

# Solvang School District



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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: Steve Seaford, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Solvang Elementary School District  
565 Atterdag Road  
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Re: 2021 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report on Remote Learning During COVID-19

On behalf of the Solvang Elementary 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.

**SES response:** Agree. When comparing like cohorts from 2019 to 2021, some groups' SBAC results improved. When speaking to the nature of learning, e.g, progressive vs. traditional instruction, in-person is more conducive to the former, which for many students is more engaging and meaningful.

### Finding 2

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

**SES response:** Disagree partially. If in-person instruction in small classes doesn't take into consideration student-achievement data and is focused on memorization, the effects are similar.

### Finding 3

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

**SES 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.

**SES 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.

**SES response:** Has been implemented. State assessments are already in place but were optional for the 2020-2021 school year. 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.

**SES 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.

**SES response:** Has been implemented. Curriculum instruction align with the California Common Core Standards. Structures are in place to support student achievement, e.g. English Learner Program.

**Finding 6**

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

**SES response:** Agree.

**Finding 7**

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

**SES 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.

**SES response:** Disagree partially. Such organizations did not provide critical assistance, as there aren't many such organizations in place in Solvang.

**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.

**SES response:** We already partner with local organizations such as the YMCA and Boys and Girls Club. However, only the Boys and Girls Club might be able to provide academic assistance.

**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.

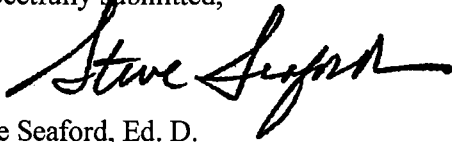
**SES response:** Agree.

**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.

**SES 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 Wi-Fi hot spots.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Seaford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Steve Seaford, Ed. D.  
Superintendent  
Solvang Elementary School District