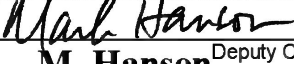


COLD SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

2243 Sycamore Canyon Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93108 | (805) 969-2678 | www.coldspringschool.net

August 10, 2026

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

FILED
SUPERIOR COURT of CALIFORNIA
COUNTY of SANTA BARBARA
08/13/2026
Angela Braun, Executive Officer
BY 
M. Hanson Deputy Clerk

Stacy Mezzetta de Cossio, Foreperson
2025-2026 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury
sbcgj@sbcourts.org

Re: 2025-2026 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report: "Public Participation Without Barriers: Brown Act Clarity at School Board Meetings"

Dear Honorable Judge Kelly and Foreperson Mezzetta de Cossio:

The Cold Spring School District Governing Board has formally received the 2025-2026 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury report entitled "Public Participation Without Barriers: Brown Act Clarity at School Board Meetings." The District appreciates the Grand Jury's attention to open government, transparency, and meaningful public participation in the work of local educational governing boards.

The Cold Spring School District is committed to conducting Governing Board meetings in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and other applicable laws. The District strives to provide timely notice of meetings, public access to agendas and supporting materials, meaningful opportunities for public comment, and clear records of Board actions. The District's Governing Board meeting page states that regular meetings are open to the public, identifies the annual meeting schedule, explains the posting timelines for regular and special meeting agendas, and provides access to the District's Brown Act and governance resources.

The District also recognizes that legal compliance is strengthened by clear, consistent, and accessible communication. Accordingly, the Board will review and refine its meeting notices, public-comment instructions, and minutes-posting procedures to ensure that members of the public can understand how to attend, participate in person, and follow Board actions without unnecessary barriers.

Pursuant to California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Cold Spring School District Governing Board provides the following responses to the findings and recommendations assigned to the District.

Summary of Responses

Item	District Response	Implementation Status
Finding 1	Disagree partially	Recommendation 1 will be implemented by December 31, 2026
Finding 3	Disagree	Recommendations 3a and 3b will not be implemented
Finding 4	Disagree	Recommendation 4 has been implemented

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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.

Cold Spring School District Governing Board Response: Disagree partially

The District agrees that public-comment instructions must clearly communicate that members of the public may address the Governing Board without being required to provide a name, address, or other identifying information. Speaker cards, sign-up sheets, and similar processes may be useful administrative tools for organizing speakers, but they must remain voluntary and may not operate as a condition of participation.

The District does not believe that it intentionally conditions public comment on the completion of a speaker card or the disclosure of identifying information. Members of the public are welcomed at open sessions and are provided an opportunity to address the Board on matters within the Board's jurisdiction and on agenda items as permitted by law. Nevertheless, the District acknowledges that written instructions should be reviewed from the perspective of an average member of the public and revised whenever wording could reasonably be interpreted as mandatory.

Recommendation 1

The Grand Jury recommends that each education governing board 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.

Cold Spring School District Governing Board Response: Will be implemented

By December 31, 2026, the District will complete a review of its agenda templates, Board meeting webpage, speaker-card language, and public-comment instructions. The District will revise those materials as necessary to state plainly that speaker cards, sign-up sheets, and online forms are optional organizational tools and that a person may address the Board without providing a name, address, or other identifying information.

The District will also incorporate this clarification into its administrative procedures for Board meetings so that staff supporting public comment apply the same consistent practice at regular and special meetings.

Finding 3

Some governing boards provide no way to participate remotely while public comment is officially open.

Cold Spring School District Governing Board Response: Disagree

The District disagrees that this finding reflects a deficiency in Cold Spring School District's Board meeting practices. Cold Spring Governing Board meetings are held in person, are open to the public, and provide members of the public with the opportunity to attend and offer public comment in accordance with the Brown Act.

The Brown Act does not require the District to provide videoconferencing, livestreaming, meeting recordings, or remote public-comment participation for regular Governing Board meetings. While such options may be useful for some agencies, the District has determined that its in-person meeting format appropriately serves the needs of its community and supports reliable, orderly, and legally compliant meeting administration.

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Recommendation 3a

The Grand Jury recommends that each education governing board provide videoconferencing for remote participation, which can also be used as a broadcast archive. To be implemented by December 31, 2026.

Cold Spring School District Governing Board Response: Will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable

The District will not implement videoconferencing, remote public participation, or meeting recording for its regular Governing Board meetings. These services are not required by the Brown Act, and the District has determined that the additional technology, staffing, monitoring, security, and administrative responsibilities are not warranted for Cold Spring's small, single-school district.

Cold Spring will continue to conduct its Governing Board meetings in person, provide timely public notice and access to agendas and supporting materials, and offer public-comment opportunities to all individuals who attend. The Board's approved written minutes will remain the official and publicly available record of Board actions.

Recommendation 3b

The Grand Jury recommends that, where remote participation is offered, agendas clearly explain how the public may observe and provide comment remotely at any time public comment is open. To be implemented by December 31, 2026.

Cold Spring School District Governing Board Response: Will not be implemented because it is not applicable

Because the District will not offer remote observation or remote public-comment participation, Recommendation 3b is not applicable to Cold Spring School District. The District's agendas will continue to clearly identify the in-person meeting date, time, location, public-comment procedures, and information regarding reasonable accommodations, as required by law.

Finding 4

Some governing boards do not consistently post meeting minutes in a clear and easy-to-find location, which makes it harder for the public to track board actions over time.

Cold Spring School District Governing Board Response: Disagree

The District disagrees that this finding reflects Cold Spring School District's practices. Cold Spring maintains a clear "Agendas and Minutes" webpage organized by year, where Governing Board agendas and approved minutes are available for public review. Approved minutes are posted promptly on the District website after they are approved by the Board.

The District is committed to maintaining this timely and transparent practice so that members of the public can readily review Board actions and access historical meeting records.

Recommendation 4

The Grand Jury recommends each governing board adopt a written practice for promptly posting approved minutes on its website. As a best practice, approved minutes should be posted within five business days after approval, with past minutes kept in an accessible online archive. To be implemented by December 31, 2026.

Cold Spring School District Governing Board Response: Has been implemented

Cold Spring School District has implemented this recommendation. Once Governing Board minutes are approved, the District promptly posts them on its website and maintains them in an accessible, year-by-year online archive.

The District will continue to follow this practice and verify that posted links and documents remain functional and readily available to the public.

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Conclusion

The Cold Spring School District Governing Board remains committed to the Brown Act's central purpose: ensuring that the public's business is conducted openly. The District will continue to provide timely notice, accessible agendas and materials, meaningful in-person public-comment opportunities, and prompt online access to approved minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Marino

President, Cold Spring School District Governing
Board

Dr. Amy Alzina

Superintendent/Principal

Approved by the Cold Spring School District Governing Board on: August 10, 2026