



Office of the Superintendent  
Stephanie Anello

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**Preparing Students for Success in College, Career, and Life.**

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October 14, 2016

Mr. Michael Simmons, Foreperson  
Contra Costa County Grand Jury  
725 Court Street  
P. O. Box 431  
Martinez, CA 94553

Dear Mr. Simmons:

We are pleased to respond to your Grand Jury Report No. 1615, "Truancy and Chronic Absence in Contra Costa County Schools?"

**Findings:**

***Response to Finding 3*** – The respondent agrees with the finding.

***Response to Finding 4*** – The Antioch Unified School District (AUSD) has no knowledge of reporting in other school districts. The District complies with the requirements found in Education Code section 15497 and reports this data in our LCAP.

***Response to Finding 6*** – The respondent agrees with the finding.

***Response to Finding 7*** – The respondent agrees with the finding.

***Response to Finding 8*** – The respondent agrees with the finding.

***Response to Finding 9*** – AUSD participates in County Coordinating Council meetings at the County Office of Education (COE), along with other districts within the county. The meetings, which are held at the COE, bring districts together to address issues such as chronic truancy and create best practices for corrective action. The District is also a member of the County’s Attendance Learning Network and participated in the Keeping Kids in School program through the Juvenile Court System.

***Response to Finding 10*** – The respondent agrees with the finding.

***Response to Finding 13*** – The respondent agrees with the finding.

***Response to Finding 14*** – The respondent agrees with the finding.

***Response to Finding 15*** – The AUSD cannot respond to this statement as we are not familiar with the County’s funding model for these programs.

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**Response to Finding 16** – The AUSD does not have a truancy officer so we cannot comment on the efficacy of such programs. However, our principals, teachers, and other school and District staff members work diligently with students and their families to support improved student attendance and achievement.

**Recommendations:**

**Response 6** – *All school districts should consider participating in the Attendance Works program.*

Last year the District evaluated different attendance monitoring systems. Attendance Works was one of the systems being considered. At this time, a final selection has not been made. The District participated in the *Every School Day Counts* program launched by the County Office of Education. In addition, the District is in the process of transitioning to a new student information system that will provide schools additional tools for monitoring student attendance.

**Response 9** – *School districts should raise parent awareness concerning how to prevent a student's school absence from affecting ADA funding or the student's truancy rate.*

The District is raising parent awareness concerning the importance of positive attendance, including scheduling public service announcements (PSAs) in a local movie theater. These PSAs highlight the role good attendance plays in student success. The District will also provide Attendance Works toolkits for parents and school sites. Activities include: hanging attendance posters and banners, attendance awareness reminders in principals' newsletters, and the inclusion of attendance as a priority in the District's LCAP and school site safety plans.

**Response 12** – *Each school district should consider designating staff to collect, track, and analyze attendance data in order to follow up on students that appear to be at risk, and identifying funds to do so.*

The District employs staff to collect, track, and analyze attendance data. Our School Attendance Review Board chairperson identifies potentially at-risk students and works with families to resolve attendance issues. Each parent or guardian is made aware on a daily basis if a student is absent from school through an automated calling system. Parents are also encouraged to monitor their child's attendance through their parent portal account.

**Response 14** – *The school district should consider incentivizing schools to seek increased ADA funding by means such as splitting the additional ADA money between the district and the school for achieving increased ADA funding.*

The District will consider this recommendation.

Respectfully,



Stephanie Anello  
Superintendent

