



GOLETA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of the Superintendent

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September 3, 2026

Superintendent

Dr. Mary Kahn

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
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FILED
SUPERIOR COURT of CALIFORNIA
COUNTY of SANTA BARBARA
09/03/2026
Angela Braun, Executive Officer
BY *Mark Hanson*
M. Hanson Deputy Clerk

Re: 2025-26 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury Report on School Shootings

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

The Goleta Union School District (GUSD) 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, community partners, and emergency responders.

Please find GUSD's responses to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations below:

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.

GUSD Response to Finding 1: Agree

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.

GUSD Response to Recommendation 1b: Has been implemented

GUSD's administrative leadership attended and participated in the annual School Safety Symposium convened by SBCEO in 2025 and plans to continue participating.

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.

GUSD Response to Recommendation 1c: Will not be implemented

GUSD respectfully declines the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury's recommendation to encourage teachers and staff to attend the countywide School Safety Symposium, as localized training at the building level at the start of the school year provides superior safety preparedness. GUSD principals review critical elements of their Comprehensive School Safety Plans (CSSPs) with their staff at the start of each school year. Conducting training at each school allows staff to learn the exact emergency layouts, specific evacuation routes, and localized roles that they need to know, translating abstract concepts into specific actions that drastically reduces panic during a real crisis. While the School Safety Symposium offers high-level overviews and develops consistency between county agencies, it lacks the actionable, campus-specific nuances required to execute site-level procedures effectively. Furthermore, frontloading this training collectively before the first day of instruction directly fulfills the legislative intent of California Education Code Sections 32280–32289.5. This statutory framework mandates a collaborative, site-specific planning process tailored to unique local risks, aiming to unify physical security and social-emotional wellness into a singular, cohesive culture of campus safety. Prioritizing targeted, start-of-the-year building training ensures immediate campus protection on day one without generating mid-year scheduling disruptions or pulling teachers away from vital instructional time with students.

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.

GUSD Response to Finding 2: Agree

Recommendation 2a

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

GUSD Response to Recommendation 2a: Has been implemented

GUSD schools hold safety drills aligned with the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) monthly, throughout the school year. Each school schedules its drills for the year before the school year begins and submits a report to the Pupil Services office at the conclusion of each drill.

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.

GUSD Response to Recommendation 2b: Has been implemented

GUSD provides training on safety protocols including the Standard Response Protocol to all employees using temporary permits (including Provisional Intern Permits, Short-Term Staff Permits, and Limited Assignment Permits). Additionally this training is provided to all long-term substitute teachers prior to placing them in the classroom with students.

Recommendation 2c

The Grand Jury recommends that all 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.

GUSD Response to Recommendation 2c: Will be implemented

GUSD has been implementing the SRP protocol for several years. We train staff on the SRP protocol at the start of each school year as part of our annual review of the Comprehensive School Safety Plans. We have provided quick-reference emergency response information for all classes previously but will confirm that they are still in place by the end of October.

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.

GUSD Response to Finding 3: Agree

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.

GUSD Response to Recommendation 3a: Has been implemented

GUSD takes pride in our investment in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS explicitly teaches that trust is established by co-creating expectations to create culturally responsive matrices that reflect shared values. Teachers are trained on a three-tiered model of support that helps educators recognize when a student's emotional or behavioral needs require support beyond the classroom managed or school-level interventions. Our school teams partner with community agencies, most regularly through our school liaisons, who connect families with resources and supports that extend beyond the school day. We have current partnerships with community agencies to provide mentorship and behavioral support to students.

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.

GUSD Response to Recommendation 3b: Will be implemented

GUSD is in the process of adding anonymous reporting boxes at all school campuses. Some are already in place and all schools will have them by the end of September.

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.

GUSD Response to Finding 4: Agree

Recommendation 4

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

GUSD Response to Recommendation 4: Will not be implemented

GUSD respectfully declines the Grand Jury's recommendation to employ School Resource Officers (SRO) or School Resource Deputies (SRD), as our elementary school district maintains a strong, collaborative partnership with local law enforcement that effectively meets our campus safety needs without the dedicated hiring of on-site officers. GUSD acknowledges that there are 20 unique school districts across Santa Barbara County, each with distinct student demographics, campus scales, and community needs that require localized approaches to safety. For our elementary school community, safety is optimally achieved through our existing relationship with local law enforcement, who remain highly responsive to our campuses. By maintaining this responsive partnership, the district successfully ensures a safe, secure, and peaceful learning environment for our young students while responsibly allocating educational resources to direct classroom instruction and student support services.

Finding 5

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

GUSD Response to Finding 5: Disagree partially with an explanation

GUSD recognizes that there are 20 school districts in the county and cannot speak to visitor access issues at all county schools. However, GUSD disagrees that its schools lack adequate controls for visitor access. This issue was an area of focus during the 2025-26 school year as we supported our campuses with new immigration

enforcement protocols that focused our attention on entry points as well as procedures for visitors.

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.

GUSD Response to Recommendation 5a: It will not be implemented with an explanation of why

GUSD agrees that visitor access is an important aspect of school safety. The District already has a process for documenting restraining orders and legal restrictions when we receive them. We require all visitors to check in and wear a badge and verify identification from unknown adults. GUSD does not agree that adding additional procedures in this area is necessary.

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.

GUSD Response to Recommendation 5b: Has been implemented

GUSD's current protocol requires visitors to sign in and wear a visitor badge while on campus during school hours.

Finding 6

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

GUSD Response to Finding 6: Disagree partially with an explanation

GUSD recognizes that there are 20 school districts in the county and cannot speak to safety infrastructure issues at all county schools. GUSD disagrees that its schools lack adequate safety infrastructure as described in finding 6. However, GUSD will continue to evaluate our safety infrastructure including fences, cameras, access points, etc. as part of your annual cycle for revising Comprehensive School Safety Plans at our nine schools.

Recommendation 6

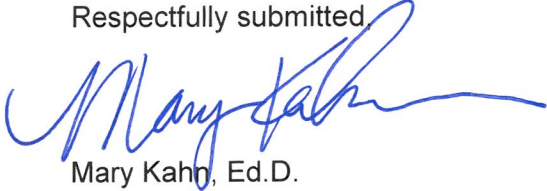
The Grand Jury recommends that all Santa Barbara County school districts have each school conduct an annual security review with respect to video security cameras at key points across school grounds, two-way communications on campus, and innovations, such as artificial intelligence-aided technologies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

GUSD Response to Recommendation 6: Will be implemented

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GUSD reviews security each year with principals as part of the development of the annual CSSPs. This review includes but is not limited to considerations video camera locations, and radio communication within the school site and with the district office. However GUSD has not considered the technology innovations mentioned in the Grand Jury report and commits to do so by December of 2026 as part of the CSSP development process.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mary Kahn", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mary Kahn, Ed.D.

Superintendent, Goleta Union School District