



# ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Education Center

1401 North Handy Street • Orange, CA 92867-4334  
www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us

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714.628.4048

714.628.4041 (FAX)

board@orangeusd.k12.ca.us

## Superintendent of Schools

Thomas A. Godley, Ed.D.

714.628.4040

714.628.4041 (FAX)

superintendent@orangeusd.k12.ca.us

September 13, 2006

Honorable Nancy Wieben Stock  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
700 Civic Center Drive West  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

### Re: 2005-2006 Orange County Grand Jury Report: "Are Schools Feeding or Fighting Obesity?"

Dear Judge Stock:

The following information is submitted in response to a letter from the Grand Jury dated June 12, 2006, in which you requested information from all Orange County Superintendents by September 14, 2006.

#### Findings/Recommendations:

**Finding 6.1:** Control over competitive foods: Most school district food service directors do not have control over all food and beverages sold on school campuses. Most often excluded are competitive foods, i.e. Food and beverages sold through vending machines, student stores, and fund raising events.

*District Response:* Orange Unified School District (OUSD) agrees with the finding as stated.

**Recommendation 7.1:** Control over competitive foods: Orange County School Districts should consider granting Food Service Directors control over sales of all food and beverages on district campuses.

*District Response:* Orange Unified School District agrees with the finding as stated and is implementing the recommendation to grant the Nutrition Service Director control over sales of all food and beverages on district campuses.

The OUSD Wellness Policy for Student Achievement was passed by the board of education in May, 2006 and the administrative regulations will be implemented this school year (2006-2007) with responsibilities for oversight and enforcement to promote student wellness. The OUSD Wellness for Student Achievement Committee is actively beginning its fourth year. Our similar concern for children's health and over all well-being the committee was established in October 2002 by proactive administrators: Kimberlee Nichols, School Board Member, Dr. Tom Godley-Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, now OUSD Superintendent, Judy

*Pollock-Director of Nutrition Services, and Karen Hanson-Health Services Coordinator. Initial membership included Ed Howard- Director of Athletics, PTA representatives, nutrition services managers and staff, school nurses, dietitians, principals, students, teachers, athletic directors, activities directors, and non-profit organizations such as the Dairy Council of California and American Cancer Society all were invited to participate on the committee and many continue to four years later. Newer members include Dr. Erna Wong, Kaiser Permanente. The OUSD Wellness for Student Achievement Committee was renamed to properly reflect the inter relationship of healthy lifestyles and learning, after starting as the OUSD Nutrition Advisory Committee. One of the first in the county and possibly the State of California to come together on goals that would later become mandated by the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 [section 204] Local Wellness Policy. The committee continues today provide valid, researched based recommendations to the board of education without funding or financial support.*

**Finding 6.2:** Compliance with Federal and State laws: Responding Orange County food service directors indicated their school district are either in compliance with or will be in compliance with recently enacted Federal and State laws addressing child wellness and obesity.

*District Response: Orange Unified School District agrees with the finding.*

**Recommendation 7.2:** Compliance with Federal and State laws: School districts should ensure compliance with legislated actions and dates addressing overall child wellness and obesity.

*District Response: Orange Unified School district is in full compliance with all laws and regulations that pertain to all children in the district on or before the implementation due dates. OUSD does not practice nor endorse policies that discriminate or exclude those who are considered malnourished. Fast food sales are not provided by OUSD Nutrition Services.*

*SB12: School Nutrition Standards Act: The implementation date per regulation is July 1, 2007. Elementary and middle schools have been compliant since July 1, 2004 and the high schools will be in full compliance by July 1, 2007.*

*SB65: Food and Beverage Contracts Act: Orange Unified School District is in compliance and has specified with the carbonated beverage vendor that the product mix must meet the current and future legislation and the soft drinks will be removed in phases, being replaced with healthier beverage items.*

*SB567: Pupil Nutrition School Wellness Policy: Orange Unified School District is in compliance and the board of education adopted the wellness policy in May, 2006.*

*SB677: California Childhood and Obesity Prevention Act: Orange Unified School District is in compliance with all beverages sold to students in grades K-8 meeting nutrition standards.*

*SB965: Healthy Beverage Act: Orange Unified School District is in compliance with the requirement stating that 50% of the beverages sold to high school students must meet the nutrition standards and will actively be moving towards the mandate of 100% of all beverages sold to high school students meeting nutrition standards before the July 1, 2009 deadline.*

**Finding 6.3: School Nutrition Programs:** Some Orange County schools have developed creative nutrition programs that go beyond State and Federal legislation to fight obesity.

