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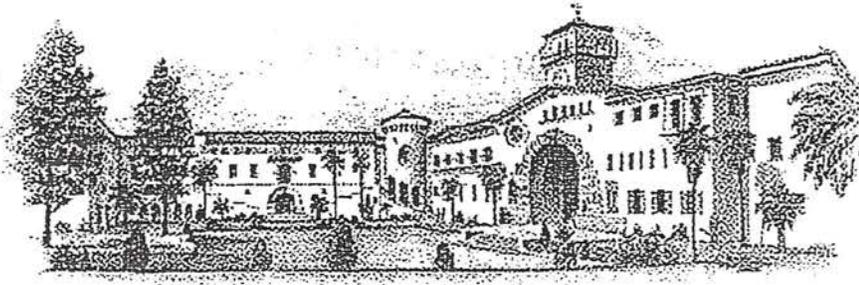
Second District

**JONI GRAY**

Fourth District

**STEVE LAVAGNINO**

Fifth District



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

County Administration Building

105 East Anapamu Street

Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Telephone: (805) 568-2190

[www.countyofsb.org](http://www.countyofsb.org)

**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA**

August 15, 2012

Honorable Judge Brian Hill  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Santa Barbara County  
Santa Barbara Superior Court  
1100 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, California 93101

**Reference:** Response to Santa Barbara Civil Grand Jury Titled, "*Reducing Truancy Throughout the County – A Prudent Investment*" (Published June 7, 2012)

Judge Hill:

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors (Board) is providing its response to the above-referenced Civil Grand Jury Report. Like the Civil Grand Jury, the Board recognizes the value of compulsory education and consistent attendance in school. We further recognize that early truancy intervention by parents and schools is critical in preventing a series of at-risk behaviors among adolescents in this community. The social and economic benefits of limiting truancy and increasing high school graduation rates are vitally important to this Board. We appreciate the Grand Jury's encouragement of County agencies to keep all young people on track to graduate from high school.

As directed by the Grand Jury, responses are provided in accordance with Section 933.05 of the California Penal Code.

**Finding 2:**

Between 2000 and 2008, Santa Barbara County had an effective truancy program under the direction of the Santa Barbara County Office of the District Attorney. During that time the truancy rate averaged 20 percent.

The Board agrees with the finding.

**Finding 3:**

After the termination of the program, truancy rates increased to a high of 30.76 percent in Santa Barbara County in 2010-11 and exceeded the truancy rate for the State of California for three years in a row.

The Board agrees with the finding.

**Recommendation 2:**

That the Office of District Attorney request and that the Board of Supervisors approve the appropriate amount in the Office of District Attorney's budget to support its participation in truancy reduction Programs:

This recommendation has been implemented.

Funding of \$170,000 for re-instating the truancy prevention program in the Office of the District Attorney was approved on June 15, 2012 as a part of the County's 2012-13 fiscal year budget.

**Recommendation 5:**

That all secondary school districts estimate the amount of money lost in the 2011-12 school year due to truancy and report this information to their school boards, the Santa Barbara County Education Office and the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors.

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.

The Board of Supervisors is not able to implement this recommendation because it does not have authority over school district actions. The Board of Supervisors looks forward to receiving the estimate of money lost during fiscal year 2011-12 from the secondary school districts upon their completion.

**Recommendation 6:**

That all secondary school districts track any reduction in truancy after the implementation of the truancy reduction program and calculate the increase in revenue resulting from such reduction and report this information to their school boards, the Santa Barbara County Education Office and the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors.

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.

The Board of Supervisors is not able to implement this recommendation because it does not have authority over school district actions. The Board of Supervisors looks forward to receiving the report on truancy reduction and any increases in revenue that result from the secondary school districts upon their completion.

Sincerely,



Doreen Farr, Chair  
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors  
Lloyd LeCain, Foreman, 2012-13 Santa Barbara Civil Grand Jury  
Joyce E. Dudley, District Attorney