



Magnolia School District

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August 25, 2023

To: Honorable Maria D. Hernandez
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
Superior Court of Orange County
Central Justice Center
700 Civic Center Drive West, Department C01
Santa Ana, CA 92701

From: Board of Trustees
Magnolia School District

Subject: Revised Response to Grand Jury Report: *School Shootings: How Prepared are Orange County Public Schools?*

Please accept this revised copy of the Magnolia School District's responses to the Orange County Grand Jury Report titled *School Shootings: How Prepared are Orange County Public Schools?* This was approved by our Board of Trustees on August 17, 2023. Since then we noticed there were some grammatical errors. We have corrected these errors and our response is attached. We will bring this back to our Board of Trustees for approval/ratification at our next Board meeting on September 14, 2023. Please accept our sincere apologies for this inconvenience.

Findings

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; the establishment of MOUs between law enforcement and school districts would strengthen this cooperation.

Response: The Magnolia School District disagrees partially with the finding.

The Magnolia School District has worked cooperatively with the Anaheim Police Department and the Orange County Sheriff's Department without the formality of a MOU. We acknowledge that expectations can be formalized in a MOU and we are willing to enter into a MOU with our law enforcement agencies.

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.

Response: The Magnolia School District disagrees partially with the finding.

Lockdown drills are scheduled and implemented throughout each school year at all schools in the Magnolia School District and these drills simulate multiple reasons for lockdown including armed assailants. When school staff and students practice lockdown drills they practice "level 3 lockdown" which indicates an emergency such as an armed assailant on campus.

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.

Response: The Magnolia School District agrees with the finding.

Finding 4: Safety and security plans for on-campus before and after-school programs are not adequately addressed by school districts.

Response: The Magnolia School District disagrees partially with the finding.

The Magnolia School District provides training to District after school program staff on safety and security and conducts emergency drills regularly. More coordination is needed between the District and the outside vendor who provides after school care to some of our students. We do not provide before school programs.

Finding 5: While many Orange County public schools have installed fences, cameras, and other methods to address the issue of active shooters on campus, there are still opportunities for improvement.

Response: The Magnolia School District agrees with the finding.

The Magnolia School District has installed perimeter fences and perimeter cameras at all school sites. There are always ways to improve, for instance we are in the process of replacing our current six-foot tall, two-inch chain link perimeter fences with eight foot tall, one-inch chain link. One-inch chain link is more difficult to climb.

Finding 6: Not all schools utilize a system for monitoring campus visitors.

Response: The Magnolia School District disagrees wholly with the finding.

The Magnolia School District utilizes the Raptor system for monitoring campus visitors at all nine schools. Visitors provide photo identification to the office staff who place the identification in the Raptor system. The system provides background screening of visitors before they are cleared to enter campus then provides a visitor badge to wear while on campus and maintains a log of 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.

Response: The Magnolia School District disagrees wholly with the finding.

The Magnolia School District has recognized the increased need and the benefits of identifying mental health needs and providing mental health support in all schools. Each school now has a full-time social worker that provides mental health counseling to students. Additional resources, including additional counselors and an online referral system, have been made available to staff, families, and students. The Magnolia School District also has full time school psychologists.

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.

Response: The Magnolia School District disagrees partially with the finding.

The Magnolia School District agrees that SROs can be a valuable asset to schools. As a district with elementary schools only, such as Magnolia School District, the need for full time SROs on our campuses may not be as important as middle and high schools. It is helpful to have access to SROs or patrol officers from local agencies when the need arises. It is also helpful to be in partnership with the Orange County Sheriff's Department and the District Attorney's Office for the Gang Reduction and Intervention Program (GRIP), which we have at three of our schools. Law enforcement officers are available to support school safety through this partnership.

Finding 9: Not all classrooms have window shades, tinted glass, or film to obstruct the interior view from the outside.

Response: The Magnolia School District agrees with the finding.

Finding 10: The camera surveillance systems utilized on many campuses require repairs, replacement, or additions.

Response: The Magnolia School District disagrees partially with the finding.

The Magnolia School District maintains our camera surveillance system in working condition at all times. When cameras or other equipment needs to be replaced it is replaced as quickly as replacement equipment is available. The District installs additional cameras when needed to increase the field of surveillance.

Finding 11: Many schools do not have perimeter fencing completely enclosing their campus.

Response: The Magnolia School District disagrees wholly with the finding.

All schools in the Magnolia School District are completely surrounded by perimeter fencing. All of our school campuses and the District Office are completely enclosed and utilize a single point of entry system, which includes a camera and buzzer system to control entry.

Finding 12: A number of school districts have school site administrative offices that remain unlocked on a daily basis.

Response: The Magnolia School District disagrees wholly with the finding.

All administrative offices at all Magnolia School District school sites, and the District Office, remain locked at all times. A camera and buzzer system is used to control entry into the office and then onto campus as appropriate.

Recommendations

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. (F1, F10, F11)

Response: The Magnolia School District has not yet implemented this recommendation, but will implement the recommendation through the *STOP School Violence: Threat Assessment/Intervention Teams Grant* starting in August 2023. This grant is funded by the United States Department of Education and implemented by the District in partnership with the Orange County Department of Education. The grant includes training in threat assessment and response. Safety plans and policies will be addressed in training and adjusted as needed. Partnerships and site assessments with local law enforcement will also be addressed.

