



# Blochman Union School District

## BENJAMIN FOXEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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November 22, 2021

To: Presiding Judge Gustavo Lavayen  
312 E. Cook St.  
Santa Maria, CA 93454

Pamela Olsen  
Foreperson  
Santa Barbara County Grand Jury  
[sbcgj@sbcourts.org](mailto:sbcgj@sbcourts.org)

From: Doug Brown  
Superintendent  
Blochman Union School District  
4949 Foxen Canyon Rd.  
Santa Maria, CA 93454

Re: 2021 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report on Remote Learning During COVID-19

On behalf of the Blochman Union School District, I have reviewed the report on “Remote Learning During COVID-19” developed by the 2021 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury and submit the following responses as requested in Foreperson Olsen’s communication of November 8, 2021.

### **Finding 1**

In-person learning is more effective than remote learning both academically and emotionally.

**BUSD response:** Agree. We do note that none of our families preferred the remote learning format and all returned to in person learning in 2021-2022.

### **Finding 2**

For student achievement, especially for low performing students, in-person learning in small classes or small groups is preferable to larger classrooms.

**BUSD response:** Agree.

### **Finding 3**

Remote learning exposed the importance of outreach efforts to provide coaching to parents on creating a positive home learning environment.

**BUSD response:** Agree.

### **Finding 4**

Santa Barbara County school districts did not use one common test throughout Santa Barbara County, making it impossible to compare countywide testing results.

**BUSD response:** Agree. For summative testing at the conclusion of the 2020-21 school year, we administered I-Ready tests in reading and mathematics in grades K-8.

### **Recommendation 4**

That the Santa Barbara County school districts and the Santa Barbara County Education Office work together to develop a common summative testing program to be adopted for all Santa Barbara County school districts for the 2022-23 school year.

**BUSD response:** Will be implemented. By 2022-23 we expect that all Santa Barbara County school districts will have resumed regular administration of California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) tests in English/language arts and mathematics in grades 3-8.

### **Finding 5**

Students with the greatest learning loss will require a concentrated effort to bring them up to Federal and State grade level standards.

**BUSD response:** Agree.

### **Recommendation 5**

That Santa Barbara County Schools outline their plans to attain Federal and State grade level standards for math and English language arts.

**BUSD response:** The Local Control Funding Form (LCAP) is our written plan outlining how to improve grade level standards for math and English language arts. Goal 1 of our LCAP addresses improvement in math and Goal 3 addresses improvements in English language arts. During the 2021/2022 school year, we implanted an after school program to address achievement gaps in math and English language arts.

### **Finding 6**

As the 2020-21 school year wore on, remote learning and teaching techniques and students' computer skills improved.

**BUSD response:** Agree.

**Finding 7**

Federal and State COVID relief funds cannot be counted on indefinitely.

**BUSD response:** Agree.

**Finding 8**

Community organizations provided critical assistance to the Santa Barbara County school districts by expanding their efforts to bridge the learning gap between the home environment and school.

**BUSD response:** Agree.

**Recommendation 8**

That each Santa Barbara County school district develop plans by the start of the 2022-23 school year to encourage community organizations to continue to provide critical academic and emotional support.

**BUSD response:** Due to our geographical location, it is challenging for us to develop relationships with community organizations. We are negotiating with Fighting Back Santa Maria Valley to obtain representation here on our campus.

**Finding 9**

Internet services were critical to remote learning and, in most cases, Santa Barbara County school districts filled the gap for homes that did not have them.

**BUSD response:** Agree.

**Recommendation 9**

That each Santa Barbara County school district maintain adequate internet services for all students if distance learning or an emergency should again require remote learning.

**BUSD response:** Has been implemented. Our Technology Department routinely supports families with internet services, either by providing information on low-cost internet access or by loaning them wifi hot spots.

Sincerely,



Doug Brown

Superintendent

Blochman Union School District