



July 24, 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 School Shootings

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

The Orcutt Union School District shares the Grand Jury's commitment to ensuring that schools remain safe, welcoming, and supportive places for students and staff. School safety is a community-wide responsibility that requires ongoing collaboration among schools, families, law enforcement, mental health professionals, local partners, and emergency responders.

Emergency preparedness has been a longstanding district priority, and Orcutt has invested time in emergency training for all employees. During the 2023-2024 school year, nationally recognized school safety expert Jeff Solomon of Consortium Training and Consulting did two full-day trainings for Orcutt staff on the Standard Response Protocol that has been adopted countywide. In 2024-2025 and 2025-2026, safety training has continued for district and school leaders. Orcutt has sent teams to attend county trainings, and in 2024-2025 the Management Team participated in monthly tabletop exercises around a variety of emergency scenarios, including a school shooter. Additionally, district and school administrators continue to consult with Solomon regularly when questions and topics arise.

With this background information provided, Orcutt respectfully submits the following responses to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations:

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and community thrives**

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SUPERIOR COURT of CALIFORNIA
COUNTY of SANTA BARBARA
08/14/2026
Angela Braun, Executive Officer
BY Mark Hanson Deputy Clerk
M. Hanson



Responses to Findings

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.

OUSD Response to Finding 1: Disagree

Orcutt values safety trainings provided by SBCEO and other entities, and it has worked to have strong participation in them by its district and site administrators. Orcutt follows a team approach to these trainings; with multiple administrators attending each one, they can compare notes and takeaways, discuss implications for Orcutt, talk through next steps for the district, and present to colleagues afterward. SBCEO trainings in, for example, multi-disciplinary threat assessment and crisis communications have directly translated into district practice.

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.

OUSD Response to Finding 2: Disagree Partially

Schools practice throughout the school year the Hold, Secure, Lockdown, and Evacuate responses from the Standard Response Protocol. Drills are scheduled at various times of the day, including after school, so as many school personnel as possible can learn and execute the safety protocols. This being said, we acknowledge that some staff always would appreciate more information and training on safety protocols. Accordingly, school safety is an ongoing topic at school staff meetings.

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.

OUSD Response to Finding 3: Disagree

Orcutt has a "See Something, Say Something" anonymous reporting form on the district website



and on each school website. Anonymous reports are sent directly to school administrators for follow-up, and counselors typically are included in this response.

Finding 4

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

OUSD Response to Finding 4: Disagree Partially

Orcutt sees that the on-campus presence of law enforcement officers would be an important asset in certain emergency situations. That said, our schools do not typically experience criminal activity during school hours. Employing one or more full-time School Resource Officers or Deputies would constitute an impractical use of public funds for our school system. Moreover, we already have a strong partnership with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department that we believe contributes to school safety.

Finding 5

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

OUSD Response to Finding 5: Disagree

Orcutt has implemented a specific protocol for visitors to enter a school campus. Visitors must check in with the school office and produce photo identification for a check by our Securly system for Megan's Law status or other violations recorded in the Department of Justice database. Once cleared by Securly, visitors are issued a Visitor sticker that is required to be worn while they are on campus.

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.

OUSD Response to Finding 6: Disagree

A school bond measure approved by Orcutt voters in 2016 funded security improvements on all school sites that included perimeter fencing and a single access point for the public during the school day. The access point takes visitors through the school office, where they are to check in, be screened, and receive a Visitor sticker (see narrative for Finding 5).



Responses to Recommendations

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.

OUSD Response to Recommendation 1b: Has Been Implemented

Orcutt has made it a priority for the superintendent, assistant superintendents, and school principals to be regular participants in SBCEO safety trainings. Our district and school leaders have indeed been participating at least once every two years.

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.

