



## CINNABAR SCHOOL DISTRICT

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# GRAND JURY

SEP 27 2007

# RECEIVED

September 24, 2007


Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury  
P. O. Box 5109  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Reference: Grand Jury Final Report – June 28, 2007 – See Dick. See Jane.  
See Dick and Jane go to school. Are they safe?

Gentlemen:

In regard to your request for responses to the recommendations in the above referenced report, attached are Cinnabar School District's responses.

Sincerely,

  
Robert Ecker  
Superintendent/Principal

Attachment

## Cinnabar Elementary School District

### Recommendations

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.

**Cinnabar School District agrees with this recommendation. The accounts clerk and the Superintendent/Principal carry out these functions.**

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 a 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.

**Cinnabar School District disagrees with this recommendation.**

**We have a moderate salary schedule for certificated staff and one of the lowest salary schedules for classified staff in Sonoma County. To add additional costs to be borne by applicants would compound our difficulties in actually employing good candidates. We fund fingerprinting, physicals and TB testing.**

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.

**Cinnabar School District disagrees with this recommendation. As a small school district with the 98% of our volunteers being parents or other family members of our students, we know, and supervise closely, our volunteers.**

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 if no fingerprinting is scheduled for that volunteer.

**Cinnabar School agrees in part with this recommendation. Office and other staff will be encouraged to check with the Megan's Law website in the event that there is any cause for suspension of non-fingerprinted volunteers if they are not known by staff.**

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

**Cinnabar School District disagrees with this recommendation in part. Adults who are not known to district personnel will be subject to this practice. Other volunteers are known by and closely supervised by regular staff members.**

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 OJ to follow up if no confirmation was received would at least give school districts some assurance that information trusted to the US. Mail or electronic mail servers is actually being received.

**The Cinnabar School District agrees with this finding. Currently, the District receives regular subsequent arrest notifications. SCOE also provides us with subsequent arrest notices on substitute teachers that work with our students.**

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 Cinnabar School District agrees with this recommendation and will implement this practice forthwith.**

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.

**Cinnabar School District disagrees with this recommendation because we have no athletic programs and each of the other activities is supervised directly by site staff, including the supervision of volunteers. We know 99%-100% of our volunteers as parents or family members.**

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.

**Cinnabar School District partially agrees with this recommendation. Contractors who will be on our campus for only a short time are not subject to fingerprinting or background checks. Major projects by contractors, proposed to be in excess of 2 or 3 weeks will be required to provide these checks for their employees.**

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.

**Cinnabar School District partially agrees with this recommendation. Applicants who indicate that they do have a criminal record are not allowed to begin work until all pre-employment checks are completed and only after Board knowledge of an agreement for employment. With other applicants, it is sometimes necessary to employ them prior to completion of their fingerprints arriving, but only under the direct supervision of school staff. Any negative responses from background checks results in immediate dismissal on the grounds of falsifying the application document.**

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.

**The Sonoma County Sherrifs Office is very positive and reactive to providing information on “dangerous” or “suspected” individuals in our community as is the Petaluma Police Department. The S.O. has responded very quickly to any questionable persons involved, in any way, with our school’s students or staff. The S.O., Petaluma Police, and the CHP conduct annual meetings at Cinnabar School in our “community watch” program.**

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 Cinnabar School District agrees with this recommendation and will request the model developed by Santa Rosa School District to adopt/adapt for our District.**