



NEWPORT-MESA Unified School District

2985 Bear Street • Costa Mesa • California 92626 • (714) 424-5000

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Jeffrey C. Hubbard, Ed.D., Superintendent

August 22, 2011

Hon. Thomas J. Borris
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Dear Judge Borris:

The attached "Response Findings and Recommendations" have been updated and supersede the previous findings sent to you on August 10, 2011.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (714) 424-7558.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Horrell".

Lori Horrell
Administrative Assistant
Facilities Support Services
Newport-Mesa Unified School District

✓cc: Jerry L. Powell, Foreman
2010-2011 Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

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Hon. Thomas J. Borris
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Dear Judge Borris:

Enclosed is Newport-Mesa Unified School District's response to the findings and recommendations of the 2010-2011 Grand Jury report, "Orange County Public Schools: Are They Prepared for Emergencies?"

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey C. Hubbard".

Jeffrey C. Hubbard
Ed.D., Superintendent

✓ cc: Jerry L. Powell, Foreman
2010-2011 Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

enc.

Response to Findings and Recommendations

2010-2011 Orange County Grand Jury Report

**“Orange County Public Schools:
Are They Prepared for Emergencies?”**

August 22, 2011

ORANGE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT

ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS: ARE THEY PREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES?

RESPONSE SUMMARY FROM THE NEWPORT-MESA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

In accordance with California Penal Code section 933.05, a response is required from the Newport-Mesa Unified School District to Findings 1-7 and Recommendations 1-5.

Finding 1:

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

The Newport-Mesa Unified School District agrees with this finding. If school districts had more personnel and resources available, districts would be better positioned to move forward with emergency management planning. At present, limited state funds are available and a federal grant program to support emergency management planning will end in Fiscal Year 2012.

Finding 2:

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

The Newport-Mesa Unified School District agrees that school districts should seek grant funding. The existing federal grant program will be phasing out in 2012 and other grant programs will need to be identified. In FY 2007/2008, our school district used portions of the U.S. Department of Education Safe Schools Healthy Students Grant to provide at least 16 hours of SEMS/NIMS and hands-on emergency training to all District staff.

Finding 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 Newport-Mesa Unified School District agrees with this finding. Our school district has developed information for the following emergency situations:

- Aircraft Crash
- Animal Disturbance
- Armed Assault on Campus
- Biological or Chemical Release

- Bomb Threat
- Bus Disaster
- Disorderly Conduct
- Earthquake
- Explosion/Risk of Explosion
- Fire in Surrounding Area
- Fire on School Grounds
- Flooding
- Loss or Failure of Utilities
- Motor Vehicle Crash
- Psychological Trauma
- Suspected Contamination of Food or Water
- Threat of Violence
- Unlawful Demonstration/Walkout
- Pandemic Influenza/Avian Flu
- Tsunami Watch/Warning

Finding 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 Newport-Mesa Unified School District agrees with this finding. School districts have developed school safety plans under the Education Code. School districts are also required to comply with state and federal emergency management standards, Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS). Efforts should be made to make these requirements consistent with each other.

Finding 5:

Some schools reported 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 Newport-Mesa Unified School District agrees that this issue should be addressed and the Newport-Mesa Unified School District is focusing on how to meet all students' needs during an emergency.

Finding 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 Newport-Mesa Unified School District agrees that different districts may access different resources. It is our understanding that different districts communicate in a variety of ways with first responders, local agencies, and other agencies to support matters of emergency management. Our school district has been an active participant on the Orange County Emergency Management Organization's Schools Subcommittee and the City of Costa Mesa's Disaster Preparedness Committee over the last several years. In FY 2008/2009, NMUSD worked collaboratively with both the City of Newport Beach and City of Costa Mesa Fire Departments to develop and implement a modified Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for District school personnel. The District has also coordinated several on-site Safe School Series emergency preparedness training sessions through the Orange County Department of Education. These presentations efficiently provide site administrators with the tools necessary to maintain higher levels of readiness at their schools and share this valuable information with their site staff. NMUSD continues to work with each City's Law Enforcement and Fire Departments, as well as OC Sheriff's Department and California EMA, to provide low or no-cost emergency preparedness training and support activities.

Finding 7:

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

The Newport-Mesa Unified School District has not prepared emergency information in languages other than English, but it is our intention to do so in the near future (See response to Recommendation 5).

Recommendation 1:

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

The Newport-Mesa Unified School District has received grants for emergency preparedness. Our school district will continue to explore similar grant opportunities as they become available.

Recommendation 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 of our school sites has a written safe school plan drafted and submitted by March 1st of each year. The plan is reviewed each year and updated annually.

Recommendation 3:

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

The Newport-Mesa Unified School District has implemented this recommendation by developing a school safety plan for each of its schools and working with federal, state and local emergency management agencies. The District maintains sufficient liability insurance with respect to emergency preparedness.

Recommendation 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 Newport-Mesa Unified School District is currently reviewing its plans with respect to the special medical and prescription medication needs of all students and is developing a plan to meet these needs, in the event of an emergency.

Recommendation 5:

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

The Newport-Mesa Unified School District plans to address and complete the recommendation within a year of the public release date of subject Grand Jury Report, May 18, 2011.