



Santa Barbara County Education Office

4400 Cathedral Oaks Rd, PO Box 6307, Santa Barbara, CA 93160-6307
Telephone: (805) 964-4711 • FAX: (805) 964-4712 • sbceo.org

Susan C. Salcido, Superintendent of Schools

July 20, 2026

The Honorable Patricia Kelly
Santa Barbara County Superior Court
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
pkelly@sbcourts.org

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

Re: 2025-26 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report on Public Participation Without Barriers: Brown Act Clarity at School Board Meetings

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

The Santa Barbara County Board of Education is committed to conducting its meetings in accordance with the Brown Act and in an open, transparent, and accessible manner. The Board recognizes the importance of providing meaningful opportunities for public participation and ensures that members of the public have access to board meetings, agendas, meeting materials, and opportunities to address the Board on matters within its jurisdiction.

The County Board of Education provides multiple opportunities for public participation beyond minimum legal requirements, including in-person and virtual attendance options, Spanish interpretation, and public access to board meeting recordings (in both English and Spanish) and board meeting materials through its website.

It is with these principles in mind that the Santa Barbara County Board of Education respectfully submits the following responses to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations.

Finding 1

Some education governing boards' agendas and public comment instructions imply that members of the public must complete a speaker card, sign-up sheet, online form, or provide identifying information in order to speak at a public meeting.

County Board of Education Response to Finding 1: Disagree partially

County Board of Education

Nadra Ehrman, *President* • Vedamarie Alvarez Flores, *Vice President*
Katya Armistead • Marybeth Carty • Judith Frost • Sarah Anne Read • Guy R. Walker

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SUPERIOR COURT of CALIFORNIA
COUNTY of SANTA BARBARA
07/20/2026

Angela Braun, Executive Officer
BY 
M. Hanson Deputy Clerk

The County Board of Education agrees that public comment procedures should clearly communicate that members of the public may address the Board without providing identifying information.

The County Board of Education's agenda language, public comment procedures, and related materials communicate that sign-up sheets are tools used to assist in organizing public comment. Individuals may address the Board without providing a name, address, or other identifying information.

Recommendation 1

The Grand Jury recommends that each education governing board, where listed in Table 1 below, review agenda language and public comment instructions to plainly state that speaker cards, sign-up sheets, and online forms are optional tools used solely to help organize public comment, and to affirm that any person may address the board during public comment periods without providing a name, address, or other personal identifying information. To be implemented by December 31, 2026.

County Board of Education Response to Recommendation 1: Has been implemented

The County Board of Education agrees that members of the public should be able to address the Board without being required to provide identifying information.

The County Board of Education's agenda language, public comment procedures, and related materials communicate that individuals may address the Board without providing a name, address, or other identifying information.

Finding 2

Website structure, language access, and accessibility issues at some education governing boards hinder the public's ability to find agendas, minutes, and participation instructions, particularly for Spanish-speaking community members and individuals who rely on accessible document formats.

County Board of Education Response to Finding 2: Disagree partially

The County Board of Education agrees that public access and participation are important and that educational governing boards should make reasonable efforts to ensure meetings and meeting materials are accessible to the communities they serve.

The County Board of Education currently provides multiple avenues for public access, including participation in person and through real-time Zoom webinars, Spanish interpretation of the board meetings, and posting Board meeting recordings in both English and Spanish on the County Board Meeting Agendas page and the SBCEO YouTube channel.

Recommendation 2a

The Grand Jury recommends that each education governing board, where listed in Table 1 below, place a prominent, direct link to current agendas on its primary homepage, as required by Government Code section 54954.2. To be implemented by December 31, 2026.

County Board of Education Response to Recommendation 2a: Has been implemented

The County Board of Education supports the intent of this recommendation and agrees that providing easy public access to Board meeting agendas promotes transparency and public engagement.

The Board Meeting Agendas page can be accessed in one click from any page on the SBCEO website (including the homepage) by clicking "Meeting Agendas."

Recommendation 2b

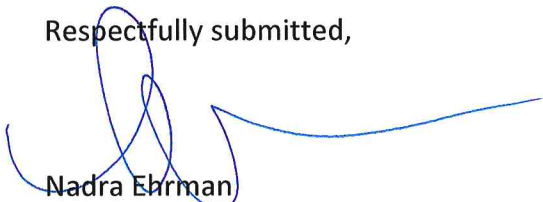
The Grand Jury recommends that governing boards serving districts with more than a 20% Spanish-speaking population provide Spanish language translations of their meetings, agendas and minutes on their websites. To be implemented by December 31, 2026.

County Board of Education Response to Recommendation 2b: Has been implemented partially

The County Board of Education supports the intent of this recommendation and agrees that language access is important to public participation. In fact, the County Board provides access beyond the Brown Act legal requirements to enhance accessibility.

The County Board of Education provides Spanish-language interpretation during Board meetings, posts both English and Spanish meeting recordings on the County Board Meeting Agendas page and on the SBCEO YouTube channel. The meeting agenda and minutes are not translated; however, all Juvenile Court and Community School parent/family-related materials and communications are translated into Spanish, with additional Mixteco interpretation services provided as well.

Respectfully submitted,



Nadra Ehrman
Santa Barbara County Board of Education President
On behalf of the Santa Barbara County Board of Education