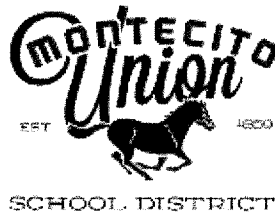


NICK BRUSKI, PRINCIPAL
RUSTY ITO, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL



ANTHONY RANIL, SUPERINTENDENT
VIRGINIA ALVAREZ, CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICIAL

July 10, 2026

The Honorable Patricia Kelly
Santa Barbara County Superior Court
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Stacy Mezzetta de Cossio, Foreperson
Santa Barbara County Grand Jury
sbcgj@sbcourts.org

FILED
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

JUL 10 2026

Angela Braun, Executive Officer
By M. Hanson
Deputy Clerk
M. HANSON

**Re: Montecito Union School District Response to the 2025-26 Grand Jury Report:
“Preparing for the Unthinkable: How are Santa Barbara County Schools Preparing to Prevent
or Minimize the Effects of a Potential Mass Shooting?”**

Dear Judge Kelly, Foreperson Mezzetta de Cossio, and Members of the Grand Jury:

The Board of Trustees and administration of Montecito Union School District (MUSD) appreciate the opportunity to respond to the 2025-2026 Grand Jury. The safety and security of our students, staff members, and community members are extremely important to us, and we have worked assiduously over the last several years to ensure excellent service in this regard.

Pursuant to California Penal Code §933 and §933.05 MUSD provides the following responses to the findings and recommendations:

Finding 1: The Santa Barbara County Education Office (SBCEO) provides County school districts training in identifying pathways to targeted violence, although attendance by employees of the various Santa Barbara County school districts in the SBCEO’s School Safety Symposium is limited.

- **MUSD Disagrees Partially.** MUSD staff members have attended every SBCEO School Safety Symposium and have brought back the lessons, tools, and materials to our one-school district in a way that is accessible to all employees.

Recommendation 1a: The Grand Jury recommends that the Santa Barbara County Education Office make its School Safety Symposium available online for ease of accessibility for school staffs county-wide.

- MUSD was not asked to respond to this recommendation.

Recommendation 1b: The Grand Jury recommends that all Santa Barbara County school districts require administrative leaders to attend the School Safety Symposium in person at least once every two years.

- MUSD has implemented this recommendation. MUSD already prioritizes regular, in-person attendance at the SBCEO School Safety Symposium.

Recommendation 1c: The Grand Jury recommends that all Santa Barbara County school districts encourage teachers and staff to attend the School Safety Symposium in- person, and if not in-person, access the online seminar annually.

- MUSD will not implement this recommendation. The presentations at these sessions are often highly sensitive in nature, not allowing the presenter to include the material digitally in an appropriate and responsible manner. Since a digital platform cannot exist, MUSD cannot mandate or encourage staff to access it annually. We will continue to send representatives to the trainings who will, in turn, come back to MUSD with updated skills and information to share.

Finding 2: Santa Barbara County school districts are compliant in creating Comprehensive School Safety Plans for their schools, but some staff require more information and training on safety protocols.

- MUSD Agrees. Our Comprehensive School Safety Plans are fully compliant and the ongoing, annual safety training of all staff will remain a priority.

Recommendation 2a: The Grand Jury recommends that the Santa Barbara County school districts train and drill all full-time campus personnel and students for campus safety at least once per semester.

- MUSD has implemented this recommendation. MUSD provides monthly drills for all students and staff on Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter protocols as well as a variety of emergency scenarios.

Recommendation 2b: The Grand Jury recommends that the Santa Barbara County school districts provide written and verbal instruction to all temporary personnel, including substitute teachers, prior to their entering a new classroom location.

- MUSD has implemented this recommendation. Site profiles, emergency procedures, and Standard Response Protocol (SRP) parameters are systematically made available to temporary and substitute personnel to ensure instructional continuity and safety baseline execution. District ID tag cards contain a QR code that provides ready access to our safety plan and a platform that would provide real-time updates in the case of an actual emergency. Radios throughout campus are provided, including in each instructional area, to allow for real-time communication in the case of an emergency. Additionally, our public address system can also provide verbal instruction if needed.

Recommendation 2c: The Grand Jury recommends that the Santa Barbara County school districts provide quick reference situational cards and/or information posters conveying simple instructions for emergency response procedures in every classroom and in public rooms.

- MUSD has implemented this recommendation. Informational posters which cover the Standard Response Protocols (SRPs) are posted in every classroom and public area .

Finding 3: While many Santa Barbara County school districts have a watch, listen, and report culture for enhancement of threat detection in their schools, not all schools have anonymous pathways for reporting threats or potential threats online or on campus.

