



September 5, 2023

Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: Huntington Beach City 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 Orange County Grand Jury:

The Huntington Beach City School District commends the Grand Jury for its time and attention devoted to studying this very important issue and publishing the Grand Jury Report dated June 14, 2023 entitled *School Shootings: How Prepared Are Orange County Public Schools?*

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 partially disagrees with this finding. The District maintains strong partnerships with local law enforcement without MOUs. From the District's perspective, an MOU is not required to strengthen cooperation unless shared resources are involved or role clarification is necessary.

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.

The District agrees with this finding regarding the District's past practices. The District does not know firsthand whether Orange County public schools have conducted drills specifically regarding armed assailants.

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 District partially agrees with this finding. While the District maintains close collaboration with relevant staff and agencies regarding safety at before and after-school programs, there is a continued need for additional planning and communication.

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 agrees with this finding.

Finding 6

Not all schools utilize a system for monitoring campus visitors.

The District partially disagrees with this finding. The District does not have firsthand information regarding whether or not schools across Orange County have systems for monitoring campus visitors, therefore, cannot wholly agree or disagree with this finding as it relates to all districts. Regarding the Huntington Beach City School District, the District disagrees wholly with this finding since all schools in the District use the Raptor system to monitor visitors on campus.

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 this finding. The District does not have firsthand information regarding whether or not all school district across Orange County have implemented mental health counseling programs, therefore, cannot wholly agree or disagree with this finding as it relates to all districts. As it relates to the Huntington Beach City School District, the District disagrees wholly with this finding. The District has increased mental health supports and services across all its schools over the last three years, including but not limited to, adding three school counselors to support the needs of elementary students, freeing up the remaining two counselors to address each of the two middle schools needs; adding a school psychologist to provide educationally-related mental health services and training for other psychologists and staff; conducting universal screening of all students' social emotional skills annually; and additional training for teachers and support staff in addressing the social-emotional and mental health needs of students.

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 partially agrees with this finding. The District does not have firsthand information regarding this finding for all districts in Orange County and, therefore, cannot wholly agree or disagree with this finding as it relates to all districts. Regarding the Huntington Beach City School District, the District partially agrees with this finding. The Huntington Beach Police Department has assigned two full-time SROs to support the two school districts entirely located in Huntington Beach, as well as three other school districts with some schools in Huntington Beach. While the District agrees that additional SRO support would be helpful, the District's primary focus for funding has been on providing

students with mental health and social-emotional supports and other preventative measures, which aligns with the functions of a school district.

Finding 9

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

The District agrees with this finding.

Finding 10

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

The District disagrees with this finding as it relates to the District. The District maintains surveillance cameras covering extensive locations at every school site. Additionally, maintenance procedures are in place to ensure cameras are working properly and serviced regularly. The District does not have firsthand information regarding this finding for all campuses in Orange County and, therefore, cannot wholly agree or disagree with this finding as it relates to all campuses in the County.

Finding 11

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

The District disagrees with this finding as it relates to the District. The District has perimeter fencing at every school site except one school site that is currently under construction. This school will have perimeter fencing upon completion of construction. The District does not have firsthand information regarding this finding for all campuses in Orange County and, therefore, cannot wholly agree or disagree with this finding as it relates to all campuses in the County.

Finding 12

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

The District agrees with this finding.

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)

This recommendation has been implemented. Local law enforcement consults with each district school to complete a safety audit annually.

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)

This recommendation will not be implemented because is not warranted or reasonable. The District does not have the resources, expertise, or access to monitor or screen all social media for messages of concern. Furthermore, Education Code 49073.6 places stringent requirements on schools to ensure student privacy and parental notification when gathering information from students' social media.

The district has employed an anonymous reporting system that includes coordination with local law enforcement to follow up on any reported messages of concern.

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)

This recommendation has yet to be implemented, but will be implemented during the 2023-2024 school year.

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)

As this recommendation is stated in the report, it will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable. It is not feasible to conduct a district-wide active shooter drill simultaneously among all district schools due to a lack of district and law enforcement resources, nor is it warranted, given that these incidents do not typically occur across multiple campuses simultaneously.

However, this recommendation will be implemented at each school campus at least once yearly by July 1, 2024, and at least every other year thereafter.

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)

This recommendation requires further analysis of the risks and benefits of an annual training requirement considering the numerous annual training requirements currently in place for district employees and lack of time and resources to complete additional training. Some district employees are required to complete this training based on their job roles. The District will conduct an analysis to determine the scope of training necessary based on recommendations from local law enforcement. The District will complete this analysis by December 14, 2023.

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. (F4)

This recommendation will be implemented as part of the school safety plan review and approval process by March 1, 2024.

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)

This recommendation has been implemented. All District schools have perimeter camera systems. The District will explore the potential use of Artificial Intelligence to enhance threat detections and prevention.

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)

This recommendation has not yet been fully implemented but will be implemented by 2024. All District schools have perimeter fencing and a single point of entry during the school day except one school currently under construction, which will have these features once construction is complete. The District is implementing controlled entry systems in the main/administrative offices of each school and anticipates completion during the 2023-2024 school year.

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)

This recommendation has been implemented. The District uses the Raptor Visitor Management system at each district school.

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)**

This recommendation will be implemented during the 2023-2024 school year. The District conducted a training of trainers for district safety teams from each campus on the standard response method in August 2023. The District will implement an anonymous threat reporting system beginning in September 2023 and will notify staff and students of the procedure for reporting. All employees, including new employees, receive annual suicide prevention training. The District has a trained threat assessment team that responds when staff or students identify threat-related behaviors.

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)

This recommendation has been implemented. The District has assigned increased resources over the last three years for mental health counseling across all schools.

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)

The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented by July 1, 2024. The District has initiated communication with local law enforcement about increased SRO support. This analysis will be completed during the 2023-2024 school year.

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)

The recommendation has been implemented. Shatter-resistant film has been installed on accessible school windows.

Please accept the information provided herein as the District's response to the Orange County Grand Jury's Factual Findings and Recommendation in the Report. Once again,

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we appreciate the time and attention that the Grand Jury devoted to this very important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leisa Winston".

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