

September 08, 2023

Honorable Judge Michael D. Coughlan
Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court
180 E. Weber Avenue, Suite 1306J
Stockton, CA 95202



RE: Grand Jury Report: “School Safety: San Joaquin County: Developing a Culture of Safety, A Shared Responsibility”: Case No. 0322

Dear Judge Coughlan:

The Escalon Unified School District (“District”) has reviewed the Facts, Findings and Recommendations in the Grand Jury Report “*School Safety: San Joaquin County: Developing a Culture of Safety*” filed on June 13, 2023. Pursuant to California Penal Code section 933(c), the following constitutes the response of the District and its Governing Board (“Board”) to the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the District.

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS 2.0: COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

F2.1. A review of CSSPs demonstrated many Districts have failed to create a CSSP that addresses safety issues unique to the individual school sites, and rather use a template and/or boilerplate language, leaving the school site unprepared in an emergency.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: We find some of the information in this finding is accurate in that the District does utilize a template to assure some consistency of mandated safety plan requirements. However, we disagree with the statement that each school site plan is not unique. Each school site has a defined process that engages educational partners in the development of each school site CSSP so that each school’s individual safety needs are met taking into consideration the logistics and population of each school.

F2.2. Many Districts have not involved teachers, support staff, students, and parents/guardians when updating each school site’s CSSP, missing an opportunity to create a culture of school safety.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: The process of CSSP approval in the District includes the following; the plan is reviewed by each school campus administration, law enforcement, classified and certificated staff, students (at most school sites) and various parent groups. The plans are reviewed with each school staff at the beginning of the school year. Each respective plan is reviewed and approved by each school site council which serves as each school’s safety

committee. Conversations are had with several committees (as appropriate by school site) Safety Committees, School Site Councils, Leadership Teams, English Language Advisory Committees and student bodies through evidence of safety drills and reflections post drills. El Portal Middle School has both a formal safety committee and a school site council. District office staff reviews each school campus plan in preparation for the plans to be reviewed by Escalon Unified Board of Trustees at a regular board meeting. Prior to the board meeting in which plans are placed on the agenda the plans are made available for trustees to review and comment upon before they are placed upon the agenda for the approval of the Board of Trustees at a public board meeting.

F2.3. Many Districts have not collaborated with local law enforcement and other first responders during the annual process to update the CSSP, which could result in a prolonged and inefficient emergency response.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: The District works together with our first responders in the city of Escalon and the Sheriff's Department for our schools that are outside of city boundaries. The approval of the Escalon Police Department or the San Joaquin Sheriff's Department as appropriate is required as part of our process for the approval of each CSSP. The police and fire departments are available to us to review and make recommendations to our plans at any time. EUSD school sites involve local law enforcement and first responders (Fire) when developing a plan. All applicable first responders sign off on the plans each year to approve the plan. All local agencies are contacted to inform them of each schools' safety drill schedule.

F2.4. Many District CSSPs show a lack of meaningful collaboration between Districts and local law enforcement agencies, causing confusion and chaos during an emergency.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding in part as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: EUSD school sites involve local law enforcement and first responders (Fire) when developing CSSP's. All applicable first responders sign off on CSSP's each year to approve the plan. The District has maintained a close collaborative partnership with the Escalon Police Department, the San Joaquin Sheriff's Department and local Fire Departments for many years. The District plans to reinforce partnership efforts by facilitating walkthroughs with all local agencies in order to update CSSP's yearly.

F2.5. Many Districts do not offer an opportunity for public input during the drafting or approval stages of the annual CSSP, which renders the Districts out of compliance with State law.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Each school site is required to complete a comprehensive annual safety plan with the opportunity for public input. Education partners are notified via SSC agendas, meeting notices advertised from site to site, annual LCAP town hall meeting from site to site as and posted meeting notes and agendas can be found on school websites. The process includes the following: The plan is reviewed by each school campus administration, law enforcement, staff, and various parent groups. It is reviewed and approved by each school site council and or school safety committee. District office staff reviews each school campus plan in preparation for the plans to be reviewed by the Board at a regular board meeting. Prior to the board meeting in which plans are placed on the agenda, the plans are made available for trustees to review and comment.