OUSD Response to Recommendation 1c: Will Not Be Implemented

Due to the ongoing shortage of substitute teachers, it simply is not realistic for us to release our teaching staff to attend all-day safety trainings either in person or virtually. We have been successful to date in sending district and school leaders to safety trainings and having them share with staff the key learnings. As needed, we also have incorporated safety topics into district professional development days. Nationally recognized school safety expert Jeff Solomon of Consortium Training and Consulting did two full-day trainings for OUSD staff during the 2023-2024 school year.

Recommendation 2a

The Grand Jury recommends that Santa Barbara County school districts train and drill all fulltime campus personnel and students for campus safety at least once per semester.

OUSD Response to Recommendation 2a: Has Been Implemented

Orcutt schools practice Standard Response Protocol responses for fire, earthquake, and intruders throughout the school year as required by state law. All personnel on campus participate. School administrators inform parents/guardians once the drill has been completed so they are aware of the drill.



Recommendation 2b

The Grand Jury recommends that 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.

OUSD Response to Recommendation 2b: Will Be Implemented

Information on the Standard Response Protocol has been included in periodic trainings provided for substitute teachers. Most office staff also discuss the Standard Response Protocol with substitute teachers and substitute classified personnel who are new to the district. This being said, Orcutt understands the importance of substitute personnel being “in the loop” on this important information and will work in 2026-2027 to make sure we have covered everyone.

Recommendation 2c

The Grand Jury recommends that 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.

OUSD Response to Recommendation 2c: Has Been Implemented

Orcutt has flip charts with Standard Response Protocol procedures accessible in all classrooms and public rooms. Offices and other public rooms have a Standard Response Protocol poster displayed.

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.

OUSD Response to Recommendation 3a: Has Been Implemented

In the past year administrators and teachers received training in trauma informed practice from Dr. Robert Macy and Frank Grijalva of the International Trauma Center. Many staff have participated in training sessions on restorative practices, crisis de-escalation, and nonviolent crisis intervention. The district has trained secondary staff on appropriate adult-student interactions (in association with Board Policy 4119.24). The district partners with community organizations such as Santa Barbara County Behavioral Wellness and the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department Behavioral Sciences Unit to meet student mental health and behavioral needs. In 2026-2027, district staff will be doing extensive professional development with Lizzie



Rodriguez, a Santa Barbara-based psychologist, on restorative practices that promote safer, healthier, more inclusive learning 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.

OUSD Response to Recommendation 3b: Has Been Implemented

As stated in the response to Finding 3, Orcutt has a "See Something, Say Something" anonymous reporting form on the district website and on each school website. Anonymous reports are sent directly to school administrators for follow-up, and counselors typically are included in follow-up.

Recommendation 4

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

OUSD Response to Recommendation 4: Will Not Be Implemented

As stated in the response to Finding 4, Orcutt is not planning to hire School Resource Officers or Deputies. Our schools do not typically experience criminal activity during school hours, and we already believe we are receiving considerable support from the Community Resource Deputy assigned to Orcutt, Deputy Shawn Banks. Employing one or more full-time School Resource Officers or Deputies would constitute an impractical use of public funds for our school system.

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.

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.



OUSD Response to Recommendations 5a and 5b: Has Been Implemented

As stated in the response to Finding 5, Orcutt has implemented a specific protocol for visitors to enter a school campus. Visitors must check in with the school office and produce photo identification for a check by our Securly system for Megan's Law status or other violations recorded in the Department of Justice database. Once cleared by Securly, visitors are issued a Visitor sticker that is required to be worn while they are on campus.

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.

OUSD Response to Recommendation 6: Has Been Implemented

Orcutt's schools continually reflect on camera coverage and how it can be enhanced; this process has led to requests for additional cameras to be installed by our Technology Department. School administrators, especially secondary administrators, also have been involved in adding improvements such as vape sensors. School safety is an evolving field, and we welcome additional ideas for leveling up.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Waffle
President, Board of Trustees
Orcutt Union School District

Holly Edds, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Orcutt Union School District