Blochman Union School District
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Blochman Union School District Response to the 2025–2026 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report

"Bullying in Santa Barbara County Schools: Addressing Aggressive and Violent Behavior Among Students"

FILED
SUPERIOR COURT of CALIFORNIA
COUNTY of SANTA BARBARA
08/18/2026
Angela Braun Executive Officer
BY M. Hanson Deputy Clerk

August 6, 2026

The Honorable Patricia Kelly
Santa Barbara County Superior Court

Stacy Mezzetta de Cossio, Foreperson
Santa Barbara County Grand Jury

Re: Response to the 2025–2026 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report – Bullying in Santa Barbara County Schools: Addressing Aggressive and Violent Behavior Among Students

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

On behalf of the Blochman Union School District, thank you for the time, effort, and thoughtful analysis reflected in the 2025–2026 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report, Bullying in Santa Barbara County Schools: Addressing Aggressive and Violent Behavior Among Students. The District appreciates the Grand Jury's commitment to promoting safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments for all students. We share the belief that every student deserves to attend school in an environment where they feel physically safe, emotionally supported, and connected to caring adults.

Blochman Union School District is a single-school Transitional Kindergarten through Grade 8 (TK–8) district serving fewer than 250 students. While all school communities face the challenge of preventing and responding to bullying, our size allows us to provide a highly collaborative, relationship-centered approach to student support. The District believes that one of the most effective strategies for preventing bullying is ensuring that students are known well by the adults who serve them. Strong relationships foster trust, encourage students to report concerns, and allow staff to recognize changes in behavior before concerns escalate.

The Blochman Model

At Blochman Union School District, bullying prevention is not viewed as a single program or isolated initiative. Rather, it is embedded within the District's daily operations and culture of collaboration. Teachers, classified staff, administration, and student support personnel communicate frequently

regarding student needs and work together to promote a positive school climate where respect, kindness, responsibility, and accountability are consistently reinforced.

Because of the District's small enrollment, concerns involving student behavior are often identified and addressed promptly. Staff members regularly observe students across instructional and non-instructional settings, communicate concerns directly with site administration, and collaborate with the District's credentialed School Psychologist regarding appropriate interventions and supports. This collaborative structure allows concerns to move quickly from identification to intervention while maintaining strong communication with students and families.

The District's credentialed School Psychologist maintains an active presence on campus and serves as the primary provider of behavioral, social-emotional, and mental health support services. In addition to conducting student assessments when appropriate, the School Psychologist provides consultation to teachers, collaborates with administration and families, participates in Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) processes, conducts individual student check-ins, assists with restorative problem-solving, and supports students experiencing social-emotional or behavioral challenges. The School Psychologist is also routinely visible throughout the school day, including during recess and other unstructured settings, allowing opportunities to build positive relationships with students and identify concerns early.

These efforts are supported through the District's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), which provides a structured framework for identifying student needs, delivering increasingly intensive interventions, and monitoring student progress through collaboration among educators, administration, families, and student support personnel.

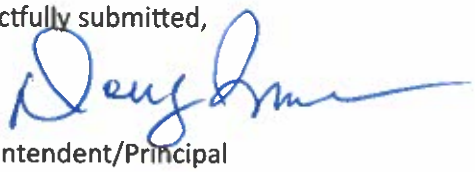
The District recognizes that effective bullying prevention extends beyond responding to incidents after they occur. Prevention begins with cultivating a positive school climate in which students feel connected to trusted adults, understand behavioral expectations, and are encouraged to report concerns. To support this work, Blochman utilizes a multi-tiered approach that includes positive behavior supports, restorative practices when appropriate, social-emotional learning, parent communication, behavioral consultation, and individualized interventions based upon student need.

Equally important is the District's partnership with families. Blochman recognizes that parents and guardians are essential partners in promoting student safety and well-being. The District remains committed to maintaining open communication with families, encouraging parent participation in school activities, and providing resources that strengthen home-school collaboration in support of students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional success.