F2.6. Most Districts do not include an assessment of the status of crime at the school and school related functions in their CSSPs, which renders the Districts out of compliance with State law and causes potential harm and liability.

Response: The District agrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(1).)

Explanation: Our District's CSSPs currently do not include an assessment of the status of crime at each school and school related functions. The District will work to resolve this issue and will ensure that this information is provided in the upcoming 2023-2024 CSSPs.

F2.7. Many Districts do not adequately address the unique needs of students with disabilities during emergencies. The lack of planning for the most vulnerable students can cause harm during a time of confusion and crisis.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding in part as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: At the beginning of the school year each school principal meets with district staff including other school professionals such as school psychologists, nurses, and speech therapists to review drills and school emergencies at their school sites. Special education teachers are housed within each school including teachers of students with mild/moderate disabilities (District operated) and moderate/severe disabilities (SJCOE operated). Students with disabilities have accommodations specified within their Individual Education Plans' or Section 504 plans and those accommodations are followed by special education and classroom teachers. The District will take the planning process further and meet with special education staff to identify even more targeted supports to best meet the safety needs of our students with disabilities.

F2.8. A few Districts do not make any part of the CSSPs available to the public, withholding important information about steps taken by the District to reduce the probability and impact of safety risks. Other Districts post the CSSPs in their entirety, failing to keep confidential information about tactical responses, potentially revealing sensitive information to the public.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: District Board Policy and Regulations specify that certain parts of CSSP's shall not be publicly disclosed. Nonetheless, the greater part of CSSP's are publicly available at parent's requests. Parents may contact their school principals for specific questions regarding safety measures unique to each campus and to view the CSSP document (minus any confidential information). Each school site CSSP (minus confidential information) is also available for viewing any time at the District Office and at each school site.

F2.9. Many Districts have CSSPs that fail to identify incident command roles and the individuals who are to perform those roles in case of an emergency, exposing students and staff to the potential for confusion and increased risks during an emergency.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Each school's CSSPs have an identified incident command and crisis notification structure in place including the roles and the individuals who are to perform specific assigned duties in the case of an emergency. The District will work with school sites however to better define roles and establish consistency across sites.

F2.10. Many Districts have CSSPs that fail to describe the system to reunite parents/guardians with their children in the event of a campus wide evacuation, creating confusion and additional anxiety in the event of a safety emergency.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding in part as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Each of our schools in the District have a reunification plan included in each campus CSSP. Evacuation plans and rally points are identified. The District will however work on better defining reunification systems and will ensure better communication regarding these plans at each school site.

F2.11. Many school site CSSPs do not account for specific dangers unique to the school site (e.g., train tracks, flooding, freeways).

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: There is a well-defined process that engages our educational partners in the development of each school site CSSP so that each school's individual unique safety needs are met. Each school's CSSP includes specific danger protocols.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS 2.0: COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

R2.1. By March 1, 2024, the annual updates for each school site's CSSP address safety issues unique to the site.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: The District will continue to utilize its educational partner engagement process in the development of each school site CSSP, so that each school's unique individual safety needs are met. As the District and school site administrators review the CSSPs yearly, we will continue to refine the details of each plan specifically to meet the unique needs of the staff and students at each campus.

R2.2 By December 15, 2023, while updating the school's CSSP, each school site collaborate and receive input from representatives of teachers, support staff, students, and parents/guardians.

Response: This recommendation was always implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: We plan to continue the current process of CSSP development and approval in Escalon Unified. Our CSSP's will be reviewed by each school campus administration, law enforcement, classified and certificated staff, students (as appropriate) and various parent groups (e.g., School Site Council, School Safety Committee, English Learner Advisory Committee). The plans are reviewed with each school staff at the beginning of the school year. It is reviewed and approved by each school site council which serves as each school's safety committee.

R2.3. By December 15, 2023, while updating the school's CSSP, each school site collaborates and receives input from the appropriate emergency response agencies.

Response: This recommendation was implemented at all times prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: The District's standard procedure of involving the local city emergency response agencies has been in place. The District will continue to utilize this best practice.

R2.5. By February 1, 2024, each school site council or safety planning committee hold an advertised public meeting at the school site to allow members of the community an opportunity to express an opinion about the school's proposed CSSP as required by California Education Code Sections 32288(b)(1) and (2).

