

Savanna School District

1330 SOUTH KNOTT AVENUE
ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA 92804-4798
PHONE: (714) 236-3800

August 22, 2023

The Honorable Maria D. Hernandez
Presiding Judge
Orange County Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: Savanna School District's Response to the 2022-23 Orange County Grand Jury Report on *School Shootings: How Prepared Are Orange County Public Schools?*

To the Honorable Maria D. Hernandez:

The Savanna School District (District) wishes to extend its gratitude to the Grand Jury for investing its time and dedication in conducting a comprehensive review of this crucial issue and subsequently sharing the outcomes in the Grand Jury Report on *School Shootings: How Prepared Are Orange County Public Schools?* (Report). It's important to know that the District takes our commitment to students, staff and our community safety very seriously. We have consistently undertaken measures to ensure the safety of our schools in the past and will continue to do so.

The District has thoroughly reviewed and considered the Findings and Recommendations in the Report. In accordance with California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Grand Jury has requested that the District respond to Findings and Recommendations made in the Report. The District responds to the Grand Jury's Findings and Recommendations with the following:

Finding 1

Law enforcement, first responders, and other stakeholders have demonstrated a strong interest in working cooperatively with Orange County public schools to mitigate the risk of an active shooter incident; establishment of MOUs between law enforcement and school districts would strengthen this cooperation.

The District agrees with the finding.

Finding 2

All Orange County public schools studied by the Grand Jury stated that they conducted or have scheduled drills within the current school year on emergency procedures addressing intruders on campus, but not all have done so specifically regarding armed assailants.

Savanna School District partially agrees with the finding. The Savanna School District is not able to respond to the means in which other LEAs conducted their drills.

Finding 3

While all districts prioritize the safety of students and staff, the attention and resources devoted to active shooter preparedness and response vary from district to district.

The District agrees with this finding.

Finding 4

Safety and security plans for on-campus before and after-school programs are not adequately addressed by school districts.

The Savanna School District disagrees with this finding. The Savanna before and after school programs are well informed and participate in all safety and security drills.

The Savanna School District is not able to respond to how other LEAs address safety protocols with their on-campus programs.

Finding 5

While many Orange County public schools have installed fences, cameras, and other methods to address the issue of active shooters on a campus, there are still opportunities for improvement.

The District partially disagrees with the finding.

As it relates to the Savanna School District, the District has consistently undertaken improvement projects to ensure our campuses are as safe as possible for our students, staff, parents, and community. We regularly present information at public Board Meetings on school safety, notify staff and parents of our safety measures, including at the beginning of each school year. (see attached examples of Memo to Staff and Letter to Parents on School Safety)

The District does not have first-hand information regarding what other educational institutions throughout the county are doing to address the issue of active shooters on campus and, therefore, cannot agree or disagree with this finding.

Finding 6

Not all schools utilize a system for monitoring campus visitors.

The Savanna School District utilizes a system for monitoring campus visitors.

The Savanna School District is not able to respond to the means other LEAs use for addressing campus visitors.

Finding 7

While there is an increased awareness of the benefits of mental health counseling, not all school districts have implemented these programs in all schools.

The District partially disagrees with the finding.

As it relates to the Savanna School District, the District has significantly increased mental health services on each of our campuses over the past three years. In addition to a school psychologist as well as a psychologist intern on each campus, we currently have two counselors and a counseling intern on each campus. We have extended counseling services to be available during our after-school programs as well. This has been a tremendous benefit to our students and parents. Additionally, we have partnered with Care Solace to provide additional counseling resources to families and are enthusiastically awaiting the implementation of Hazel Health, an online resource for additional counseling, once the contract is approved by the Orange County Department of Education and the Orange County Health Care Agency.

The District does not have first-hand information regarding what other educational institutions throughout the county are doing to address the issue of providing mental health counseling and, therefore, cannot agree or disagree with this finding.

Finding 8

School Resource Officers (SROs) are a valuable asset for school safety, yet many cities/districts do not allocate sufficient funds to hire needed officers.

The District agrees with the finding that SROs are very valuable. Savanna strongly believes that the SROs should be financed by local cities or by the State.

Finding 9

Not all classrooms have window shades, tinted glass, or film to obstruct the interior view from the outside.