The District also acknowledges that bullying remains a complex issue affecting schools throughout California and the nation. No single program or intervention can eliminate bullying entirely. Accordingly, Blochman Union School District views bullying prevention as an ongoing process of continuous improvement. District staff regularly evaluate existing practices, collaborate regarding student needs, and seek opportunities to strengthen prevention, intervention, and family engagement efforts in order to maintain a safe and supportive educational environment for every student.

As demonstrated in the responses that follow, Blochman Union School District has developed an integrated system of prevention, intervention, and student support that reflects the District's commitment to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment for every student. The District remains committed to evaluating its practices and making thoughtful improvements that are responsive to student needs and consistent with available resources.

Respectfully submitted,



Superintendent/Principal
Blochman Union School District

Blochman's Response to Bullying Prevention

Finding 1

Grand Jury Finding: Bullying in County schools will be reduced by implementing additional safety measures.

District Response: Agree

Blochman Union School District agrees that thoughtful, evidence-based safety measures can reduce opportunities for bullying and contribute to a safer school climate. The District believes the most effective safety measures combine active adult supervision, positive relationships, timely intervention, and clearly communicated behavioral expectations.

As a single-school TK–8 district serving fewer than 250 students, Blochman is able to provide consistent adult visibility throughout the school day. Teachers, classified staff, administration, and the School Psychologist routinely supervise classrooms, common areas, playgrounds, arrival, dismissal, and other unstructured settings. This visibility promotes early identification of concerns and allows staff to intervene before situations escalate.

The District continually reviews supervision practices, campus procedures, and student support systems to strengthen school safety and maintain a respectful learning environment.

Finding 2

Grand Jury Finding: Administrators do not consistently inform school counselors when students under their guidance engage in bullying.

District Response: Disagree Partially

Blochman Union School District agrees that communication among professionals supporting students is essential whenever bullying or significant behavioral concerns occur. However, the District's student support structure differs from larger districts referenced in the report.

Although the District does not employ a credentialed school counselor, administrators routinely collaborate with the credentialed School Psychologist regarding student behavioral, social-emotional, and mental health concerns as appropriate. Teachers and other staff similarly communicate concerns through established MTSS, SST, and administrative processes, allowing timely consultation and coordinated intervention.

Due to the District's size, communication is often direct and immediate, allowing student concerns to be addressed quickly while maintaining appropriate confidentiality and complying with applicable laws and District policies.

Finding 3

Grand Jury Finding: Parent participation in outreach programs for bullying has been poor.

District Response: Agree Partially

Blochman Union School District recognizes that meaningful family engagement is essential to successful bullying prevention and intervention. Like many districts, parent participation can vary depending on work schedules, transportation, childcare responsibilities, language needs, and other factors.

The District remains committed to strengthening family partnerships through flexible communication, regular outreach, conferences, school events, and opportunities for parent education. Blochman will continue exploring practical methods for increasing accessibility and participation while recognizing that attendance may fluctuate despite the District's efforts.

The District believes that maintaining strong relationships with families is a critical component of the Blochman Student Support Model and supports continued efforts to increase parent engagement whenever feasible.

Statement

Blochman Union School District appreciates the Grand Jury's commitment to promoting safe and supportive schools. The District believes its relationship-centered approach, integrated student support model, and collaborative culture position it well to address bullying proactively while continually evaluating opportunities for improvement. The following responses to the Grand Jury's

recommendations describe the specific practices and actions the District has implemented or will continue to strengthen in support of student safety.

Recommendation 1a

Grand Jury Recommendation: Increase staff presence in areas where students congregate before, during breaks, and after school.

District Response: Has Been Implemented

Blochman Union School District has implemented this recommendation through its relationship-centered Student Support Model. Staff members are assigned supervision responsibilities before school, during recess and lunch, and at dismissal. Administrators, teachers, classified staff, and the School Psychologist maintain a visible presence in common areas to promote positive interactions, identify concerns early, and intervene promptly when needed.

Given the District's single-campus TK–8 structure and enrollment of fewer than 250 students, supervision is highly coordinated and allows adults to build meaningful relationships with students while maintaining a safe campus environment.

Recommendation 1b

Grand Jury Recommendation: Have sufficient cameras to monitor where students congregate before, during, and after school.

