



SCHOOL DISTRICT

November 9, 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: Anthony Ranii
Superintendent
Montecito Union School District
385 San Ysidro Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93108

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

On behalf of the Montecito Union School District (MUSD), 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.

MUSD response: Agree.

Finding 2

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

MUSD response: Agree.

Finding 3

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

MUSD 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.

MUSD response: 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.

MUSD 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 and 11.

Finding 5

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

MUSD 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.

MUSD response: Has been implemented. Goal 1 of the Montecito Union School District Local Accountability Plan (LCAP) is to have will have a relevant, rigorous, and integrated curriculum designed to engage the "whole child." Staff will utilize instructional best practices and multiple assessment measures to equip every student with the skills necessary to succeed in an everchanging world. Goal 2 of the Montecito Union School District Local Accountability Plan (LCAP) is that English learners will receive a relevant and rigorous curriculum, will make regular progress, and will achieve at levels similar to English only peers after a reasonable amount of time. Goal 3 of the Montecito Union School District Local Accountability Plan (LCAP) is to will sustain a positive and respectful school culture that provides our students with the skills and dispositions necessary to thrive during a time of constant change. Students' character will be developed through meaningful interactions with and applications of the Habits of Mind. We will sustain a school community in which each student is known and nurtured in an atmosphere of physical and emotional safety, as well as trust. The LCAP contains a detailed action plan to bring about improved student achievement.

Finding 6

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

MUSD response: Agree.

Finding 7

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

MUSD 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.

MUSD 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.

MUSD response: Has been implemented. We partner with a variety of community organizations, including the Montecito YMCA and the Montecito Union School Foundation. 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.

MUSD 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.

MUSD response: Has been implemented. We support families with internet services, either by providing information on low-cost internet access or by loaning them Wi-Fi hot spots.

Sincerely and respectfully submitted,



Anthony Ranii
Superintendent
Montecito Union School District