

Cuyama Joint Unified School District

2300 Highway 166, New Cuyama, California 93254
(661) 766-2482 • FAX: (661) 766-2255

November 19, 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

From: Alfonso Gamino
Superintendent
Cuyama Joint Unified School District
2300 Highway 166
New Cuyama, CA 93254

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

As the Superintendent of the Cuyama joint Unified School District, I have reviewed the report on "Remote Learning During COVID-19" developed by the 2021 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury and, at this time, 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.

Cuyama Joint Unified School District response: Agree. All of our families prefer the in-person learning and all students in the district are coming to receive their daily in-person instruction 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.

Cuyama Joint Unified School District response: Agree.

Finding 3

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

Cuyama joint Unified School District response: Agree.

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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.

Cuyama Joint Unified School District response: Agree. Some districts administered the STAR 360 by Renaissance, others administered the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests in reading and mathematics. Cuyama Joint Unified School District administered the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) testing for the 2020-2021 school year.

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.

Cuyama Joint Unified District response: A common summative testing program 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 and 11. Cuyama Joint Unified will continue to administer the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) tests in English/language arts and mathematics in grades 3-8 and 11 in 2021-2022 and continue in 2022-2023 and beyond.

Finding 5

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

Cuyama Joint Unified School District 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.

Cuyama Joint Unified School District response: In the current Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) the district has implemented the goal to provide all students with a rigorous and high-quality instruction that maximizes student achievement over time. This goal is to have all students improve and meet/achieve grade level standards in English/language arts and mathematics. The goal is to have all students meet standard proficiency in English/Language arts and mathematics. The Cuyama Joint Unified School District LCAP and the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) contain detailed action plan to improve student achievement.

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Finding 6

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

Cuyama Joint Unified School District response: Agree.

Finding 7

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

Cuyama Joint Unified School District 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.

Cuyama Joint Unified School District 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.

Cuyama Joint Unified School District response: Will be implemented. Cuyama Joint Unified School District is working with Santa Barbara Behavioral Health to provide emotional support for students. Cuyama Joint Unified School District is also working closely with the Cuyama Valley Family Resource Center to provide early academic supports to our 0-5 students and to continue to monitor academic progress by the end of third grade. Cuyama Joint Unified School District also partners with SBCPH. On November 13, 2021, a vaccine clinic was held to provide Covid-19 and Flu vaccine to our community. This resource allows for our community to access these resources without having to drive to Santa Maria. Our students are able to access academic supports and emotional support as they are able to access these resources. In addition, we also partner with TAFT college and Hancock College to provide workshops and support to our students.

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.

Cuyama Joint Unified School District response: Agree.

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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.

Cuyama Joint Unified School District response: Has been implemented. Our district has now implemented the 1 to 1 technology where each student has one laptop assigned to them K-12th grade. The district will provide/loan each student a Wi-Fi hot spot if distance learning or an emergency should again require remote learning.

Sincerely,



Alfonso Gamino
Superintendent
Cuyama Joint Unified School District