- MUSD Disagrees Partially. While the District agrees that a proactive culture of reporting is vital, the finding fails to differentiate between high school environments and elementary environments. In a TK-6 elementary district, threat reporting is optimized through strong relational bonds with trusted adults, counselors, and robust Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) frameworks, rather than digital reporting mechanics designed for older student demographics.

Recommendation 3a: The Grand Jury recommends that all Santa Barbara County school districts train school personnel on how to gain trust, understand healthy boundaries, and engage in strategic partnerships with community service groups to support student needs.

- MUSD has implemented this recommendation. MUSD continuously updates its protocols and professional development around student safety, mandatory reporting, behavioral boundaries, and community-partnered mental health resources to maintain safe, supportive environments.

Recommendation 3b: The Grand Jury recommends that all Santa Barbara County school districts provide an anonymous reporting mechanism on school-provided devices, in addition to a drop box available on campus.

- MUSD will not implement this recommendation. Implementing anonymous physical drop boxes or digital reporting software on devices is developmentally inappropriate for our student base (ages 4 to 12). For elementary school students, anonymous digital tools frequently result in behavioral misuse or heightened anxiety. Safety in a TK-6 environment is best achieved by fostering high-trust relationships where students speak directly to counselors, teachers, and administrators.

Finding 4: School Resource Officers or Deputies are valuable in preventing or addressing potentially dangerous situations on campus, but many schools do not employ them.

- MUSD Response: Disagree Partially. While MUSD acknowledges that School Resource Officers (SROs) or School Resource Deputies (SRDs) can serve as assets in certain secondary educational environments, studies regarding their overall efficacy are mixed. Furthermore, MUSD is a safe, one-school district in a neighborhood with very little criminal activity, especially during the school day. The hiring of SROs or SRDs would not be a good use of public funds.

Recommendation 4: The Grand Jury recommends that all Santa Barbara County school districts have School Resource Officers (SRO) or Deputies (SRD).

- MUSD will not implement this recommendation. The cost of purchasing full-time sworn law enforcement personnel is prohibitively expensive and represents an unsustainable allocation of public education funds for a small elementary district. Given that our campus experiences zero school-hour criminal activity, forcing the implementation of an SRO/SRD would provide no measurable safety benefit while actively stripping vital funds away from classroom instruction and essential student programming. Recently, the Santa Barbara Sheriff's office opened a sub-station to improve response times to our community. We are grateful for the ongoing partnership with local law enforcement and will continue to strengthen those ties as we work collaboratively to support our students and our community.

Finding 5: Some schools in Santa Barbara County school districts lack adequate controls for visitor access.

- MUSD Disagrees partially. While we cannot speak to all schools in the area, MUSD has adequate visitor controls for visitor access.

Recommendation 5a: The Grand Jury recommends that Santa Barbara County school districts improve visitor access control during school hours by requiring valid government-issued photo identification verified by school personnel, utilizing a system that checks for restraining orders or other legal restrictions.

- MUSD will not implement this recommendation. While the District agrees with the intent of controlling visitor access, the procurement, licensing, and management of specialized automated legal screening databases are cost-prohibitive for our small district. Our existing human-verified sign-in controls, mandatory badge visibility, and reduced perimeters during instruction hours provide effective security without depleting general fund resources. Moreover, such implementation may serve to have a chilling effect, discouraging family members from visiting the school. Many of our families prize their privacy and may see this additional step as an overreach, causing them to access school services and attend school events less frequently.

Recommendation 5b: The Grand Jury recommends that Santa Barbara County school districts require all schools to issue visitors a badge and require its visibility on the visitor while on campus during school hours.

- MUSD has implemented this recommendation. All visitors to campus must wear a visible badge during school hours.

Finding 6: Not all schools in Santa Barbara County have adequate safety infrastructure, including fences, cameras, classrooms that lock from the inside, restricted access points, and instantaneous communication devices.

- MUSD Disagrees Partially. MUSD can't speak to other campuses, but our school campus has adequate safety infrastructure, including fences, cameras, classrooms that lock from the inside, restricted access points, and instantaneous communication devices.

Recommendation 6: The Grand Jury recommends that all Santa Barbara County school districts have each school conduct an annual security review with respect to video security cameras at key points across school grounds, two-way communications on campus, and innovations, such as artificial intelligence-aided technologies or drones, and make improvements based on those reviews.

- MUSD has implemented this recommendation. MUSD does an annual safety and security review, has ample video security cameras that utilize artificial intelligence, and has two-way communications across campus with radios, phones, as well as a public address system. We do not utilize drones and do not plan to as that would be impractical, an expensive use of the public's dollars, potentially unsafe, and as we have never seen this technology successfully employed in a TK-6 school in a way that improved safety and security.

The Montecito Union School District remains committed to the safety and security of our students, staff members, and community and is grateful for the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury's report.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ARanii', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Anthony Ranii, Superintendent

The Board of Trustees, Montecito Union School District