



August 15, 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 in San Joaquin County: Developing a Culture of Safety”: Case No. 0322

Dear Judge Coughlan:

The Ripon Unified School District (“District”) has reviewed the Facts, Findings and Recommendations in the Grand Jury Report “*School Safety in 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. There is a well-defined process that engages 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 (in some cases) and various parent groups. 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. Ripon High 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 Ripon 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 is pleased and proud to work together with our first responders in our city of Ripon. They help to ensure the safety, security and well-being of our schools and the citizens of the District and the City of Ripon at large. The response time for our police and fire departments is much less than the average response time. The District Leadership Team and principals meet regularly and hold a safety meeting update as a part of each meeting. All of our schools benefit from the support of our Safe Schools Resource Officer. We have a formalized partnership agreement with the City to have the valuable expertise of a police officer available to our schools. He works directly with our principals and staff. The approval of the Ripon Police Department is required as part of our process for the approval of each school site safety plan. The police and fire departments are available to us to review and make recommendations to our plans at any time.

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 as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: The District has maintained a close collaborative partnership with the Ripon Police and Fire Departments for many years. All parties have worked together in concert to address various matters regarding the safety of our students and families within the community. This collaboration encompasses assessments of administrative procedures and school site security, offering recommendations and engaging in discussions. Additionally, the partnership involves active participation in the formulation

and implementation of the District's overall safety plans, as well as those specific to individual school sites. As a culmination of these efforts, staff development training sessions and practical exercises are conducted jointly by multiple organizations.

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)(1).)

Explanation: Each school site is required to complete a comprehensive annual safety plan with the opportunity for public input. 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 which serves as each school's safety committee. Ripon High 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 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. Then they are placed upon the agenda for public comments and the approval of the Board of Trustees.

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

Explanation: Our District's CSSPs do include an assessment of the status of crime at each school and school related functions. This information can be found in the appendix at the back of the 2022-2023 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 as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Procedures for students with special needs are addressed in the CSSPs. At the beginning of the school year each school principal meets individually with staff (teachers) as well as other school professionals such as the psychologist, nurse, mental health clinician when a student has specific needs or accommodations to ensure that the unique needs of students with disabilities are met. Individual Educational Plans and 504s are reviewed for pertinent information in conjunction with outreach to students' parents or guardians. Additionally, information may be found in the section for evacuating students with special needs.

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: The District safety measures are referred to in the District Student and Family Handbook which is posted on our district website. Additionally, a separate transportation safety plan is also posted on the website. Each school site has a SARC (School Accountability Report Card) that is posted and addresses their safety measures. Our school board policies are accessible to the public on our website. Within those is our policy and administrative regulation regarding the Comprehensive Safety Plan (CSSP). Parents may contact their school principals for specific questions regarding safety measures unique per campus and to see the CSSP document (minus any confidential information). Families may also contact our Director of Facilities, Operations and Safety Services via our website under the department page. Each school site CSSP (minus confidential information) is also available for viewing any time at the District Office.

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: Our schools and District CSSPs each 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 if an emergency.

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 as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Each of our schools in the District have a detailed reunification plan included in each campus CSSP.

F2.11. Many schoolsite 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 partners in the development of each school site CSSP so that each school's individual unique safety needs are met. As the District and school site administrators review the CSSPs, we will continue to refine the details of each plan specifically to meet the needs of the staff and students at each campus.

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 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 will continue to utilize its well-defined process that engages partners 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 with our partners (including emergency responders), 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 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: We plan to continue the current process of CSSP approval in Ripon Unified which includes the following; the plan is reviewed by each school campus administration, law enforcement, classified and certificated staff, students (in some cases) and various parent groups. 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: For many years 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.

Below are the approval dates for each Comprehensive School Safety Plan for this last school year;

Colony Oak Elementary School	September 26, 2022
Harvest High School	September 21, 2022
Park View Elementary School	October 4, 2022
Ripona Elementary School	September 13, 2022
Ripon Elementary School	October 5, 2022
Ripon High School	October 10, 2022
Weston Elementary School	September 21, 2022

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 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 District’s CSSPs do include an assessment of the status of crime at each school and school related functions. This information can be found at the back of the 2022-2023 CSSP in the appendix section.

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 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: Procedures for students with special needs are addressed in the CSSPs. Principals will continue to meet individually with staff (teachers), as well as other school professionals such as the psychologist, nurse, mental health clinician when a student has specific needs or accommodations to ensure that the unique needs of students with disabilities are met during an emergency. Individual Educational Plans and 504s are reviewed for pertinent information in conjunction with outreach to students’ parents or guardians. Additionally, information may be found in the section for evacuating students with special needs.

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 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: Currently the Ripon Unified School Site and District CSSP are available to the public with the exception of the confidential information.

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 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.

R2.11 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 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 will continue to utilize its well-defined process that engages partners 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 with our partners (including emergency responders), we will continue to refine the details of each plan specifically to meet the unique needs of the staff and students at each campus.

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: As mentioned above the District team of six attended the 2022 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: Safety drills are regularly practiced by teachers and support staff at each school. At scheduled monthly staff meetings safety topics including drill procedures are placed on the agenda 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 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.

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

In the District we utilize the ICS Command structure and protocols. Duties are broken out into the key elements of the ICS – Incident Command System: Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance. The specific jobs include: Incident Commander and Command Staff, Safety Officer, Communications PIO Public Relations to other site leaders and transportation, Student and Staff Crisis Management (Care and Supervision) Liaison, Facility and Transportation Crisis Management, School Site Support and Bus Support.

