



Santa Ana Unified School District

Michael P. Bishop, Sr.
CBO, Associate Superintendent
Business Services

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Superintendent

August 16, 2011

Honorable Thomas J. Borris, Presiding Judge
Orange County Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA. 92701

Re: "Orange County Public Schools: Are They Prepared for Emergencies?"

Dear Judge Borris,

In accordance with California Penal Code Section 933.05, the Santa Ana Unified School District is responding to the Orange County Grand Jury's request for response to their report titled: "Orange County Public Schools: Are They Prepared for Emergencies?"

Response to Findings:

F-1 With respect to reported constraints on emergency planning and preparation, over half of the schools and almost three quarters of districts identified either limited time or funds.

If school districts had more personnel and resources, many school districts could move forward with emergency management planning. The Santa Ana Unified School District has been able to acquire federal funds to assist the District with emergency planning. Limited time continues to be an issue as teachers and administrators are involved in their primary role of instruction. The District has had to rely on non-instructional days to provide emergency response training to approximately 40% of the District's teachers. Additionally, the District recently launched an on-line learning management system to provide on-line training to staff in all areas of emergency management.

F-2 Six (of 17) school districts have managed to apply and receive relatively large grants from governmental agencies to greatly enhance their emergency planning efforts, while others have not.

The Santa Ana Unified School District has been successful in securing these extremely competitive grants. The District has received:

2006 Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Grant \$704,000
2010 Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Grant \$612,423

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Unfortunately, federal grant programs to support emergency management planning will end in Fiscal Year 2012. As other programs are identified, the Santa Ana Unified School District will continue to apply for available funding. As a previously successful grantee, the District is willing to volunteer to coordinate a joint County of Orange application for all Districts in the County for emergency planning funds to include training, communication and drills.

F-3 Some schools anticipate responding to only a few emergency situations (e.g., earthquake and fire) while others have developed plans to respond to over a dozen different threatening situations.

The Santa Ana Unified School District has identified 41 situations in which the District may need to respond. The District is currently are working on the District's response to a Tsunami. The Santa Ana Unified School District has developed information for the following emergency situations:

Excerpt from the Santa Ana Unified School District Emergency Response Plan (ERP)

<u>Animal Disturbance</u>	<u>Kidnapping / Child Stealing</u>
<u>Armed Student(s) / Weapon on campus</u>	<u>Medical Emergency</u>
<u>Armed Intruder / Active Shooter</u>	<u>Missing Students</u>
<u>Bomb Threat</u>	<u>Natural Gas Leak</u>
<u>Bus Accident</u>	<u>Pandemic Flu</u>
<u>Bus Terrorism</u>	<u>Plane Crash</u>
<u>Chemical/Hazardous Material</u>	<u>Runaway Threat or Confirmed Runaway</u>
<u>Spill/Leak/Release</u>	<u>Sexual Assault / Rape</u>
<u>Child Abuse or Neglect</u>	<u>Severe Weather Storms</u>
<u>Contamination - Food or Water</u>	<u>Suicide Attempt at School</u>
<u>Crime and Violence</u>	<u>Suicide Threats</u>
<u>Death of a Student/Staff Member</u>	<u>Suspicious Package/Mail Threats</u>
<u>Demonstration / Riot / Walkout</u>	<u>Terrorism - General</u>
<u>Earthquake</u>	<u>Terrorism - Chemical Attack</u>
<u>Fire and/or Explosion</u>	<u>Terrorism - Biological Attack</u>
<u>Fire - Wildland/Brush Fires</u>	<u>Terrorism - Radioactive/Nuclear Attack</u>
<u>Flooding</u>	<u>Terrorism - Explosive/Conventional Attack</u>
<u>Gang Fight</u>	<u>Tornado</u>
<u>Homeland Security</u>	<u>Transportation Incident - Truck / Train</u>
<u>Homicide</u>	<u>Utility Outage</u>
<u>Hostage Situation</u>	
<u>Infectious Diseases</u>	

F-4 School districts develop plans with respect to a number of different but overlapping regulations and standards, including those required by the county, state and the federal government.

The Santa Ana Unified School District has developed all plans to comply with state and federal emergency management standards, the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Emergency System (NIMS).

F-5 Some schools reported that they have not adequately anticipated the needs of students taking prescription medications, or with specialized medical needs, in the event of some emergencies, such as an extended lockdown.

The Santa Ana Unified School District agrees that this is an important issue that must be dealt with ahead of an emergency. The District's nurses have developed an emergency Health Care Plan (HCP) that includes evacuation plans and medications for students with specialized medical needs. The District is currently working on loading these HCPs into our document tracking system for easy access.

F-6 School districts are in communication with a variety of local and county departments, agencies, and systems to help them prepare for and respond to disasters or emergencies; not all districts access the same resources.

The Santa Ana Unified School District agrees that different districts may access different sources of emergency services. As a first responder, the District's School Police Department regularly communicates and drills with other first responders in the County of Orange including the City Santa Ana Police Department.

F-7 Few schools have plans or emergency preparation information available in languages other than English.

The Santa Ana Unified School District is currently working on an additional webpage that will provide parents emergency preparedness information and District protocols that is translated in all prevalent languages.

Response to Recommendations

R-1 Those districts which have yet to identify disaster grant opportunities especially from governmental agencies, investigate the availability of potential resources. Forming inter-district collaborative, learning from districts in the county that have been successful, pooling resources, and asking for consultation from the Orange County Superintendent of School/OCDE may help in these efforts.

As a District who has been successful with securing federal grant funding, the Santa Ana Unified School District is willing to assist other districts in their efforts. The District has already joined in a collaborative effort with the Garden Grove, Tustin and Irvine Unified School Districts, along with the Orange County Department of Education to form the Orange County Emergency Radio System (OCSERS) for emergency radio communication.

R-2 Districts review their plans, and the plans specific to each of their campuses with respect to emergencies or possible disaster situations they have not anticipated.

Each school in the Santa Ana Unified School District has a Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CSSP) which is reviewed annually by March 1.

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R-3 Districts review their local level of compliance with various existing codes, regulations, and liability insurance issues that pertain to emergency preparedness in schools.

The Santa Ana Unified School District has implemented this recommendation.

R-4 Districts review their plans, and the plans specific to each of their campuses, to ascertain whether the special medical and/or prescription medication needs of all students are adequately anticipated, especially during an extended disaster situation.

The Santa Ana Unified School District is currently reviewing its plans with respect to the special medical and prescription medications of all students with specialized medical needs.

R-5 Districts survey their campuses with respect to the needs on non- or limited- English speaking parents and guardians, and develop outlines or summaries of critical emergency planning information in Spanish, Vietnamese, and or other threshold languages prevalent in their local communities.

The Santa Ana Unified School District is currently working on a District website that will provide parents emergency preparedness information and District protocols that is translated in all prevalent languages.

We hope the Grand Jury will find our response both responsive and informative related to the findings and recommendations of your report. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Camille Boden, Executive Director of Risk Management at (714) 558-5826.

Sincerely,



Michael P. Bishop, Sr.
CBO, Associate Superintendent
Business Services

CB/MB:mm

cc: Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana, Ph.D., Superintendent
Cathie Olsky, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent
Herman Mendez, Assistant Superintendent, Elementary Education
Dawn Miller, Assistant Superintendent, Secondary Education