

# GARDEN GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

10331 Stanford Avenue  
Garden Grove, California 92840-6353  
(714) 663-6000 Fax: (714) 663-6100

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May 20, 2009

SUPERINTENDENT  
Laura Schwalm

The Honorable Kim Dunning  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
700 Civic Center Drive West  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: Response to the Grand Jury Report on "Education of Parents in the  
Development of Strategies to Keep Their Children Out of Gangs"

Dear Judge Dunning:

The following responses are in accordance with Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05.

## **Finding F-1**

The early gang prevention and intervention efforts provided by the Probation Department, the District Attorney's Office, and such collaborative efforts as the Pio Pico Collaboration are extremely cost effective when compared to the growth of gangs in Orange County and the subsequent cost of prosecution and incarceration of gang members.

*The respondent does not have data, other than that presented in the report, upon which to form an opinion. Based on the data presented in the report this finding appears to be accurate.*

## **Finding F-2**

The most effective way to prevent children from joining gangs in most cases is to work with parents of young children to teach them to spot the danger signs for gang activity and to help them develop effective strategies to keep their children from joining gangs.

*The respondent agrees that this is one of the effective ways to approach gang prevention; however, as with most complex problems, a multi-pronged approach is most advisable.*

## **Finding F-3**

The most effective time to begin gang prevention efforts is when children are in elementary school.

*The respondent agrees that beginning gang prevention efforts in elementary schools can be helpful.*

**Finding F-4**

The most effective gang prevention and intervention programs are done by a collaboration of government agencies and private organizations and it is important for governmental entities to support such collaborations.

*The respondent agrees that collaboration between government agencies and private organizations can be very effective and that programs with proven results should be supported by governmental agencies.*

**Finding F-8**

The Pio Pico Collaboration needs to gain certification so that it may be used as a model program for other cities and school districts throughout Orange County.

*The respondent does not have the knowledge to agree or to disagree with this finding.*

**R-5**

Recommend that school districts with high numbers of at-risk children join forces and exchange information on how to begin gang prevention and intervention programs, how to expand existing programs by working cooperatively, and how to export proven practices to other districts that would benefit from them.

*The respondent agrees that collaborating with other school districts and outside agencies on gang prevention and intervention issues is a good practice and thus one which has been ongoing in the respondent's district for many years.*

Sincerely,



Laura Schwalm  
Superintendent

LS:la

C: Orange County Grand Jury