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GREGORY KAMPF, SUPERINTENDENT

BY: _____

June 24, 2011

Grand Jury Suite 12
411 E. Canon Perdido Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101-7531

Dear Grand Jury:

On behalf of the Lompoc Unified Board of Education, I am enclosing our response to your report entitled, "Where is the Truancy Program in Santa Barbara County? Truancy is Troubling...for Everyone".

Background

Lompoc Unified School District began working with the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's office in 2002-2003. The DA's office was a great help to us because the public perceived that the SARB process was a serious matter. Without the DA's office involvement, the school district could not do more than give parents a good tongue lashing to try to get their children to school. The DA's presence was felt by parents, students and school staff and treated as if the the truancy program was a serious matter. From 2008 to 2010, the district's truancy rate increased from 28.82% to 39.39%. I believe that a major factor in the increase in the truancy rate was attributable to the elimination of the Truancy Intervention and Parent Accountability Program (TIPAP).

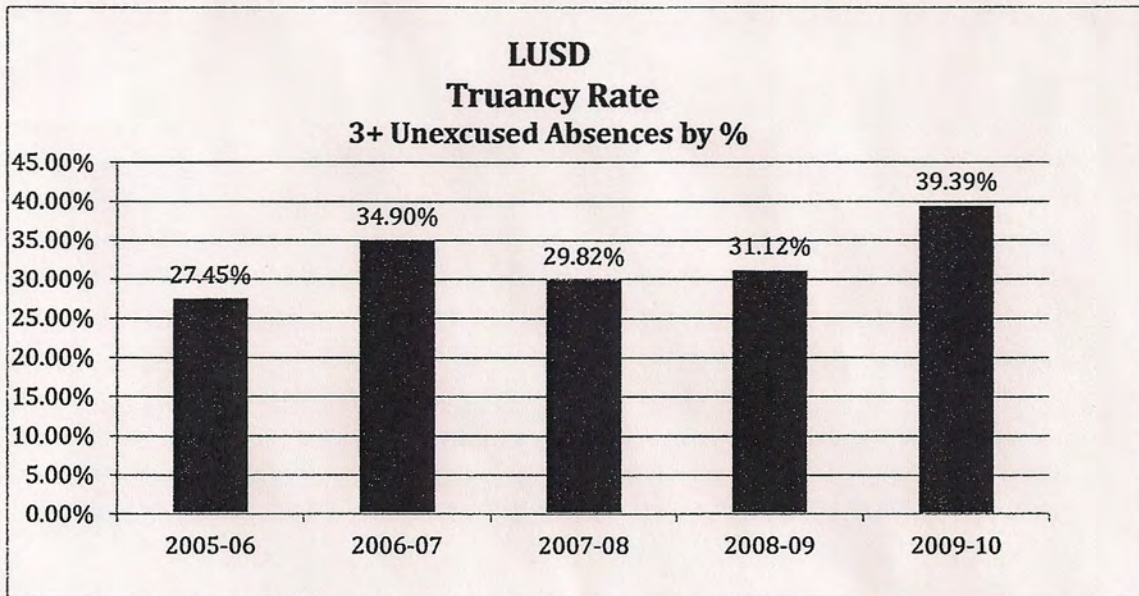
Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1

The only truancy programs in use today in the County of Santa Barbara are those independently developed and managed by individual districts and schools.

Response

1. The Lompoc Unified School District agrees with this finding.
2. Lompoc Unified School District has developed and managed its own truancy program since 2008. The district currently employs one person four hours per day for ten months per year in addition to school site personnel, which has been reduced in the last two years. In addition, the School Attendance Review Board is comprised of a community volunteer, Director of Pupil Support Services, a classroom teacher, school administrator, and school attendance personnel.
3. Below please find LUSD's truancy data.



Recommendation 1a

That the Santa Barbara County District Attorney immediately reinstate the initial letter portion of the prior truancy program for all secondary schools until a new program is developed.

Response:

1. The Lompoc Unified School District agrees.
2. LUSD has sent out these letters but some parents believe that there are no sanctions because the DA is not involved in the SARB process until a referral is made by the district to the DA's office.

Recommendation 1b

That the Santa Barbara County Office of the District Attorney report the results quarterly of the truancy intervention letters data, to the Santa Barbara County Education Office and all Santa Barbara County school districts.

Response

1. The Lompoc Unified School District partially disagrees.
2. LUSD would be interested in the number of letters sent by the District Attorney's office to parents in the LUSD reported at each SARB meeting. The District Attorney's office could support LUSD SARB in the following ways:
 - a. Ensuring a representative from the DA's office and from the probation department be present at each SARB meeting which are held twice per month September through May.
 - b. Work expeditiously to respond to a SARB referral by the DA's office.

Recommendation 1c

That the Santa Barbara County Education Office in partnership with the Santa Barbara County Office of the District Attorney, Santa Barbara County elementary, secondary and unified school districts, immediately develop a countywide program to reduce truancy, by reinstating the School Attendance Review Boards.

Response

1. The Lompoc Unified School District agrees.
2. LUSD has continuously maintained an active SARB since 2008.

Recommendation 1d

That the Santa Barbara County Office of the District Attorney, working with the Santa Barbara County Education Office of the District Attorney, working with the Santa Barbara County Education Office, and Santa Barbara County school districts, implement truancy enforcement countywide for all Santa Barbara County schools.

Response

1. The Lompoc Unified School District agrees.

Findings and Recommendations

Finding 2

There currently is no available federal or state funding for truancy programs.

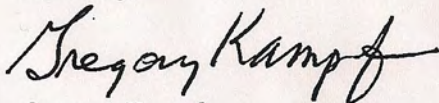
Recommendation 2b

That the Santa Barbara County school districts provide in its budget a proportional share based on the number of students, to the Santa Barbara County Office of the District Attorney to administer an enforceable truancy program for all Santa Barbara County schools.

Response

1. The Lompoc Unified School District partially disagrees.
2. LUSD is prepared to provide limited funding for the truancy program that includes a formula based on ADA and utilization.

Sincerely,



Gregory Kampf
Superintendent of Schools
Lompoc Unified School District