



**WESTMINSTER
SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

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September 7, 2006

Honorable Nancy Wieban Stock
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive
Santa Ana, California 92701

Subject: **Orange County Grand Jury Request for Information Related to Student Obesity**

Dear Judge Stock:

The following information is submitted in response to a letter from the Orange County Grand Jury dated June 12, 2006, in which information is requested from all Orange County Superintendents by September 14, 2006.

Findings

- 6.1 Control over competitive foods: Most school district food service directors do not have control over all food and beverages sold on school campuses. Most often excluded are competitive foods, i.e., food and beverages sold through vending machines, student stores, and fund raising events.

Response: The Westminster School District Wellness Committee, of which the Director of Child Nutrition & Food Service Programs (CNFSP) is a part, works closely with site administrators, teachers, student and adult organizations to ensure that food and beverage sales are in compliance with state and federal regulations.

Student Store sales and fundraisers by student and/or adult organizations are usually conducted after school. These sales are considered non-competitive. Site administrators provide oversight for all food and beverage sales used for fundraising.

Vending machine sales are primarily limited to areas accessible to staff only. There are a limited number of exceptions which the Director of CNFSP is reviewing with principals at the affected sites in order to bring them into compliance with the state and federal law and Board policy.

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- 6.2 Compliance with federal and state laws: Responding Orange County food service directors indicated their school districts are either in compliance with or will be in compliance with recently enacted federal and state laws addressing child wellness and obesity.

Response: Westminster School District is in compliance with state and federal laws addressing child wellness and obesity with the exception regarding competitive food sales noted in 6.1 above.

- 6.3 School nutrition programs: Some Orange County schools have developed creative nutrition programs that go beyond state and federal legislation to fight obesity.

Response : Westminster School District has been part of the Orange County Nutrition Network for the past three years for K-8 and last year our Child Development Program joined the Network. Parent education classes, cooking demonstrations and walk to school day for whole schools are just a few of the things offered to our students and parents.

During the past 10 years all of our elementary and middle school sites have been utilizing self-service salad bars ("Fresh Express") that provide a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables promoting healthy choices daily.

PTA conducted a family awareness event modeled after Fear Factor, entitled Food Factor. Students and parents were invited to go through a series of events to promote exercise and good eating. They were challenged to try new and unusual foods like blood oranges, bean sprouts, etc.

Students at Schmitt Elementary School wrote over 200 letters to save recess citing the need for physical activity, healthy exercise and a social outlet. As a result their site was awarded \$5,000.00 from the Cartoon Network in collaboration with the PTA. The money will be used to continue to build healthy habits through P.E. activities and recess.

Recommendations

- 7.1 Control over competitive foods: Orange County school districts should consider granting food service directors more control over sales of all food and beverages on district campuses.

Response: With the assistance of our Wellness Committee, the Director of CNFSP has sufficient opportunity to plan, promote, educate and monitor healthy eating and drinking for all students and their families.

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- 7.2 Compliance with federal and state laws: School districts should ensure compliance with legislated actions and dates addressing child wellness and obesity.

Response: Westminster School District is in compliance with legislated actions and dates addressing child wellness and obesity. As a participant in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, our Superintendent or designee ensures meals meet federal and state nutritional standards and dietary guidelines.

- 7.3 School nutrition programs: To fight obesity, Orange County schools should consider researching and developing nutrition programs that go beyond state and federal legislation.

Response: Westminster School District will continue to participate in the Nutrition Network promoting good nutrition and fitness to our students and their families. Fruit and/or vegetable gardens are being planned for the 2006-2007 school year at many of our sites. During Back to School Night tables were set up with nutrition and physical education information and with nutritious snacks and/or salad bars for parents to sample. Food service department staff were present during middle school registration days to promote "5 a day", our school meals and "Fresh Express" salad bars.

Our entire district continues to work with the Wellness Committee, the School Board, parents and students to promote physical fitness and nutrition education.

If you need additional information please call me at (714) 894-7311 x400.

Sincerely,

Bobbi Mahler, Ed.D.
Interim Superintendent