Response: This recommendation was implemented at all times prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: This practice of the School Site Council/Safety Committee providing input and the approval of the CSSP has been and will continue to be in place in the District. Each school will do a better job however, at ensuring that School Site Council and Safety Committee agendas clearly denote public comment sections regarding each school's CSSP.

R2.6 By March 1, 2024 each school site's CSSP includes the State mandated assessment of the status of crime at the school and school-related functions.

Response: This recommendation will be implemented by March 1, 2024. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: Our District's CSSPs currently do not include an assessment of the status of crime at each school and school related functions. The District will work to resolve this issue and will ensure that this information is provided in the upcoming CSSPs by March 1, 2024.

R2.7. By March 1, 2024, each school site consult with the appropriate professionals to address the unique needs of students with disabilities when updating the CSSP.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: At the beginning of the school year each school principal meets with district staff including other school professionals such as school psychologists, nurses, and speech therapists to review drills and school emergencies at their school sites. Special education teachers are housed within each school including teachers of students with mild/moderate disabilities (District operated) and moderate/severe disabilities (SJCOE operated). Students with disabilities have accommodations specified within their Individual Education Plans' or Section 504 plans and those accommodations are followed by special education and classroom teachers. The District will take the planning process further and meet with special education staff to identify even more targeted supports to best meet the needs of our students with disabilities.

R2.8. By March 1, 2024, each school site's CSSP be available to the public with the exception of confidential information about tactical responses.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: Currently the Escalon Unified School Site and District CSSP are available to the public with the exception of the confidential information upon request.

R2.9 By March 1, 2024, each school site's CSSP identify the incident command roles and the individuals who are to perform those roles and their alternate in cases of an emergency.

Response: This recommendation was implemented at all times prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: Our schools and District CSSPs already have an identified incident command structure in place including the roles and the individuals who are to perform specific assigned duties in the case of an emergency.

R2.10 By March 1, 2024, each school site's CSSP describe the system to reunify parents/guardians with their student in the event of a campus-wide evacuation, including how parents/guardians are informed of reunification details.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: Each of our schools in the District has a reunification plan included in each campus CSSP. Evacuation plans and rally points are identified. The District will however work on better defining reunification systems and will ensure better communication regarding these plans at each school site.

R2.11 By March 1, 2024, each school site's CSSPs account for dangers unique to the specific school site (e.g., train tracks, flooding, freeways).

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: There is a well-defined process that engages our educational partners in the development of each school site CSSP so that each school's individual unique safety needs are met. Each school's CSSP includes specific danger protocols. The District will continue to utilize its process that engages partners in the development of each school site CSSP so that each school's unique individual safety needs are met.

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS 3.0: TRAINING

F3.2 Some of the Districts failed to send representatives to the 2022 School Safety Summit, thereby missing an opportunity to work together to make schools safer.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: The District sent representatives from all school grade spades including elementary, middle school, and high school. One School site, El Portal Middle School even brought members of their School Safety Committee to the 2022 San Joaquin County School Safety Summit. The District looks forward to sending a team to attend the upcoming San Joaquin County School Safety Summit again this coming school year.

F3.3 The Grand Jury learned through interviews, surveys, and site tours that many Districts fail to include safety topics during regular meetings with teachers and support staff throughout the school year, minimizing the importance of safety.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: At many scheduled monthly staff meetings safety topics including drill procedures are regularly placed on staff meeting agendas and continue to be analyzed and reviewed.

F3.4 The Grand Jury learned through interviews, surveys, and site tours that many school sites fail to assure substitute staff receive the information they will need in the case of a school safety emergency, leaving the substitute staff ill-prepared for an emergency

Response: The District disagrees with this finding in part as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: The District's school sites provide substitutes with the pertinent information regarding the emergency procedures including where the safety flipcharts are located with class lists and emergency evacuation routes. Some school sites attach this information via our substitute electronic system, while other sites have folders that can be easily accessed through the front office by each substitute teacher. The District will however do a better job of ensuring that all substitute employees have the needed information including classified substitutes (i.e., substitute paraprofessionals).