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

Explanation: All District cabinet-level and Board of Trustees have received the ICS 402 training.

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 routine safety drills throughout the year. These drills are 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 and reported by each site 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 as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Classified staff is required to participate in safety drills and trainings to ensure preparedness for potential real life safety issues. Both school site and district office administrators are responsible for ensuring that all support staff “classified” personnel participate in probable real life safety drills. Our Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan (MYTEP) also has specific details about trainings, such as who, when and where trainings (staff meetings, table top exercises, workshops, and full scale scenarios) are to be conducted.

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 as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: After a drill is executed principals send information to the District Office. At monthly staff meetings drill procedures are analyzed and reviewed. Information from site reviews may be reported to the district leadership team, office of maintenance, operations and safety or the superintendent’s office.

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 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 looks forward to 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 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: Safety drills are regularly practiced by teachers and support staff at each school. At all regularly scheduled monthly school site staff meetings safety topics including drill procedures are placed on the agenda and continue to be analyzed and reviewed.

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 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 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. When a substitute is hired they are provided a substitute handbook in which emergency procedures are addressed, as well as the new EOP App details are provided (which is the electronic version of our safety procedures which can be viewed on a cellular device).

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 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: All of our leadership (personnel) members have been identified for incident command roles and have received the training well in advance of October 1, 2023.

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

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: All District-level executive leadership and Board of Trustees have completed the ICS-402 training.

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 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: Principals will continue to schedule varied types of routine safety drills throughout the year. These drills are conducted at different days, 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 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: Classified staff is required to participate in safety drills and trainings to ensure preparedness for potential real life safety issues. Both school site and district office administrators are responsible for ensuring that all support staff “classified” personnel participate in probable real life safety drills. Our Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan (MYTEP) also has specific details about trainings, such as who, when and where trainings (staff meetings, table top exercises, workshops, and full scale scenarios) are to be conducted.

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

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: After a drill is executed, principals send information to the District Office. A regular post incident review is included in the information reported to the District Office. Monthly staff meetings drill procedures will continue to be analyzed and reviewed. When immediate action needs to take place principals will continue to report to whichever district department is able to assist.

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. Upon leaving the school, visitors are required to sign out and return their visitor badge.

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 inspected all perimeter fencing at all school sites in the fall of 2022 and has been making improvements and upgrades as needed. Gathering data from families and community and partnering with our parent faculty clubs has strengthened our perimeter campus security. Ripon High School has a major construction project underway, and new gated and control points are planned to be installed upon completion. In addition, Ripon High has increased campus supervisor staff during school hours.

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 as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(1).)

Explanation: Every classroom, school district department and common area has a copy of the Ripon Unified Emergency Response Procedures, Guidelines and Emergency Map. This information is posted on the classroom, department and common area wall next to the door, or in the vicinity of the entrance and/or exit utilized during drills with updated information pertaining to each class/area.

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 as it applies to the District. (Pen. Code, § 933.05(a)(2).)

Explanation: Every classroom, school district department and multi-use room has a copy of the Ripon 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. However, many of our staff are now utilizing our EOP App on their cell phones. The App is powered by USA Safe Schools which contains our Emergency Response Procedures and Guidelines electronically.

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 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. The District does not know the practices of other districts and only has knowledge of its practices. Our goal is to provide a safe environment for students and staff, therefore by limiting the risks to all. All school windows have been assessed for vulnerability and shades or coverings are in place.

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.

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: Our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework enhances evidence-based practices to achieve important outcomes for every student. This includes services provided by counselors, mental health clinician, and psychologists, as well as character education curriculum and restorative practices. Committees in the District help support building school and community relationships. Staff, parent and student surveys indicate a high level of good rapport.

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

Explanation: Our culture in safety is transparent and does encourage involvement. Each school site is required to complete a comprehensive annual safety plan with the opportunity for public input. 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 which serves as each school's safety committee. Ripon High 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 the 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 public comments and the approval of the board of trustees.

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 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: Each school in the District has a designated access program for 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 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 inspected all perimeter fencing at all school sites in the fall of 2022 and has been making improvements and upgrades as needed. Gathering data with input from families and community and partnering with out parent faculty clubs has strengthened our perimeter campus security. Ripon High School has a major construction project underway, and new gated and control points are planned to be installed upon completion. In addition, Ripon High has increased campus supervisor staff during school hours.

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 has not been fully implemented, but the "You Are Here" notes will be added to the Emergency Map. (Pen. Code § 933.05(b)(2).)

Explanation: Every classroom and school district department has a copy of the Ripon Unified Emergency Response Procedures, Guidelines and Emergency Map. This information is posted on the classroom and common areas wall 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 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 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 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: Every classroom, school district department, common area and multi-use room has a copy of the Ripon 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. However, many of our staff are utilizing our EOP App on their cell phones. The App is powered by USA Safe Schools which contains our Emergency Response Procedures and Guidelines electronically.

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 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 goal is to provide a safe environment for students and staff, therefore by limiting the risks to all. All school windows have been assessed for vulnerability and shades or coverings are in place.

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 has not been implemented, but 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 Ripon Unified School District, we appreciate your concern for our District.

Sincerely,



Ziggy Robeson
Superintendent