



Acalanes Union High School District

1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette, CA 94549

www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

925-280-3900 ♦ Fax 925-932-2336

GOVERNING BOARD

Gwen Reinke
President

Richard Whitmore
Clerk

Kathleen R. Coppersmith
Member

Susie Epstein
Member

Tom Mulvaney
Member

Nicole Forbes
Student Board Member

June 19, 2012

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Grand Jury
Contra Costa County
725 Court Street
PO Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report No. 1204
"Education Board Compensation, Leading by Example"

**DISTRICT
ADMINISTRATION**

John T. Nickerson, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Christopher J. Learned
*Associate Superintendent,
Business Services*

Kevin French
*Associate Superintendent,
Administrative Services*

Dear Mr. Bell:

The Acalanes Union High School District will comply with Recommendations 1 and 2 based on findings of the Grand Jury Report No. 1204.

The Acalanes Union High School District will present a report annually at the last meeting in June of the Governing Board to provide the public an opportunity to review all compensation the members of the Governing Board received during the fiscal year. The first public annual report will be heard during the June 27, 2012, regularly scheduled Governing Board meeting.

SCHOOLS

Acalanes Adult Education
Walnut Creek

Acalanes Center for
Independent Study
Walnut Creek

Acalanes High School
Lafayette

Campolindo High School
Moraga

Las Lomas High School
Walnut Creek

Miramonte High School
Orinda

Sincerely,

John Nickerson, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Office of the Superintendent
Donald Gill, Ed.D.

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

June 28, 2012

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa county Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P. O. Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553

Re: Comments on 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury Report No. 1204 Findings and Recommendations

Dear Foreperson Bell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Governing Board of the Antioch Unified School District (“Governing Board”) files this comment with regard to the 2011-2012 Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report #1204 Findings and Recommendations.

FINDINGS

Finding #1:

The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #1:

While the Governing Board agrees that in some cases, the total cost of board compensation can be significant for districts facing financial challenges. We do not believe that the District’s current \$47,111 (less \$1378. In travel/training/other) expense meets the definition of a significant expense to the operating budget.

Finding #2:

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #2:

While the Governing Board agrees that in some cases, the total cost of these types of costs can be significant for districts facing financial challenges. We do not believe that the District’s current \$1378 in travel, training and other expenses meets the definition of a significant expense to the operating budget.

Finding #3:

Health care benefits, or cash in lieu of health care, can be the costliest compensation component.

Response to Finding #3:

While the Governing Board agrees that in some cases, the total cost of these types of costs can be significant for districts facing financial challenges. Antioch Unified School District's current \$22,184 in health care benefits, or cash in lieu is not the most costly compensation and this expense does not meet the definition of a significant expense to the operating budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1:

All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.

Response to Recommendation #1:

The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented on an annual basis. The Governing Board will direct the District's Superintendent to submit to the Board as an agenda item once a year a report on "Total Board Compensation Components" in the form of the chart utilized by the Grand Jury in their report.

Recommendation #2:

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation #1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

Response to Recommendation #2:

The recommendation has already been implemented. We have well established policies and regulations in this area. In addition, we have checks and balances in place to insure only appropriate expenditures are made.

Recommendation #3:

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, districts that provide health care benefits should consider whether it is appropriate to provide such benefits to their elected board members.

Response to Recommendation #3:

The Governing Board as a part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation #1 will review and consider if health care benefits should be provided and will verify expenses as a part of the report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Donald Gill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and "G".

Donald Gill, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Secretary to the Board



Brentwood Union School District

255 Guthrie Lane, Brentwood, CA 94513 (925)513-6300 FAX (925)634-8583

**Superintendent
Merrill M. Grant, Ed.D.**

June 27, 2012

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

Re: Amended Comments on 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury Report No. 1204 Findings and Recommendations

Dear Foreperson Bell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Governing Board of the Brentwood Union School District ("Governing Board") files this comment with regard to the 2011-2012 Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report #1204 Findings and Recommendations.

