

**FORESTVILLE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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February 1, 2008

**GRAND JURY**

FEB 04 2008

Dennis O'Reilly, Foreperson  
The Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury  
PO Box 5109  
Santa Rosa, California 95402

**RECEIVED**

Dear Mr. O'Reilly:

Please accept my sincere apologies for the confusion about the Forestville School District's responsibility to respond to the Grand Jury Report for 2006/2007. While there was a reference to our obligation to respond in the text of the report, we expected to see a letter calling for our cooperation and establishing a timeline. The letter we received in September, notifying the district that we had not responded, was misinterpreted to mean that we had not responded to a request for information provided during the Grand Jury's information gathering phase of the investigation. While we responded in a timely manner by providing copies of Board policies and procedures originally requested, we thought there may have been a problem and sent all the documents a second time, not realizing this September notice was informing us we had not responded to the Grand Jury report itself.

Since our telephone conversation just before the Winter Break, the staff have developed responses to the various recommendations, and are attached. While it is late, I hope the Grand Jury finds this work informative and helpful.

Sincerely,



Don Hack, District Superintendent

The Forestville Union School District is an equal opportunity agency and employer. The Forestville Union School District does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, age, religion, gender, color, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability. The District compliance officer is the Superintendent, who can be contacted at Forestville Union School District, 6321 Highway 116, Forestville, CA 95436, Phone: (707) 887-9767; Fax 887-2185.

*A California Distinguished School*

Forestville School District Response to Recommendations  
Grand Jury Report  
2006/2007

R1: Each public school district in Sonoma County should have at least one employee who is trained and authorized to access DOJ website within an official and specified schedule. This employee should fully understand the way in which information is to be communicated. Further, in the absence of this employee, a suitable alternate person should be in place to responsibly retrieve valuable information as it is posted. This system should also cover notices from the DOJ sent via U.S. Mail.

RESPONSE: The Forestville School District (FSD) has two employees who are trained and authorized to access the Department of Justice (DOJ) website (The District Administrative Secretary and Chief Business Official (CBO)), and both understand the way in which information is to be communicated. Generally, the website is accessed for subsequent arrest notifications once a week. Initial responses, and all subsequent arrest reports, are shared with either the CBO or the District Superintendent, and after review are destroyed within 30 days.

R4: School districts should consider changing their policies to require successful employee applicants to pay for their own fingerprinting and background responses from DOJ and FBI. There is at least \$65,000 in 06-07 school district budgets for fingerprinting. As costs are shifted to paid employees, districts could use savings to fund costs for volunteers.

RESPONSE: The FSD, through its policy study and adoption process, will consider this recommendation as a possible amendment to current policy.

R5: School districts should amend their policies, if needed, to allow for volunteers names to be public information and readily available so that a greater scrutiny is provided.

RESPONSE: The FSD, through its policy study and adoption process, will consider this recommendation as a possible amendment to current policy.

R6: Schools should routinely check out names of adult volunteers on Megan's Law website (a public posting of sexual predators) even if fingerprinting is scheduled for that volunteer.

RESPONSE: The FSD, through its policy study and adoption process, will consider this recommendation as a possible amendment to current policy.

R7: School districts should request criminal activity record from the Sonoma County Superior Court Records Division on any adult wanting to volunteer with students. The service is available at no cost to a district.

RESPONSE: The FSD, through its policy study and adoption process, will consider this recommendation as a possible amendment to current policy.

R8: School districts should, individually or collectively, request that the DOJ implement a system to confirm school district receipt of Notices of Subsequent Arrest. A system that would require the DOJ to follow up if no confirmation was received would at least give school districts some assurance that information trusted to the U.S. Mail or electronic mail servers is actually being received.

RESPONSE: The FSD, guided by the policies and procedures included in their Policies and Procedures Manual, will consider this recommendation.

R9: School districts should request FBI responses on all classified employees and volunteers that they do a DOJ response regardless of the time they have lived in California. The relatively small fee of \$24 to get prior criminal activity from a national database seems justifiable, reasonable and the right action to take.

RESPONSE: The FSD, through its policy study and adoption process, will consider this recommendation as a possible amendment to current policy.

R10: School districts should require fingerprinting for all adults (paid and volunteer) involved in athletic programs, overnight field trips, off-campus field trips, and any school sponsored student activity that occurs outside of the normal school day or hours.

RESPONSE: The FSD routinely, and as a matter of policy, requires a fingerprint and background clearance for all adults involved in athletic programs. The FSD, through its policy study and adoption process, will

consider the recommendations about overnight field trips, off-campus field trips, and other school sponsored student activities as a possible amendment to current policy.

R11: School districts should implement provisions of Education Code Sections 33193 and 45125.2 requiring that certain independent contractors and employees of contractors undergo fingerprinting and background checks.

RESPONSE: The FSD has implemented, currently implements, and will continue to implement the provisions of Education Code Sections 33193 and 45125.2, requiring independent contractors and their employees to undergo fingerprinting and background checks. The FSD provides a formal, written notice to all vendors of goods and services of this requirement, and mandates written acknowledgement and a certification that they will comply with these requirements as a condition of approving contracts with the District.

R13: School districts should not allow new employees to begin work until all pre-employment requirements are met. Most specifically, this means that all fingerprinting and criminal history responses that are required must have been completed and properly evaluated.

RESPONSE: The FSD does not allow new employees to begin work until all pre-employment requirements are met, including but not limited to a review of the DOJ report resulting from the required fingerprint submission. All DOJ reports are reviewed by staff that know and understand the provisions of law related to this employment requirement. Under no circumstances are potential new employees allowed to be with students at any time without direct, line of sight supervision by an employee hired through the fingerprint/background clearance provisions of the FSD policies and procedures.

R14: The S.O. should make available to all school districts information on how to access services available to them through the S.O. that would aid districts in determining if individuals should be approved to serve as volunteers in our schools and at school sponsored activities.

RESPONSE: The FSD cannot respond to this recommendation.

R15: School districts should require all volunteers to sign an agreement that outlines behavior do's and don'ts and consequences if agreement terms are broken.

RESPONSE: The FSD, through its policy study and adoption process, will consider this recommendation as a possible amendment to current policy.

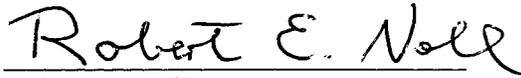
**determining if individuals should be approved to serve as volunteers in our schools and at school sponsored activities.**

Fort Ross School agrees with this recommendation.

**R15. School districts should require all volunteers to sign an agreement that outlines behavior do's and don'ts and consequences if agreement terms are broken.**

Fort Ross School agrees with this recommendation and will develop an agreement form for use in the district.

The above response to the Grand Jury recommendation was adopted at a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees on September 5, 2007



Robert E. Noll

Superintendent/Principal