

November 15, 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: Ray Vazquez  
Superintendent/Principal  
Los Olivos School District  
2540 Alamo Pintado Avenue  
Los Olivos, CA 93441

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

On behalf of the Los Olivos 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.

**LO response:** Agree. Los Olivos was back in school, on campus grades TK-5 on October 19, 2021 and grades 6-8 on November 9, 2021

**Finding 2**

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

**LO response:** Agree.

**Finding 3**

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

**LO 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.

**LO response:** Agree. For summative testing at the conclusion of the 2020-21 school year, we administered the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) tests in English/language arts and mathematics grades 3-8.

**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.

**LO 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.

**LO 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.

**LO response:** Has been implemented. Goal 1 of the Los Olivos School District Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) is to maintain and promote and celebrate a culture of academic excellence through teacher quality, evaluations, curriculum and instruction, and student achievement.

Our teachers also work in Professional Learning Communities on the first Thursday of the month per grade levels (K-2)(3-5), and (6-8). These PLC's are led by, 1. What do want our students to know (Learning objectives). 2. How will we know if they learned the objectives (summative and formative assessments), and 3. What will we do when they have mastered them. (acceleration) and, what will we do when they haven't mastered them (re-teach and re-test in a different manner)

**Finding 6**

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

**LO response:** Agree.

**Finding 7**

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

**LO 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.

**LO 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.

**LO response:** Will be implemented. We are one of several school districts participating in a county consortium that is working to build stronger links between schools and governmental and community supports. The goal of the consortium is to foster “warm handoffs” when referrals are made so as to ensure that youth and families are accessing the services they need. Finally, we already partner with local organizations such as Arts Outreach, the Santa Ynez Valley YMCA and People Helping People, each partnership provides important support for 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.

**LO 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.

**LO 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 that we purchased through Kajeet

Sincerely and respectfully submitted,

Ray Vazquez  
Superintendent/Principal  
Los Olivos School District