



CENTRALIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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August 18, 2023

Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

RE: Centralia Elementary School District's Response to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Report on **Russian Roulette: Fentanyl in Orange County**

Dear Orange County Grand Jury,

Centralia Elementary School District (CESD) commends the Orange County Grand Jury for its time and attention devoted to studying the very important issue concerning the dangerous of opioid use in Orange County and publishing the June 21, 2023, Grand Jury Report entitled; **Russian Roulette: Fentanyl in Orange County**. The District understands the impact fentanyl is having in the county and the importance of educating our community on the dangers of an opioid overdose.

CESD has thoroughly reviewed and considered the Findings and Recommendations in the Grand Jury Report. Please find CESD's responses to the Grand Jury's Findings and Recommendations outlined in the report, **Russian Roulette: Fentanyl in Orange County**.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Norma E. Martinez
Superintendent
Centralia Elementary School District

Centralia Elementary School District

Superintendent Norma E. Martinez

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Henry Charoen – Art Montez – Elizabeth A. Gonzalez – Lamiya A. Hoque – Luis Flores

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Centralia Elementary School District
Response to Findings and Recommendations
2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury Report
Russian Roulette: Fentanyl in Orange County

Findings:

F2: Illicit fentanyl is a pervasive problem in Orange County.

Response: CESD agrees with the finding. Law enforcement has identified illicit Fentanyl as a pervasive problem in Orange County.

According to CalMatters.org, California witnessed a staggering 121% increase in opioid-related deaths within a span of merely three years, from 2019 to 2021. The primary culprit behind the vast majority of these fatalities was identified as fentanyl. In 2021, Orange County ranked 8th among all counties in California with the highest incidence of Fentanyl-related overdoses. The rate of such overdoses in Orange County was recorded at 21.352 per 100k residents, surpassing the overall rate in California (15.625), Riverside (17.053), Los Angeles (13.752), and San Diego (20.125), as reported by the California Department of Public Health. (CDPH).

F7: Orange County will benefit by establishing a chartered multiagency Task Force to address fentanyl crisis Orange County.

Response: CESD agrees with the finding. A chartered multi-agency Task Force has the potential to create a more focused, collaborative, and effective response to the fentanyl crisis in Orange County, and reduce the impact of the opioid epidemic on the community. This decision-making should be left to Orange County law enforcement to determine the best course of action in this matter.

F8: As long as there is a demand, producers will find ways to supply drugs. Orange County cannot law enforce its way out of the fentanyl crisis. Education, prevention, and treatment are critical to reducing demand.

Response: CESD agrees with the finding.

F9: There is a need to increase public awareness and acknowledgement of the risks of illicit fentanyl.

Response: CESD agrees with the finding. In March 2023, CESD co-hosted a community town hall in Buena Park on this topic, along with local law enforcement, the OC Health Care Agency and other neighboring districts.

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F10: Some educational institutions are not participating in available educational and preventive fentanyl/drug program.

Response: CESD partially disagrees with the finding. CESD is consistent in its practices concerning participation of educational and preventative fentanyl/drug programs across the district. We can only respond to practices in our district, not about other districts.

Recommendations:

R1: By January 1, 2024, the Orange County Board of Supervisors should charter a multi-agency Task Force to address the fentanyl crisis. (F2, F7, F8, F9)

Response: The recommendation is not warranted. This decision should be under the consideration of Orange County law enforcement to determine the best course of action in this matter.

R5: By January 1, 2024, the Orange County Department of Education should develop a model fentanyl/opioid prevention education program to be offered to all K-12 school districts in Orange County. (F2, F8, F9, F10)

Response: The recommendation is not warranted. This decision-making should be left to the Orange County Department of Education in collaboration with Orange County law enforcement to determine the best course of action in this matter. if such a prevention program were developed, CESD would evaluate it and consider it as a viable curriculum.

R6: By October 1, 2023, the Orange County Department of Education should promote the use of currently established and in-place fentanyl and drug-related educational programs offered by OC agencies such as Health Care Agency, OC Sheriff's Department, and non-governmental organizations to all K-12 school districts in Orange County. (F2, F8, F9, F10)

Response: The recommendation is not warranted. This decision-making should be left to the Orange County Department of Education in collaboration with Orange County law enforcement to determine the best course of action in this matter.