FINDINGS

Finding #1:

The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #1:

The Governing Board agrees and disagrees with this finding. Although the cost of board compensation can be an expense to some districts facing financial challenges, we do not believe that the District's current \$29,541 expense in this regard is a significant expenditure.

Finding #2:

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #2:

The Governing Board agrees and disagrees with this finding. Although the cost of travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures can be an expense to some districts facing financial challenges, the Brentwood Union School District expended only \$1,951 for fiscal year 2010-11. This represents less than \$400 per board member for professional development.

Finding #3:

Health care benefits, or cash in lieu of health care, can be the costliest compensation component.

Response to Finding #3:

The Brentwood Union School District has no cash-in-lieu option for board health care. The total expense of \$15,141 paid for Board Member health care represents a miniscule percentage of our overall district budget.

Recommendation #1:

All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.

Response to Recommendation #1:

The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented on an annual basis. The Governing Board will direct the District's Superintendent to submit to the Board as an agenda item once a year a report on "Total Board Compensation Components" in the form of the chart utilized by the Grand Jury in their report.

Recommendation #2:

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation #1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

Response to Recommendation #2:

This recommendation has already been implemented. We have well established policies and regulations in this area. In addition, we have checks and balances in place to insure only appropriate expenditures are made.

Recommendation #3:

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation #1, districts that provide health care benefits should consider whether it is appropriate to provide such benefits to their elected board members.

Response to Recommendation #3:

This discussion will occur annually as a component of the "Total Board Compensation Components" as referenced in "Response to Recommendation #1".

Sincerely,



Merrill M. Grant, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Brentwood Union School District



July 13, 2012

Mr. Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
P. O. Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

RE: Amended Comments on 2011-12 Contra Costa Grand Jury Report
No. 1204 Findings and Recommendations

Dear Foreperson Bell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code section 933.05, the Byron Union School District files this comment with regard to the 2011-12 Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report #1204 Findings and Recommendations.

Finding/Recommendation #1: Not Applicable. Byron School District does not provide specific compensation to board members for the areas and items listed in Finding #1. In the future, if we do provide compensation as stated in Recommendation #1, we will provide such information to the public in the open session of an appropriate board meeting.

Finding/Recommendation #2: The Governing Board agrees and disagrees with this finding. Although the cost of board travel, training and other reimbursed expenditures can be an expense to districts facing budgetary challenges, the Byron School District Governing Board feels that board member training is invaluable to them as governing board members in helping them make the important decisions needed during these difficult fiscal times. The Byron School District will be implementing a process of annual review during one of our scheduled board meetings in which we will provide a detailed review of the board member expenditures related to Travel/Training/Other. The recommendation will be implemented in the upcoming 2012-13 academic school year.

Finding/Recommendation #3: Not Applicable. Byron School District does not provide health care benefits for its board members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Jacopetti', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Ken Jacopetti
Superintendent
Secretary to the Board



since 1918

CANYON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

June 13, 2012

Contra Costa Civil Grand Jury

Dear Sir:

This is a response to Grand Jury Report No. 1204, "Education Board Compensation, Leading By Example" by the 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury.

The district agrees with the findings and recommendations for 1 and 2.

The recommendations have not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future if and when the district provides any form of board compensation.

Sincerely,

Gloria Faircloth

Superintendent/CBO

Canyon Elementary

Governing Board

Tomi Van de Brooke, *President*
Sheila A. Grilli, *Vice President*
John E. Márquez, *Secretary*
Robert Calone
John T. Nejedly



Chancellor
Helen Benjamin, Ph.D.

College Presidents
Contra Costa College Denise Noldon, Ph.D.
Diablo Valley College Peter Garcia
Los Medanos College Robert Kratochvil

July 19, 2012

Lloyd D. Bell, Foreperson
2011-12 Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. BOX 911
Martinez, California 94553-0091

Re: Report 1204: Education Board Compensation, Leading by Example

Dear Mr. Bell:

On behalf of the Contra Costa Community College District (District), I am responding to your letter dated April 24, 2012, regarding the Contra Costa County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) *Report 1204: Education Board Compensation, Leading by Example*.

