



FULLERTON JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Human Resources

July 27, 2011

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

Re: 2010-11 Orange County Grand Jury report, "Orange County Public Schools:
Are they Prepared for Emergencies?"

Dear Honorable Judge Borris:

Please allow this letter to serve as the official response from the Fullerton Joint Union High School (District) to the 2010-11 Orange County Grand Jury report, **Orange County Public Schools: Are they Prepared for Emergencies?**

As requested by the Grand Jury in a letter dated May 11, 2011, the District is providing a detailed response to each finding (F1 – F5) and each recommendation (R1 – R5) in compliance with *Penal Code* 933.05 (a), (b).

FINDINGS

F1: The District concurs that current economic conditions constrain both the financial and personnel resources of Districts in the emergency planning and preparation process. The availability of additional resources and personnel would afford more opportunities for additional emergency management planning. At present, limited state funds are available and a federal grant program to support emergency management planning will end in fiscal year 2012.

F2: The District concurs that six school districts have received governmental grants to enhance emergency planning efforts. The District recognizes the varying ability and resources of districts to obtain, integrate, collaborate, and provide on-going monitoring of specific grants that focus on a variety of core missions in the educational environment. The District agrees that school districts should seek grant funding and ensure resources are sufficient to support the grant. The existing federal grant program will be phasing out in 2012 and other grant programs will need to be identified.

F3: The District concurs that there are range of emergency and potentially threatening situations that various districts have created plans to respond with in the event of

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such an occurrence. Many factors contribute to this range of response including: previous experience at sites, building layout, geographic location, emergency personnel availability on site, and training, experience and resources of District personnel. The district has plans in place for many "common" (earthquake, flood, fire) emergencies, but also has plans for many unique situations.

F4: The District concurs that many overlapping jurisdictional regulations, standards, and recommendations are considered and addressed during the creation of response plans. School districts have developed school safety plans under the Education Code. School districts are also required to comply with state and federal emergency management standards, Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS). Efforts should be made to make these efforts consistent with each other.

F5: The District concurs that districts vary in their individualized response to emergency situations and the response to specialized circumstances such as the students who require on-going daily medication routines or other assisting medical apparatus availability during an extended lockdown. The District has accounted for this in its plans through the replication of best practice models, and the inclusion of medical providers, specially trained personnel, and emergency responders input in the development and refinement of its emergency plans. This is a specific issue that individual schools should address based upon their individual student population needs during an emergency and should be accounted for in the planning process.

F6: The District concurs that communication and collaboration with a network of emergency response providers and agencies are a key asset in the preparation and refinement of emergency response plans. The district agrees that districts may access a variety of different resources. It is our understanding and experience that districts communicate in a variety of ways with first responders, local agencies, and other agencies to support matters of emergency management.

F7: The District concurs that districts primarily have emergency preparation plans available in a single language. The District recognizes that student and family demographics as well as prudent emergency plans should be responsive to the student and community population. It is equally important to have multi-lingual staff members involved and available in the preparation, training, and implementation of the emergency plans. The district will continue to refine and address this information in future planning processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1: The District serves a geographic area that encompasses three separate municipalities and primary (elementary/middle school) "feeder" districts. In addition the District has coverage from emergency response personnel based in two separate counties. The District has been well served for many years

developing and strengthening collaborative partnerships with other districts and local agencies to gain additional perspectives and broader resources in its emergency planning process.

The District recognizes the varying ability and resources of districts to obtain, integrate, collaborate, and provide on-going monitoring of specific grants that focus on a variety of core missions in the educational environment. The District has actively pursued and has been successful in obtaining emergency equipment funding for countywide emergency communications and site-based Automatic External Defibrillators. In the future the District intends to implement Recommendation # 1, by identifying disaster grant opportunities and investigating the availability of potential resources.

- R2:** The District currently complies with this recommendation. The District regularly reviews its emergency plans and has conducted multiple site-based scale multi-agency emergency response exercises. Additionally the District has agreements in place for each of its comprehensive high schools with the American Red Cross (ARC) as a primary evacuation shelter. This includes recent electronic scale-drawing data base references and site-based walkthroughs with both ARC and district personnel. The District also has a site, Buena Park High School, that is designated as an Orange County Point of Distribution (POD) for mass illness and medical response in the North Orange County area. This process involved the District planning, collaborating, and coordinating with many Orange County agencies and local municipalities' to create a single response location.
- R3:** The district currently complies with this recommendation as it has implemented and developed a school safety plan for each of its schools and is working with federal, state, and local emergency management agencies. The district has sufficient liability insurance coverage and resources with respect to emergency preparedness. The District incorporates staff, emergency personnel, parents or students, on site based teams that plan drills and review emergency plans. The District also utilizes its liability insurance carrier's resources which provide staff safety training including code compliance and site-building safety reviews specific to public schools.
- R4:** The District currently complies with this recommendation as it has plans in place with respect to the special medical needs and prescription medication needs for students. The District will continue to update and further develop plans to meet the evolving needs of students in the event of an emergency.
- R5:** The District will survey campuses with respect to the needs of non or limited English speaking parents and guardians in relation to critical emergency planning information in their native language.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CDE', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Carl D. Erickson
Director of Human Resources and Risk Management

Cc: Orange County Grand Jury