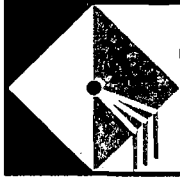


Jeffrey J. Riel  
Attorney at Law

ANAHEIM  
UNION  
HIGH  
SCHOOL  
DISTRICT



THE  
SPIRIT  
OF  
LEARNING  
SINCE 1898

Tel: 714 999-5685  
Fax: 714 999-0622  
[riel\\_j@auhsd.us](mailto:riel_j@auhsd.us)

August 15, 2011

Honorable Thomas J. Borris  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
700 Civic Center Drive West  
Santa Ana, California 92701

Re: Orange County Public Schools: Are They Prepared for Emergencies

Dear Judge Borris,

The Anaheim Union High School District ("District") provides this response to the Orange County Grand Jury Report titled, Orange County Public Schools: Are They Prepared for Emergencies? Pursuant to California Penal Code section 933.05, the District responds to Findings 1-7 and Recommendations 1-5 as follows:

### FINDINGS

**Number 1: With respect to reported constraints on emergency planning and preparation, over half of schools and almost three quarters of districts identified either limited time or funds.**

The District agrees with this finding. If the District had additional personnel or access to additional dedicated resources, the District could allocate additional time, energy, and resources to develop a more robust emergency management plan. California has limited funding dedicated for this purpose. Further, current federal grants supporting emergency management planning end in Fiscal Year 2012.

**Number 2: Six (of 17) school districts have managed to apply for and receive relatively large grants from governmental agencies to greatly enhance their emergency planning efforts, while others have not.**

The District agrees with this finding.

**Number 3: Some schools anticipate responding to only a few emergency situations (e.g., earthquake and fire), while others have developed plans to respond to over a dozen different threatening situations.**

The District agrees with this finding.

**Number 4: School districts develop plans with respect to a number of different but overlapping regulations and standards, including those required by the county, state, and the federal government.**

The District agrees with this finding. Each District school has developed safety plans in compliance with applicable Education Code provisions. Our current plans comply with State and federal emergency management standards, Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and National Incident Management System (NIMS). The District would support any effort to make these requirements consistent.

**Number 5: Some schools reported they have not adequately anticipated the needs of students taking prescription medications, or with specialized medical needs, in the event of some emergencies, such as an extended lockdown.**

The District agrees with this finding.

**Number 6: School districts are in communication with a variety of local and county departments, agencies, and systems to help them prepare for and respond to disasters or emergencies; not all districts access the same resources.**

The District agrees with this finding.

**Number 7: Few schools have plans or emergency preparation information available in languages other than English.**

The District agrees with this finding.

///

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Number 1: Those districts which have yet to identify disaster grant opportunities, especially from governmental agencies, investigate the availability of potential resources. Forming inter-district collaboratives, learning from districts in the county that have been successful, pooling resources, and asking for consultation from the Orange County Superintendent of Schools/OCDE may help in these efforts.**

The District has not received grants for emergency preparedness. Considering the current economic climate, there are few grant opportunities available for this purpose. The District currently coordinates with the Orange County Department of Education, the fire departments from the cities of Anaheim, Cypress, La Palma, Buena Park, and Stanton, and the police departments from the cities of Anaheim, Cypress, La Palma, Buena Park, and Stanton. The District will continue seeking disaster grant opportunities and the availability of other potential resources to address emergency preparedness.

**Number 2: Districts review their plans, and the plans specific to each of their campuses, with respect to emergencies or possible disaster situations they have not anticipated.**

Each of our school sites has a written safe school plan that is reviewed, modified (as necessary), and submitted to the Orange County Department of Education by March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. During the 2011/2012 school year, the District will notify each school site of the Grand Jury recommendation to consider disaster situations or other emergencies that may not have been previously considered as part of the school's emergency plan document. In preparation for meeting the March 1, 2012, deadline to update the school site emergency plans, the District will forward written guidance to the school site administrator responsible for updating the emergency plan to consider less frequently planned for emergencies noted on page 5 of the Grand Jury Report.

**Number 3: Districts review their level of compliance with various existing codes, regulations, and liability insurance issues that pertains to emergency preparedness in public schools.**

The District has implemented this recommendation by developing a school safety plan for each of its schools and working with federal, state and local emergency management agencies. The school district has sufficient liability insurance with respect to emergency preparedness.

**Number 4: Districts review their plans, and the plans specific to each of their campuses, to ascertain whether the special medical and/or prescription medication needs of all students are adequately anticipated, especially during an extended disaster situation.**

The District is currently reviewing school site plans with respect to the special medical and prescription medication needs of all students and is developing a plan to address such needs in emergency situations. This recommendation will be forwarded to each school site with the direction to review the recommendation and update the school's emergency preparedness plan accordingly. This recommendation will be implemented by March 1, 2012.

**Number 5: Districts survey their campuses with respect to the needs of non- or limited-English-speaking parents and guardians, and develop outlines or summaries of critical emergency planning information in Spanish, Vietnamese, and other threshold languages prevalent in their local communities.**

The District is currently reviewing its plans regarding translation of outlines or summaries of emergency plan information. This recommendation will be forwarded to each school site with the direction to review the recommendation, update the school's emergency preparedness plan accordingly, and translate summaries of the plan's essential components into the primary home languages spoken in the community served by the school. This recommendation will be implemented during the 2011/2012 school year. Following completion of the updated emergency preparedness plans on or before March 1, 2012, school sites will be directed to prepare and translate summaries of the pertinent information contained in the plan into the primary languages spoken in the community served by the school.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter, please contact my office.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey J. Riel, Esq.  
District Counsel

C: Orange County Grand Jury  
Elizabeth I. Novack, Ph.D., Superintendent