



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SHERIFF-CORONER DON BARNES

OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

August 7, 2023

Honorable Maria Hernandez, Presiding Judge
Orange County Superior Court
Central Justice Center
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

RE: Response to 2022-23 Orange County Grand Jury report, *"School Shootings: How Prepared Are Orange County Public Schools?"*

Dear Presiding Judge Hernandez:

In accordance with Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, enclosed please find my response to the 2022-23 Orange County Grand Jury report, *"School Shootings: How Prepared Are Orange County Public Schools?"*

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Don Barnes'.

Don Barnes
Sheriff-Coroner

cc: Grand Jury Foreperson
Members, Orange County Board of Supervisors
Frank Kim, County Executive Officer

Orange County Sheriff's Department
Response to Findings and Recommendations
2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury Report
"School Shootings: How Prepared Are Orange County Public Schools?"

FINDINGS

F1.

Law enforcement, first responders, and other stakeholders have demonstrated a strong interest in working cooperatively with Orange County public schools to mitigate the risk of an active shooter incident; establishment of MOUs between law enforcement and school districts would strengthen this cooperation.

Response: *Agrees with finding*

F8.

School Resource Officers (SROs) are a valuable asset for school safety, yet many cities/districts do not allocate sufficient funds to hire needed officers.

Response: *Agrees with finding.*

The lack of financial resources have prevented cities from hiring more school resource officers.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

R1.

Each Orange County school district should arrange for local law enforcement to do an annual safety inspection of each school. The written safety checklist should include an audit of the integrity of site boundaries and a review of safety plans and policies. This annual safety audit should commence with the 2023-24 school year by October 1, 2023, and annually thereafter.

Response: *This recommendation is being implemented.*

The Orange County Sheriff's Department has done threat assessments of multiple schools within areas patrolled by the department. Additionally the department has formalized a process for doing annual safety assessments for each school in those communities.

R3.

Each Orange County school district, in conjunction with law enforcement, should develop and implement tabletop exercises to be conducted in district schools by December 31, 2023, and annually thereafter.

Response: *This recommendation has been implemented.*

The Orange County Sheriff's Department does regular training, including tabletop exercises, with the schools in areas patrolled by the department.

R4.

Each Orange County school district should work with local law enforcement to plan and conduct a district-wide active shooter drill by July 1, 2024, and at least every other year thereafter

Response: *The Orange County Sheriff's Department defers to each individual school district for a response to this recommendation.*

While regular active shooter drills occur at schools throughout communities patrolled by the Orange County Sheriff's Department, the decision to conduct a district-wide drill will need to be made by each individual school district.

R12.

Each Orange County School District should assess the need for SROs or additional SROs, reaching out to appropriate community partners to facilitate funding by July 1, 2024.

Response: *The Orange County Sheriff's Department defers to each individual school district for a response to this recommendation.*

The decision on whether or not to implement this recommendation will need to be made by each individual school district.