District Response: Has Been Implemented

The District supports the appropriate use of security cameras as one component of a comprehensive school safety program. Existing cameras are strategically placed to assist with monitoring campus activity, investigating incidents, and supporting student safety.

Blochman believes that technology complements—but does not replace—active adult supervision. Consistent with the Blochman Student Support Model, the District prioritizes visible adult presence, relationship building, and timely intervention while periodically evaluating campus safety needs and equipment.

Recommendation 1c

Grand Jury Recommendation: Add more counselors to achieve a ratio no greater than 250:1.

District Response: Has Been Implemented

Although the District does not employ a credentialed school counselor, Blochman has implemented an integrated student support model that provides students with timely access to behavioral, social-emotional, and mental health support.

With fewer than 250 enrolled students, concerns are addressed through close collaboration among the

Principal, the credentialed School Psychologist, teachers, and other educational staff. The School Psychologist maintains a regular presence on campus, conducts student check-ins, consults with staff and families, participates in MTSS and SST processes, and assists with behavioral interventions and restorative problem-solving. This collaborative structure enables rapid identification of student needs and timely intervention.

Recommendation 2

Grand Jury Recommendation: Inform school counselors whenever students under their guidance engage in bullying.

District Response: Has Been Implemented

Consistent with the District's organizational structure, administrators routinely communicate with the credentialed School Psychologist regarding bullying and significant behavioral concerns whenever student support is warranted. Staff members collaborate through administrative meetings, MTSS, SST processes, parent conferences, and ongoing consultation.

Because of Blochman's size, communication among staff is often immediate, allowing concerns to move quickly from identification to coordinated intervention while maintaining appropriate confidentiality. This collaborative practice reflects the District's commitment to early intervention and comprehensive student support.

Recommendation 3a

Grand Jury Recommendation: Schedule parent outreach programs regarding bullying on evenings, weekends, online, and with archived recordings to accommodate working parents.

District Response: Will Be Implemented

Blochman Union School District agrees that providing flexible opportunities for family engagement increases accessibility and strengthens school-home partnerships. The District will continue to offer parent outreach through a variety of formats, including evening meetings when appropriate, virtual options, electronic communications, and other methods that accommodate family schedules and available resources.

Implementation Schedule: The District will continue expanding flexible parent outreach opportunities during the 2026–2027 school year and will review participation to identify additional improvements by December 31, 2026.

Recommendation 3b

Grand Jury Recommendation: Implement non-monetary incentives to encourage parents to attend outreach programs.

District Response: Will Be Implemented

The District recognizes that meaningful parent participation is influenced by convenience, relevance, and accessibility. Blochman will continue exploring practical, non-monetary strategies to encourage participation, including childcare when feasible, recognition of participation, flexible scheduling, virtual attendance opportunities, translated materials, and topics that respond to parent interests and student needs.

Implementation Schedule: These practices will continue to be incorporated into parent outreach efforts throughout the 2026–2027 school year.

Recommendation 3c

Grand Jury Recommendation: Strongly encourage parents of students who have engaged in repeated acts of bullying to attend outreach programs.

District Response: Has Been Implemented

Blochman Union School District believes that family engagement is essential when addressing repeated behavioral concerns. Administrators, teachers, and the School Psychologist routinely communicate with parents and guardians to develop collaborative strategies that support positive student behavior and improve school success.

When patterns of bullying or other significant behavioral concerns are identified, families are encouraged to participate in meetings, problem-solving discussions, and available educational opportunities. The District's emphasis remains on partnership, early intervention, and restoring positive relationships rather than punitive responses alone.

Closing Statement

Blochman Union School District appreciates the opportunity to respond to the 2025–2026 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report. The District shares the Grand Jury's commitment to ensuring that every student learns in a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

Consistent with the Blochman Student Support Model, the District will continue to emphasize positive relationships, visible adult supervision, timely communication, collaboration among staff and families, and continuous improvement in its efforts to prevent and respond to bullying. The District believes these practices, together with ongoing evaluation of District programs and procedures, provide a strong foundation for promoting student safety and well-being.

Respectfully submitted,

Superintendent/Principal
Blochman Union School District