F3.5 Many Districts fail to include the utilization of communication and incident command protocols (ICS-100) during safety drills throughout the school year, causing miscommunication in an emergency.

Response: Response: The District agrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(1).)

Explanation: The District will appropriately train pertinent staff in the utilization of communication and incident command protocols (ICS-100) by October 1, 2023.

F3.6 Many district cabinet level positions (e.g. Superintendent, Chief Business Officer) are not trained in ICS protocols (ICS-402), causing a lack of unified response to Districtwide emergencies

Response: The District agrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(1).)

Explanation: All District cabinet-level members will receive ICS 402 training before the end of the 2023-2024 School year.

F3.7 Many school sites do not vary the time of day when routine safety drills are conducted or when students are not in classrooms, making drills predictable and leaving students unprepared for emergencies that may occur at any time.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Principals will continue to schedule varied types of safety drills throughout the year at various times. Drills are currently conducted at different days, times and

locations as well as when students are in classrooms and other locations on campus. Details of safety drills including variety of times conducted are maintained by each site and reported to district office personnel.

F3.8 Many school sites fail to include support staff (classified personnel) in probable real-life roles during safety drills, leaving them unprepared to assist students in emergencies.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding in part as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Classified staff are required to participate in safety drills and trainings to ensure preparedness for potential real life safety issues. Although some sites include support staff in probable real-life roles during safety drills, we need to further analyze itinerant support staff training including Maintenance Operations and Transportation staff.

F.3.9 Most school sites fail to conduct a post-incident report after drills analyzing what went well, what went wrong, and what needs to be changed in the future to improve plans and drills, undermining the effectiveness of drills.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding in part as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: After a drill is executed most school sites conduct informal post-incident reflections. The District plans to standardize post-incident report form that is consistent throughout the District to debrief and analyze the drill's effectiveness.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS 3.0: TRAINING

R3.2 By December 1, 2023, each school District send one or more representatives to the annual School Safety Summit hosted by the San Joaquin County Office of Education.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: The District plans on sending a team to attend the upcoming San Joaquin County School Safety Summit in this coming school year similar to this last school year.

R3.3 By September 1, 2023, safety topics be an agenda item at all school site staff meetings with teachers and support staff throughout the school year.

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(4).)

Explanation: Although it may be ideal to discuss safety topics at all school site staff meetings, this recommendation cannot be fully implemented. Staff comes together at school sites generally once a month and there is a vast array of topics to cover and discuss, including safety. School sites will commit to discuss safety topics throughout the school

year at staff meetings as appropriate and feasible, including beginning of the year procedure reviews, pre and post safety drills, and addressing specific concerns as they arise.

R3.4 By September 1, 2023, Districts develop, adopt, and implement written procedures for school sites to provide substitute staff with the information they will need in case of a school emergency.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: The District's school sites provide substitutes with the pertinent information regarding the emergency procedures including where the safety flipcharts are located with class lists and emergency evacuation routes. Some school sites attach this information via our substitute electronic system, while other sites have folders that can be easily accessed through the front office by each substitute teacher. In addition to our current practice, all substitute teachers will be provided with a copy of site-specific safety procedures, or the location of safety plans in the classroom, upon arriving on any campus across the district. Site specific safety procedures will be uploaded onto AESOP in PDF format and will be accessible to substitutes upon acceptance of a job.

R3.5 By October 1, 2023, personnel identified in the school CSSP for incident command roles be trained and certified in ICS-100 protocols.

Response: This recommendation will be implemented by October 1, 2023. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: All of our leadership (personnel) members have or will receive training on or before October 1, 2023.

R3.6 By October 1, 2023, ICS-402 training be completed for all District-level executive leadership.

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(3).)

Explanation: We have been unsuccessful in locating and scheduling training to be completed by October 1, 2023. The District's trainings are traditionally coordinated and scheduled through our liability insurer, but we have been informed by our insurer that Level 400 ICS training are not being offered anywhere right now, so the District will work on locating and securing ICS-402 training by December 13, 2023.

R3.7 By October 1, 2023, scheduled safety drills be conducted on different days throughout the school year and at various times throughout the school day, including when students are not normally in their classrooms.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: School sites will continue to schedule varied types of routine safety drills throughout the year. These drills will be conducted on different days of the week, times, and locations as well as when students are in classrooms and other locations on campus.