*District Response:* Orange Unified School District agrees with the finding and is one of the districts with exemplary programs such as:

*-The first district in Orange County to provide Breakfast in the Classroom, which began July 2006, by OUSD Nutrition Services. Esplanade Elementary School's breakfast in the classroom program includes breakfast at no charge for all students and teachers. The goals of the program include academic, nutrition behavior, and attendance measurable outcomes such as:*

- *Increase student breakfast participation by 50% .*
- *Increase student fruit, fiber, and calcium consumption during school breakfast by 25% during each school year.*
- *Decrease student health office visits by 25%.*
- *Reduce student absenteeism by 20%.*
- *Conduct parent and student focus groups each school year.*
- *Provide 2-4 parent meetings to include effective skill based nutrition education, parent advocacy topics such as fundraising alternatives, parent school breakfast involvement-encourage families to contribute to the program and volunteer time, nutritious cooking classes, and encourage overall good eating habits and the relationship to learning.*
- *Provide school breakfast orientation event each school year for to introduce and encourage participation in the Breakfast in the Classroom program.*
- *Obtain and record Body Mass Index (BMI) of every student grades K-6 during each school year, beginning 2006-2007.*
- *Create and provide 3 breakfast lessons in the classroom which aligns nutrition education with the California State Teaching Standards, OUSD Essential Standards, and California Department of Education Nutrition Education Benchmarks.*
- *Provide 3 parent newsletters on the importance of eating a nutritious breakfast on overall well being and academic learning each school year beginning 2006-2007.*
- *Increase API scores by 6 points at the end of each testing API base period (2007 and 2008).*

*-Recipient of the California Nutrition Network grant for the past five years. Under the Administration of the Nutrition Services Director, OUSD Nutrition*

Network program targets 15 low-income schools, Pre-K/School Readiness program, and the After school programs. Nutrition education programs developed and implemented by OUSD Nutrition Network are cross curricular and align with the California State Teaching Standards and OUSD Essential Teaching Standards. OUSD Nutrition Network successful programs include:

*-The Breakfast Club-A three year continuous longitudinal research project*

*studying the effects of social marketing techniques during breakfast and*

*outcomes of breakfast nutrition lessons implemented in the classroom. Target population includes third, fourth, and fifth graders. Published results will be available after third cohort reaches sixth grade.*

*-Harvest of the Season-Provide fresh fruit and vegetable taste tests to all*

*Nutrition Network school sites along with teach lesson and student curriculum.*

*-Guest Chef- Nutrition Network staff provide Harvest of the Season skill based nutrition education in the classroom for 12 elementary schools.*

*-Parent Guest Chef- Four parent volunteers at two elementary schools provide Harvest of the month nutrition education in the classroom! These parents are trained by Nutrition Network staff and teach the lessons to all grade levels at 2 schools. This promotes sustainability of the program.*

*-Provide teacher, staff, parent, and community nutrition education and physical activity trainings to increase nutrition literacy across OUSD.*

*-Breakfast Expansion grant which assists with funding to provide healthier choices and increase the number of School Breakfast program sites.*

*-Participation in the California Fresh Start Program which promotes the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by school age children.*

*-Changing the name of the OUSD Nutrition Service Department to "Orange Unified School District Center for Nutrition and Physical Activity". The name change provides a clearer image of the goals and objectives of the department.*

*-Continuous review of the nutrition, health, and physical activity instruction requirements and providing feedback/recommendations to the board of education.*

*-Providing yearly Open Parent Forum to present updates from the Nutrition Service Department (Center for Nutrition and Physical Activity) to families while providing continuous opportunities for parent/community dialogue. Child Care and translation services are provided free of cost during this event.*

*-Orange Unified School District has been asked to present at various meetings for the State, County, and California State PTA Convention on the success of the Wellness Committee for Student Achievement and Wellness Policy developments.*

*-Orange Unified School District has received awards including:*

*\*Certificate of Recognition for outstanding support and collaboration on the 5 a Day – Power Play! Campaign.*

*\*KABC's and OCDE Steps for Healthy Living recipient for both the extraordinary efforts in progressing the goal of healthy children and the school district with the most participating schools.*

*\*Numerous Outstanding National School lunch and Breakfast awards from the United States Department of Agriculture and the State of California.*

*-A first for the district, OUSD Center for Nutrition and Physical Activity hired a full time Registered Dietitian on staff to coordinate nutrition education and physical activity programs*

*-OUSD departments continue to nourish effective collaboration and strong partnerships within the districts. These include Health Services, Nutrition Services (Center for Nutrition and Physical Activity, Elementary and Secondary Curriculum, Athletics Department, Business Services, Human Resources and Risk Management and many others.*

*-Updating the Nutrition Service Website to give students and parents sound nutrition information.*

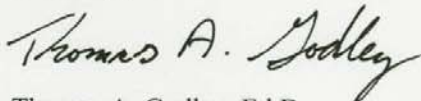
*-Providing nutrient analysis of menu items for parents and students.*

**Recommendation 7.3: School Nutrition Programs:** To fight obesity, Orange County Schools should consider researching and developing nutrition programs that go beyond State and Federal legislation.

*District Response: Orange Unified School District is continuing the quest for improvements in nutrition, health and physical activity and is thinking outside of the box for unique partnerships, grants, or research to achieve the goal of providing exemplary nutrition to students and promoting the center for nutrition and physical activity. The name change of OUSD Nutrition Services to Center for Nutrition and Physical Activity, the beginnings of a district wide staff Wellness program, nutrition integration across all academic subjects, and commitment to providing nutritious foods to all students are just a few examples of our commitment to our children and community. Continual implementation of solid, research based nutrition programming is our goal.*

Thank you for the interest of the Grand Jury in the health of the Orange Unified School District students. If you need any further information, please call me at (714) 628-4040.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Godley, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools