

DEC 31 2007



HEALDSBURG UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
1028 Prince Street
Healdsburg, CA 95448

Robert J. Carter, Superintendent

December 26, 2007

The Honorable Robert S. Boyd
Presiding Judge
Sonoma County /Superior Court
Hall of Justice
600 Administration Drive
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

GRAND JURY

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RECEIVED

Dear Judge Boyd:

**Healdsburg Unified School District Response to Grand Jury Report:
“See Dick. See Jane. See Dick and Jane go to school. Are they
Safe?”**

Prepared by: Robert J. Carter Ed.D., Superintendent.

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 or system 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.

The Healdsburg Unified School District agrees with the finding. The recommendation has been fully implemented. We have our Human Resources Manager trained in this area.

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.

The Healdsburg Unified School District disagrees with the finding. It is already difficult to find highly qualified employees in certain categories; we do not wish to make the application process more costly or cumbersome to potential applicants than it is already. Additionally, employment costs are negotiable conditions of employment (Public Employees Relations Board—PERB).

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.

The Healdsburg Unified School District disagrees with this finding. The Public Records Act has provision in it which we feel would be in conflict with the recommendation listed above.

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, and always do so it if no fingerprinting is scheduled for that volunteer.

The Healdsburg Unified School District agrees with this finding and will continue to direct principals and teachers to check for the names of their volunteers on the website, whenever practical and always when they have any suspicion about a potential volunteer.

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

The Healdsburg Unified School District partially disagrees with this finding. This recommendation seems somewhat impractical to implement with all volunteers and unnecessary. Our principals and teachers are directed that no volunteer works or supervises students in isolation from a district employee.

R8: School districts should, individually and 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 and would at least give school districts some assurance that information trusted to the U.S. Mail or electronic mail services is actually being received.

The Healdsburg Unified School District agrees with this finding and agrees to assist the County Superintendent, Dr. Wong, in writing such a letter to the DOJ on behalf of all districts. Currently, we get notices of subsequent arrest. SCOE also provides us with subsequent arrest notices on substitute teachers that work in our district.

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.

The Healdsburg Unified School District disagrees to this finding. The District complies with the current law as it relates to residency requirements.

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.

The Healdsburg Union School District partially agrees with this finding and has fully implemented the recommendation for athletic coaches, and all paid adults. Our principals and teachers are directed that all overnight field trip volunteers must be fingerprinted.

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

The Healdsburg Unified School District agrees with this finding and is working toward full implementation of this recommendation.

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

The Healdsburg Unified School District agrees to this finding and has fully implemented the recommendation.

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

The Healdsburg Unified School District agrees to this finding and would be willing to disseminate such information to all of my employees.

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.

The Healdsburg Union School District agrees to this finding. The recommendation has not yet been fully implemented.

Cc: Carl Wong, Superintendent of Schools
Dennis O'Reilly, 'Grand Jury Foreperson'