R3.8 By October 1, 2023, scheduled safety drills include support staff (classified) in probable emergency roles during the year and document their participation.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: Classified staff are required to participate in safety drills and trainings to ensure preparedness for potential real life safety issues. Although some sites include support staff in probable real-life roles during safety drills, the District will further analyze how to include itinerant support staff and the Maintenance Operations and Transportation staff in future trainings.

R3.9 By October 1, 2023, administrators create a post-incident report after all safety drills.

Response: This recommendation will be fully implemented by October 1, 2023. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(2).)

Explanation: After a drill is executed most school sites conduct informal post-incident reflections. The District plans to standardize post-incident report form that is consistent throughout the District to debrief and analyze the drill's effectiveness.

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS 4.0: SCHOOL SITE VISITS

F4.1 Not all school sites have check-in procedures in place that were followed consistently, posing serious security threats.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Each school in the District has a designated access point for entry to the school where visitors are required to identify themselves, sign-in and receive a visitor badge. Site administration and staff are made aware that we have a visitor on campus as appropriate.

F4.2 Perimeter fencing or an “open” campus each pose security challenges and require careful consideration to mitigate security shortcomings.

Response: The District agrees with this finding. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(1).)

Explanation: The District MOT department and school site Principals inspect all perimeter fencing at all school sites in the fall. The District has been making concerted efforts to make improvements and upgrades as feasible. Gathering data from families and community and partnering with our educational partners has strengthened our perimeter campus security. Dent Elementary School has a major construction project underway, but the campus is fully gated and secured. Escalon High School recently received a front office remodel so that a

central access point could be identified while all other gates and entry points remain locked throughout the day. The District is also currently seeking quotes to improve fencing and minimize broad campus access at El Portal Middle School.

F4.3 Evacuation maps that are posted inconsistently or do not adequately illustrate evacuation routes cause confusion and prolonged evacuation times, making staff and students vulnerable to harm in both classrooms and common areas.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding in part as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Evacuation maps are posted throughout campuses including in classrooms and main areas with marked evacuation routes. However, reunification points while listed and included in plans can be better communicated and explained to students, visitors and substitutes.

F4.4 Inconsistent door-locking policies and failure to follow policies create opportunities for perpetrators to enter classrooms and common areas.

Response: The District agrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(1).)

Explanation: The District follows a policy of locking classroom doors when school is in session.

F4.5 Most school sites utilized flip charts that identify steps to be taken in case of emergencies, however, none of the sites posted them in all rooms used by students, staff, parents/guardians, and the general public.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding in part as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Most classroom, school district department and multi-purpose rooms have a copy of the Escalon Unified Emergency Response Procedures, Guidelines in a flipchart format. This information is posted on the wall and utilized during drills with updated information pertaining to each class.

F4.6 Insufficient window coverings give perpetrators a clear line of sight, creating risk for students and staff.

Response: The District disagrees with this finding in part as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: The District agrees that insufficient window coverings give perpetrators a clear line of sight, creating risk for students and staff. Most windows throughout the District had window coverings, and or are tinted as appropriate., However the Maintenance Operations and Transportation Department, is assessing the needs of all schools to ensure that windows without coverings are effectively provided with a solution.

- F4.7 Most school sites, regardless of age, were well maintained and showed school pride. One school site demonstrated multiple maintenance shortcomings, which can negatively impact safety.**

Response: The District agrees with this finding as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(1).)

Explanation: The District takes great pride in their well-maintained campuses throughout the district. Our school and district leaders meet and discuss facility needs proactively and upgrades are made throughout campus as fiscally permitted.

- F4.8 Good relationships among administrators, certificated and classified staff, parents, and students are vital to promptly identify and address areas of concern, particularly regarding student behavior. Relationships varied greatly from campus to campus.**

Response: The District agrees with this finding. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(1).)

Explanation: The District implements Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) aimed at meeting the needs of the whole child. This includes services provided by school counselors, psychologists, and mental health providers as well as Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS). Committees in the District help support building school and community relationships and high student participation and community engagement in school based extracurricular activities supports a sense of school pride and positive relationships.