The District partially disagrees with the finding.

As it relates to the Savanna School District, all classrooms have window shades and tinted glass that obstructs the interior view from the outside. Additionally, all offices have window shades and tinted glass that obstructs the interior view from the outside as well as bullet-resistant film on all windows and glass doors at the front of each school.

The District does not have first-hand information regarding what other educational institutions throughout the county are doing to obstruct the interior view of classrooms from the outside and, therefore, cannot agree or disagree with this finding.

Finding 10

The camera surveillance systems utilized on many campuses require repairs, replacement, or additions.

The Savanna School District agrees with the findings. Camera systems are not maintenance free and need to be replaced at times. We regularly inspect cameras and camera footage, replacing aging cameras as needed.

Finding 11

Many schools do not have perimeter fencing completely enclosing their campus.

The District partially disagrees with the finding.

As it relates to the Savanna School District, we have perimeter fencing completely enclosing each campus. While we want our schools to reflect an "open and inviting" atmosphere, we have an obligation to keep our students safe. All of our schools have perimeter fencing with one entry point.

The District does not have first-hand information regarding the type or quantity of fencing other educational institutions throughout the county are utilizing and, therefore, cannot agree or disagree with this finding.

Finding 12

A number of school districts have school site administrative offices that remain unlocked on a daily basis.

The District partially disagrees with the finding.

In the Savanna School District, all campus doors, including those in school offices, are locked throughout each day. Visitors are allowed in by staff after they have been identified by the use of audio and visual devices including paging phones located at the entrances to the school offices. Cameras allow staff to see who is at the door, allowing them to unlock the door on an 'as needed' basis.

The Savanna School District is not able to respond what protocols are being used by other LEAs.

Recommendation 1

Each Orange County school district should arrange for local law enforcement to do an annual safety inspection of each school. The written safety checklist should include an audit of the integrity of site boundaries and a review of safety plans and policies. This annual safety audit should

commence with the 2023-24 school year by October 1, 2023, and annually thereafter.

The Savanna School District agrees with the recommendation. We work closely with local law enforcement to walk our sites, review our safety plans, and assist in the refinement of plans.

Recommendation 2

All Orange County school districts should establish a threat identification and assessment system for all school sites to monitor social media, screen for messages of concern, and manage information received in coordination with local law enforcement using MOUs, if necessary, by July 1, 2024

The surrounding cities that support Savanna School District provide the service that is being recommended. The cooperation from these entities in sharing the intel when needed is very valuable.

Recommendation 3

Each Orange County school district, in conjunction with law enforcement, should develop and implement tabletop exercises to be conducted in district schools by December 31, 2023, and annually thereafter.

The District agrees with this recommendation and is working with local law enforcement agencies toward this opportunity.

Recommendation 4

Each Orange County school district should work with local law enforcement to plan and conduct a district-wide active shooter drill by July 1, 2024, and at least every other year thereafter.

The District agrees with this recommendation and is working with local law enforcement agencies toward this opportunity.

Recommendation 5

All Orange County school districts should develop a casualty care training program for each school in their district, to be in place by the end of the first semester of the 2023-24 school year and provided annually thereafter.

The District agrees with this recommendation and regularly practices casualty care training during earthquake drills.

Recommendation 6

Safety and security plans for on-campus before and after-school programs need to be addressed more thoroughly by school districts, by July 1, 2024.

This recommendation has been implemented in Savanna School District.

Recommendation 7

Each Orange County school district should obtain and incorporate perimeter camera systems in all district schools by July 1, 2024, or earlier if financially able to do so, and investigate the potential use of cameras that incorporate Artificial Intelligence to enhance threat detection and prevention.

Schools in the Savanna School District have between 35-40 cameras on each campus.

Recommendation 8

All Orange County school districts should review entry procedures on all campuses with an eye toward the use of perimeter fencing, the use of single point entry, and the use of a buzzer and camera system for entry into the main/administrative offices.

This recommendation has been implemented in Savanna School District.

Recommendation 9

Each Orange County school district should identify and implement a parent and visitor management system for each school site within the school district. This is to include identified access points, badges, or a similar identification procedure to be implemented by July 1, 2024.

This recommendation has been implemented in Savanna School District.

