



GOLETA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dr. Diana Galindo-Roybal

December 1, 2021

To: Presiding Judge Gustavo Lavayen
312 East Cook Street
Santa Maria, CA 93454

Pamela Olsen
Foreperson
Santa Barbara County Grand Jury
sbcgj@sbcourts.org

From: Diana Galindo-Roybal, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Goleta Union School District
401 N. Fairview Avenue
Goleta, CA 93117

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

On behalf of the Goleta Union School District, I have received the report on "Remote Learning During COVID-19" developed by the 2021 Santa Barbara Grand Jury and submit the following responses as requested in Foreperson Olsen's communication of November 9, 2021.

Finding 1:

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

GUSD Response Finding 1: Agree

Finding 2:

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

GUSD Response Finding 2: Agree

Finding 3:

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

GUSD Response Finding 3: 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.

GUSD response:

GUSD Response Finding 4: Agree

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.

GUSD Response Recommendation 4: *Will not be implemented.* Hopefully, our local districts will be in-person and return to the use of State testing as a common assessment across school districts, eliminating the need to have other, additional common assessments. Beyond using the State assessments, determining a common local measure across all Santa Barbara County Schools would require further analysis. Currently, our school district utilizes the Renaissance system for benchmark and progress monitoring. Other school districts may have unique student, device, and budget needs that lend themselves to prefer another assessment system.

We are currently in a contract for this assessment system through the 2022-2023 school year; moving to an alternative common measure would cause financial loss to our district and others. Additionally, a new assessment system would require additional staff professional development, parent education, and influence factors in other minor but essential areas such as color-coding systems linked to Renaissance outcomes for checking out books in the library. Since we already have our professional development allocated to other topics for the 2022-2023 school year, moving to a new assessment system so soon would impact additional staff learning planned. Finally, our district would strongly prefer not to move to another assessment system since we finally have a solid data collection system that lets us analyze student outcomes over time. Moving to a new assessment system at this time would disrupt the quality of data analysis we can conduct on our student learning as a whole, as well as by student groups.

Finding 5:

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

GUSD Response Finding 5: Agree

Recommendation 5: Santa Barbara County Schools outline their plans to attain federal and State grade-level math and English language arts standards.

GUSD Response Recommendation 5: *Requires further analysis.* It is reasonable that districts and the County expect students to obtain grade-level objectives. However, it is also essential that districts can meet the needs of our specific students. Additionally, as districts have varied resources, plans should reflect those differences. Should a common plan be needed, it is expected that the County can synthesize information from the current plans that currently exist in each school district.

Finding 6:

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

GUSD Response Finding 6: Agree

Finding 7:

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

GUSD Response Finding 7: Agree. The multi-year plan for COVID relief funds is complete and includes significant reductions used to mitigate the effects of COVID and learning loss. Class sizes will return to contracted levels, and temporary teachers will be released.

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.

GUSD Response Finding 8: Agree

Recommendation 8: For each Santa Barbara County school district to develop plans by the start of the 2022-23 school year to encourage community organizations to continue providing critical academic and emotional support.

GUSD Response Recommendation 8: Will be implemented. During summer 2022, the GUSD school social worker, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services, and community liaisons collaborate with GUSD community partners to ensure the ongoing provision of academic and emotional support.

Finding 9:

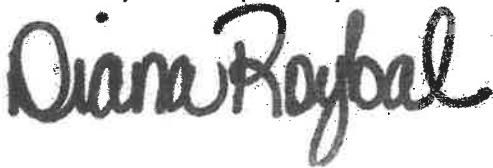
Internet services were critical to remote learning and, in most cases, Santa Barbara County school districts filled the gap for homes that did not have them

GUSD Response Finding 9: Agree. GUSD surveyed all families at the beginning of the pandemic about internet services. Families were provided information on the reduced rate internet plan from COX Communications, a local provider. They established a relationship with T-Mobile to obtain over 200 mobile hotspots that could be used with district devices to access the internet from homes that had no internet. GUSD continues to pay for T-Mobile hotspot services for all issued hotspots for families that need them.

Recommendation 9: Each Santa Barbara County school district maintains adequate internet services for all students if distance learning or an emergency should again require remote learning.

GUSD Response Recommendation 9: GUSD continues to provide mobile hot spots to families that need internet access and maintains an inventory of additional devices should any new families need help with access. We will also continue to use our technology division to communicate with local providers to identify affordable internet service for families and GUSD Community Liaisons and school site staff to help parents navigate access to the affordable plans and determine the need for additional hot spots.

Sincerely and respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diana Roybal". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Diana Galindo-Roybal
Superintendent
Goleta Union School District