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Bryan Crain
Orange County Rescue Mission
1 Hope Drive
Tustin, CA 92782

8/15/2023

John Stragusa
Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92782

Dear Mr. Stragusa,

Enclosed is a copy of the response to the findings and recommendations of the 2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury report, ***The ABC's of Educating Children Experiencing Homelessness in Orange County***. The response of Orange County Rescue Mission was sent to presiding judge of the Orange County Superior Court, Maria Hernandez on 8/15/2023.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bryan Crain".

Bryan Crain
Interim President
Orange County Rescue Mission

Enclosure: Response Letter to
Grand Jury Report
Penal code 933, 933.05



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Maria Hernandez
Presiding Judge
Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

The Honorable Maria Hernandez,

Orange County Rescue Mission is responding to the 2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury report, *The ABC's of Educating Children Experiencing Homelessness in Orange County*. The requested responses to the Findings and Recommendations are below:

Findings:

F11: A lack of reliable transportation for children experiencing homelessness often results in chronic tardiness and absenteeism.

Response:

Orange County Rescue Mission (OCRM) requires compulsory, daily school attendance for any school aged children or youth in four sites for transitional housing: **Village of Hope, Tustin Veteran's Outpost and Hope Harbor (Sea Glass and Rip Tide)**.

Elementary aged students are chaperoned to school by a parent to the nearby Heritage Elementary. Middle school students were transported by Tustin Unified School District (TUSD) bus to Curry Middle School more recently known as Sycamore Magnet Academy from 2008-2023. However, for this upcoming school year 2023-2024 TUSD is providing bus passes to Village of Hope students attending Sycamore Magnet Academy. OCRM has been informed by TUSD that Village of Hope does not meet the distance requirement for bussing of 2 miles or greater distance from school.

Children with specialized needs identified by their Individualized Education Plan (IEP), are transported by district buses to schools with specialized programs. Teen boys and girls at Hope Harbor are transported directly to Ednovate's Legacy College Prep High School in Santa Ana by house parent staff.

In fiscal year 2023 (7/1/2022-6/30/2023), all 207 school aged children and teens at Village of Hope, Tustin Veteran's Outpost and Hope Harbor attended school consistently and received academic support on-site or in collaboration with school sites. Furthermore, students needing additional academic support through the summer were provided transportation to attend summer school.

Ending Homelessness One Life at a Time

Findings Continued:

F16: A significant lack of affordable permanent housing contributes to many families being caught in the cycle of homelessness.

Response:

OCRM provides both supportive housing programs and transitional housing programs to families experiencing homelessness. OCRM does not currently provide affordable permanent housing.

OCRM seeks to provide families with the ability to become economically self-sufficient through holistic services in the area of: housing, counseling (individual and family), sobriety, health, financial literacy, education, vocational training and legal assistance.

In fiscal year 2023 (7/1/2022-6/30/2023), OCRM provided transitional or supportive housing to **298** children experiencing homelessness in Orange County and **141** families.

The **Village of Hope** provides transitional housing for families experiencing homelessness as well as singles. This includes 40 units for 2 parent families (99 beds available) and 40 units for single women and children (90 beds available).

In the past fiscal year (7/1/2022-6/30/2023)

Village of Hope served:

- **88 households with children, 178 children total**
 - 57 single mothers with children (117 children total)
 - 14 single fathers with children (22 children total)
 - 17 dual parent households (39 children total)

Tustin Veteran's Outpost provides transitional housing for veterans; this includes veteran families experiencing homelessness.

In the past fiscal year (7/1/2022-6/30/2023)

Tustin Veteran's Outpost served:

- **10 households with children, 21 children total**
 - 4 single mothers with children (7 children total)
 - 2 single fathers with children (3 children total)
 - 4 dual parent households (11 children total)

Hope Harbor provides transitional housing to at-risk teens (aged 13-17) experiencing homelessness through 2 programs, **Sea Glass**, for at-risk teen girls and **Rip Tide**, for at-risk teen boys.

In the past fiscal year (7/1/2022-6/30/2023)

Hope Harbor served:

- **8 at-risk teens aged 13-17 years**
 - **5 girls**
 - **3 boys**

Findings Continued:

Supportive Housing:

The **House of Hope** provides supportive housing to families experiencing homelessness to single moms that are in the workforce.

In the past fiscal year (7/1/2022-6/30/2023)

House of Hope served:

- **16 single mother households with children, 27 children total**

Hope Family Housing provides supportive housing to families experiencing homelessness (either dual parent families or single moms) that fall within the 30-50% of the area AMI.

In the past fiscal year (7/1/2022-6/30/2023)

Hope Family Housing, Buena Park served:

- **20 households with children, 45 children total**
 - 11 single mothers with children (27 children total)
 - 2 single fathers with children (6 children total)
 - 6 dual parent households (12 children total)

In the past fiscal year (7/1/2022-6/30/2023)

Hope Family Housing, Pearl House (Orange) served:

- **7 households with children, 19 children total**
 - 5 single mothers with children (11 children total)
 - 2 dual parent household (8 children total)

Future Plans:

OCRM is planning to provide 20 more transitional housing units at its Silverado location, Double Restoration Ranch. OCRM is currently completing a county permitting process to open up this facility to families and singles.

Recommendations:

R6: By October 1, 2023, a joint task force should be formed by the OCDE comprised of a district level administrator from each Orange County School district and leadership from non-profit organizations who serve homeless families, to address absenteeism, low test scores and low graduation rates of children experiencing homelessness.

Response:

Orange County Rescue Mission is honored to be considered for a joint task force related to improving the education of children experiencing homelessness. We look forward to serving on the joint task force and collaborating with school district and non-profit leadership to address the adverse impacts to children experiencing homelessness including chronic absenteeism and low graduations rates.

The organizational contact for the joint task force is:

Elaine Muselli, Manager, Analytics & Special Projects

phone: (714)441-8055

email: elainejmuselli@rescuemission.org

Very Truly Yours,



Bryan Crain

Interim President

Orange County Rescue Mission