- F4.9 The culture of safety is best developed by public transparency and involvement by all parties. Few of the school sites visited by the Grand Jury demonstrated meaningful public engagement in safety planning.**

Response: The District disagrees with this finding in part as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: The District aims to promote a culture of safety that is transparent and encourages involvement. Each school site is required to complete a Comprehensive School Safety Plan with the opportunity for public input. The District will continue their efforts to seek and obtain involvement and will improve practices to promote opportunities for public comment, especially as School Site Councils and Safety Committees meet at each respective school site.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS 4.0: SCHOOL SITE VISITS

- R4.1 By October 1, 2023, each school site implements an access control program that consistently includes verifying visitors' identity and collection of any issued badge before the visitor leaves the school site.**

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: Each school in the District has a designated access point of entry to the school where visitors are required to identify themselves, sign-in and receive a visitor badge. Upon leaving the school, visitors are required to sign out and return their visitor badge.

R4.2 By March 1, 2024, Districts develop, adopt, and implement a plan for effective perimeter control of access at all school sites.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: The District MOT department and school site Principals inspect all perimeter fencing at all school sites in the fall. The District has been making concerted efforts to make improvements and upgrades as feasible. Gathering data from families and community and partnering with our educational partners has strengthened our perimeter campus security. Dent Elementary School has a major construction project underway, but the campus is fully gated and secured. Escalon High School recently received a front office remodel so that a central access point could be identified while all other gates and entry points remain locked throughout the day. The District is also currently seeking quotes to improve fencing and minimize broad campus access at El Portal Middle School.

R4.3 By September 1, 2023, all school sites post evacuation maps clearly showing routes from the “You Are Here” perspective be prominently posted at each entry or exit door location in both classrooms and common areas.

Response: This recommendation will be fully implemented. (Pen. Code § 933.05(b)(2).)

Explanation: Classrooms and school district departments have a copy of the Escalon Unified Emergency Response Procedures, Guidelines and Emergency Map. This information is posted on classroom and common areas walls next to the door and utilized during drills with updated information pertaining to each class. The District will ensure that the evacuation route is clearly marked in each designated classroom/area with the “You Are Here” denoted on each map.

R4.4 By March 1, 2024, Districts develop, adopt, and implement a plan for door-locking policies to secure classroom and common area doors.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Grand Jury Report and will continue to be implemented in the future. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(1).)

Explanation: The District follows a policy of locking classroom doors when school is in session.

R4.5 By March 1, 2024, all school sites post flip charts or similar summaries of emergency procedures be posted in all classrooms and common areas.

Response: This recommendation will be fully implemented by March 1, 2024. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(2).)

Explanation: Most classroom, school district department and multi-purpose rooms have a copy of the Escalon Unified Emergency Response Procedures, Guidelines in a flipchart format. This information is posted on the wall and utilized during drills with updated information pertaining to each class. By March 1, 2024 every classroom and common area will have flip charts or similar summaries of emergency procedures.

R4.6 By March 1, 2024, all school sites ensure window coverings are provided for all windows, thereby not allowing a perpetrator a clear line of sight into a classroom or common area.

Response: This recommendation will be fully implemented by March 1, 2024. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(2).)

Explanation: The District agrees that insufficient window coverings give perpetrators a clear line of sight, creating risk for students and staff. Most windows throughout the District had window coverings, and or are tinted as appropriate., However the Maintenance Operations and Transportation Department, is assessing the needs of all schools to ensure that windows without coverings are effectively provided with a solution.

R4.7 By October 1, 2023, the Board of Trustees, during a public meeting, review and discuss the findings and recommendations of the 2022-2023 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury report, Case #0322 – School Safety in San Joaquin County: Developing a Culture of Safety.

Response: This recommendation will be implemented. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(b)(2).)

Explanation: The Board of Trustees will review and discuss the findings and recommendations of the 2022-2023 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury report, Case #0322 – School Safety in San Joaquin County: Developing a Culture of Safety at the first public meeting after the District has filed its response to this Report.

CONCLUSION

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Escalon Unified School District, we appreciate your concern for our District.

Sincerely,



Ricardo Chavez
Superintendent