Recommendation 10

Each Orange County school district should implement training for all staff to identify threat-related behaviors and provide a procedure for reporting the behavior by the beginning of the 2024-25 school year.

This recommendation has begun implementation in Savanna School District through a partnership with the Orange County Department of Education.

Recommendation 11

All Orange County school districts should develop a plan to implement or enhance mental health counseling for all schools by December 31, 2024.

This recommendation has been implemented in Savanna School District and will continue as long as funding permits.

Recommendation 12

Each Orange County school district should assess the need for SROs or additional SROs, reaching out to appropriate community partners to facilitate funding by July 1, 2024.

The District agrees with this recommendation will work with local law enforcement agencies toward this opportunity.

Recommendation 13

All Orange County school districts should investigate and consider bullet resistant or tinted film covering for school windows by December 31, 2023.

This recommendation has been implemented in Savanna School District.

The Savanna School District has worked systematically to ensure that each school campus is as safe as possible. In an effort to continue to ensure the safety of all of our campuses, we have implemented a number of measures at all of our sites and will continue to monitor security needs at each site, work closely with local law enforcement, and respond appropriately.

Please accept the information provided herein as the Savanna School District's responses to the Orange County Grand Jury's Factual Findings and Recommendation in the Report.

Sincerely,

BOARD APPROVED: 8/21/23



Dr. Sue Johnson
Superintendent
Secretary of the Board of Trustees



Mrs. Chris Brown
President, Board of Trustees

Attachments: Safety Memo to Staff
Safety Letter to Parents

July 30, 2023

TO: Savanna Staff
FROM: Administrative Team
RE: School Safety

As we reflect on recent incidents of violence at schools across the country, it's important to know that we take our commitment to students, staff and our community safety very seriously. We have consistently undertaken measures to ensure the safety of our schools in the past and will continue to do so. While we want our campuses to be welcoming and inviting places, we have an obligation to provide the safest possible environment for our students and staff members. With the understanding that no community is immune from a tragic incident, the District has worked systematically to ensure that each school campus is as safe as possible. In an effort to continue to ensure the safety of all of our campuses, we have implemented the following measures at all of our sites:

Perimeter Fencing—Perimeter fencing with a 1" mesh has been installed throughout each campus; all campuses have 8' to 10' perimeter fencing throughout.

Single Point of Entry—Access to each campus is limited to one access point; the entry gate is monitored each morning by an adult to ensure visitors are directed to check in through the office.

Security Cameras - Security cameras have been installed throughout each campus; while there is no audio and no cameras inside classrooms, these cameras have proven to be extremely useful in helping deter crime. Several common areas, including but not limited to school offices, multi-purpose rooms, Technology Learning Centers, and kitchens have also been equipped with security cameras, all without audio capabilities.

Visitor Check in System—This system enhances school security by reading visitor drivers' licenses, comparing the information to a sex offender database, alerting campus administrators if a match is found; if no match was found, a visitor badge is printed that includes a photo. All visitors on a school site are to have a visitor badge.

Staff ID Badges—Staff members are asked to wear their Savanna School District ID badge while on school campuses. Lanyards or clips will be available from the school office to allow staff to display the badge.

Paging Systems—Each site is equipped with a paging system that can be accessed from any site phone to make announcements or place the site into a 'secure campus' mode.

Paging Gates—In order to allow access to before and after school child care programs, each campus has been equipped with one identified paging system that is controlled by staff in those programs to open specific gates.

Student Transportation Services—Each bus is equipped with visual and audible cameras to assist drivers with student management as well as providing an additional layer of security for students and drivers. Students scan bus passes that provides real-time information on when and where students enter and exit the bus. We have tablets on each bus that allow the driver to verify students are exiting at the correct location.

Emergency Notification Systems—Each classroom has a 'panic button' that can be utilized in an emergency to open an immediate line of communication with the school office.

911 Notification Systems—Each office has a system in place that will allow staff to send a silent alarm to the 911 dispatcher in the event of an emergency.

Classroom Door Locks—Each classroom has exterior doors that can be locked from the inside, alleviating the need to open the door to lock it.

Enhanced Fire Alarm and Security Systems—Fire alarm & security systems are fully automated and monitored.