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. (F1, F3)

Response: The Magnolia School District has partially implemented this recommendation, but will fully implement the recommendation as part of the *STOP School Violence: Threat Assessment/Intervention Teams Grant* starting in August 2023. This grant is funded by the United States Department of Education and implemented by the District in partnership with the Orange County Department of Education. The grant includes training in threat assessment and response and communication with local law enforcement. The District does have filters in place that identify threats of violence made by students while using their school online accounts or devices.

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. (F2)

Response: The Magnolia School District has not yet fully implemented this recommendation. A pilot tabletop exercise was conducted in March 2023 at Pyles STEM Academy in partnership with the Orange County Sheriff's Department. This exercise was observed by members of the OC Grand Jury. Tabletop exercises and site vulnerability assessments will be conducted at each school as they are required components of the *STOP School Violence: Threat Assessment/Intervention Teams Grant* starting in August 2023. This grant is funded by the United States Department of Education and implemented by the District in partnership with the Orange County Department of Education.

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. (F2)

Response: The Magnolia School District has not yet implemented this recommendation. School site drills are scheduled and implemented during each school year. *Knowledge Saves Lives* training will be conducted for all District staff by October 31, 2023 as a required component of the *STOP School Violence: Threat Assessment/Intervention Teams Grant*. This grant is funded by the United States Department of Education and implemented by the District in partnership with the Orange County Department of Education.

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. (F3)

Response: The Magnolia School District has not yet implemented this recommendation, but plans to do so by November 18, 2023. First Aid/CPR training is provided to all staff annually (no cost to staff members). Casualty care training will be provided to key identified staff by the end of the first trimester (November 18, 2023) of the 2023-2024 school year.

Recommendation 6: Safety and security plans for on-campus before and after-school programs need to be addressed more thoroughly by the school district, by July 1, 2024. (F4)

Response: The Magnolia School District has not yet implemented this recommendation, but plans to do so by July 1, 2024. Safety and security plans for after-school programs (we do not have before school programs), including programs provided by an outside vendor, will be

reviewed and enhanced to include thorough training on safety and security protocols. This will be the responsibility of the Director of Expanded Learning.

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. (F5, F10)

Response: The Magnolia School District has implemented this recommendation. All sites have cameras that provide perimeter surveillance. The District will continue to investigate the incorporation of cameras with Artificial Intelligence and other technologies to enhance safety and security.

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. (F5, F12)

Response: The Magnolia School District has implemented this recommendation. All nine schools and the District Office have a single point of entry. All sites have complete perimeter fencing and each main/administrative office uses a buzzer and camera system to identify and allow visitors onto campus.

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. (F6, F11, F12)

Response: The Magnolia School District has implemented this recommendation. Parents and visitors enter the school through a single point of entry. Through a buzzer and camera system parents and visitors as appropriate are buzzed into a locked waiting area of the main/administrative office. Once the parent/visitor is cleared using the Raptor system, they are buzzed onto campus as appropriate. The Raptor system reviews the parent/visitor's identification and background. Parents/visitors who have been cleared are given an identification badge to wear while on campus.

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. (F7)

Response: The Magnolia School District has not yet implemented this recommendation, but will implement the recommendation through the *STOP School Violence: Threat Assessment/Intervention Teams Grant* starting in August 2023. This grant is funded by the United States Department of Education and implemented by the District in partnership with the Orange County Department of Education. The grant includes training in threat assessment, *Comprehensive Threat Assessment Guidelines*, and the use of case management software for reporting.

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. (F7)

Response: The Magnolia School District has implemented this recommendation. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, mental health services were enhanced and have been maintained. One full time social worker was added to each school site to provide mental health counseling. School psychologists are assigned to school sites and also provide mental health counseling. An online, 24-hour per day, 365 days per year referral service was added for students, family members, and staff. Additional mental health services are provided by an outside vendor if site social workers need to refer students for more in-depth counseling services or if the caseload is higher than what the site social worker can service.

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. (F8)

Response: The Magnolia School District requires further analysis of this recommendation. The Magnolia School District would like to have SROs, but this can only happen in partnership with local law enforcement. The District will reach out to appropriate community partners, such as local law enforcement and city governments, by July 1, 2024 to explore SRO options and possible funding models. In the meantime, we do have access to SROs and patrol officers who work for local law enforcement at all school sites as needed and GRIP officers at three of our sites.

Recommendation 13: All Orange County school districts should investigate and consider bullet resistant or tinted film covering for school windows by December 31, 2023. (F9)

Response: The Magnolia School District is currently researching the most appropriate covering for school windows. The study will be complete by December 31, 2023. Funding has been identified to pay for the window covering and the covering will be installed by August 30, 2024.

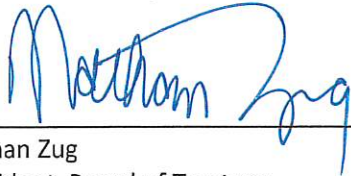
Please accept the information provided herein as the Magnolia School District's responses to the Orange County Grand Jury's Factual Findings and Recommendation in the Report. Once again, we appreciate the time and attention that the Grand Jury devoted to this very important issue.

Sincerely,



District Superintendent

BOARD APPROVED:



Nathan Zug
President, Board of Trustees

8-17-23

Date



Frank Donovan, Ed.D., Secretary
Governing Board of Trustees

8-17-23

Date