Increased Security Lighting—After hours, each campus is lit with security lighting to ensure the continued safety and security of those working and to deter crime.

Remote Locking Doors— Each school office is equipped with the ability for staff to remotely lock the front entry door in the event of an emergency or unwanted visitor.

Security Film on Front Windows—Safety & security film has been installed on the front windows and doors of each site to deter break-ins and impede unwanted entry when the front doors are locked.

NaviGate Prepared— Each teacher has been equipped with the ability to call an emergency, account for their students, and communicate with the site administrator through the NaviGate Prepared software.

Park Ranger Patrols—Through the Anaheim Police Department, Park Rangers patrol campuses on weekends and holidays.

Partnership with Local Police Departments — Safety at each school has been enhanced through established relationships with our local police departments.

DR. SUE JOHNSON
SUPERINTENDENT

Savanna School District

August 4, 2023

1330 SOUTH KNOTT AVENUE
ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA 92804-4798
PHONE: (714) 236-3800

Dear Parents,

It's important to know that we take our commitment to students, staff and our community safety very seriously. We have consistently undertaken measures to ensure the safety of our schools in the past and will continue to do so. While we want our campuses to be welcoming and inviting places, we have an obligation to provide the safest possible environment for our students and staff members.

The District has worked systematically to ensure that each school campus is as safe as possible. In an effort to continue to ensure the safety of all of our campuses, we have implemented a number of measures at all of our sites. Below are a few of the security measures in place:

Perimeter Fencing—Perimeter fencing with a 1" mesh has been installed throughout each campus.

Single Point of Entry—Access to each campus is limited to one access point; the entry gate is monitored each morning by an adult to ensure visitors are directed to check in through the office.

Security Cameras—Security cameras have been installed throughout each campus; these cameras have proven to be extremely useful in helping deter crime.

Visitor Check in System—This system enhances school security by reading visitor drivers' licenses, comparing the information to a national database, alerting campus administrators if a match is found; if no match was found, a visitor badge is printed that includes a photo. All visitors on a school site are to have a visitor badge.

Staff ID Badges—Staff members have been asked to wear their Savanna School District ID badge while on school campuses.

Paging Systems—Each site is equipped with a paging system that can be accessed from any site phone to make announcements or place the site into a 'secure campus' mode.

Paging Gates—We have installed paging phones at specific locations on each campus to allow access for parents with children enrolled in our before and after-school programs.

Classroom Door Locks—Each classroom has exterior doors that can be locked from the inside, alleviating the need to open the door to lock it.

Enhanced Fire Alarm Systems—During the modernization projects at sites, the fire alarm systems were enhanced, updated and are fully automated and monitored.

Increased Security Lighting—After hours, each campus is lit with security lighting to ensure the continued safety and security of those working and to deter crime.

Monitored Security Systems—Each site has a monitored security system.

Partnership with Local Police Departments—Safety at each school has been enhanced through established relationships with our local police departments.

Because student and staff safety are paramount, we are continually assessing the safety and security needs of our campuses. We appreciate your continued diligence in alerting us or local law enforcement when you see something that doesn't look right. If you have any questions about the safety and security of our campuses, please speak with your school principal.

As we begin the 2023-24 school year, we know that parents would like to walk their children to their classrooms on the first day of school. We welcome you to do that; however, after the first day of school, parents and visitors wishing to come on campus will need to check in through the school office. I ask that you remember that our staff are trained to ensure that all visitors and volunteers sign in at the front office; this is done to continue to ensure the safety of your children. While limiting access to school events may be difficult at times, safety is paramount. Together, we will be able to continue to ensure our schools are safe and secure learning environments.

Sincerely,



Dr. Sue Johnson
Superintendent

**EXCERPT FROM THE OFFICIAL MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
SAVANNA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA 92804**

August 21, 2023

Motion by Dr. Zambrano, seconded by Mrs. Karanick, to approve the response of Savanna School District to the 2022-23 Orange County Grand Jury Report *School Shootings: How Prepared are Orange County Public Schools?* The motion was carried 4-0.

CERTIFICATION

I, Sue Johnson, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS
A TRUE AND EXACT COPY OF THAT PORTION OF THE MINUTES SPECIFIED.

SIGNED


Secretary of the Board of Trustees