As required by Section 933.5(a) of the California Government Code, we are providing our response and explanation to each of the report's three findings.

Finding 1

The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response

The District **partially disagrees** with this finding despite surviving our fourth consecutive year of state budget reductions. Governing Board members receive a monthly compensation of \$700 per month. This is in accordance with California Education Code 72024, which states the maximum compensation amount to elected trustees is \$750 per month. In addition, these Governing Board members are offered the same benefits available to all District employees. As indicated by your report, total board compensation for the District in FY 2010-11 is approximately \$94,000, and we believe that amount is not significant when one considers the 2010-11 District budget of \$174,554,949. This amount does not include the stewardship of the 2002 and 2006 Measure A bond funds which totaled \$400 million. However, since the expense of compensation and health benefits are a major cost to the District, we will continue to monitor and assess this expense on an annual basis.

Finding 2

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response

The District **partially disagrees** with the finding. A specific fund has been set up and managed by the Chancellor to track and monitor all Governing Board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures. For FY 2010-11, \$13,000 was allocated for these expenditures, and we believe this amount is not significant when one considers

the 2010-11 District budget of \$174,554,949. This does not include the stewardship of the 2002 and 2006 Measure A bond funds which totaled \$400 million. While not significant expenses, we take the stewardship of public funds seriously to ensure District expenditures are appropriate and contribute to the mission of the District. We will continue to monitor these expenditures on an annual basis.

Finding 3

Health care benefits, or cash in lieu of health care, can be the costliest compensation component.

Response

The District **partially disagrees** with the finding. Health care benefits, or cash in lieu of health care, are not the costliest compensation component for full-time employees but may be true for Governing Board members who only receive a monthly compensation of \$700 per month. Two members have voluntarily had their salaries reduced by 11%, effective June 2012. While they are not employees of the District, but rather elected officials, the District recognizes their important contribution by extending them the opportunity to participate in the District's benefit package as if they were full-time, active employees. As stated in our response to Finding 1, the expense of compensation and health benefits are a major cost to the District, and we will continue to monitor and assess this expense on an annual basis.

In addition, as required by Section 933.05(b) of the California Government Code, we are providing our reply to each of the report's three recommendations.

Recommendation 1

All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.

Response

The District **agrees** with the recommendation and will incorporate such a review in its annual self-evaluation.

Explanation for Recommendation 1

The Governing Board's compensation is established by California Education Code 72024. Based on the number of students the District serves annually, the maximum allowable compensation for each Governing Board member is \$750 per month. Currently, each Governing Board member is paid \$700 per month.

Regarding other forms of compensation such as health care benefits and post-retirement benefits, the Governing Board already conducts an annual budget review and budget study session that analyzes all employee compensation costs including those made available to Governing Board members. Governing Board total compensation represents approximately .02 percent of our 2010-11 adopted budget of \$174,664,949.

In the past, the Governing Board has led by example during times of budgetary reductions by reducing its monthly compensation even further before approving reductions to employee salaries. For example, when the District was facing difficult financial circumstances in 2004, the Governing Board voted to reduce its monthly compensation 25% to \$525 per month before discussing and approving reductions for District employees. As the salary for all District employees was restored, so to was the Board member compensation.

Recommendation 2

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

Response

The District **disagrees** with the recommendation. It will not be implemented because it is not warranted or needed.

Explanation for Recommendation 2

Board member travel and professional development expenses are not significant when set against the 2010-11 District budget of \$174,554,949. The District currently and always has, on an annual basis, established a budget for Governing Board travel, training, and other reimbursable expenses. For FY 2010-11, the District allocated \$13,000 for all five Governing Board members, averaging \$2,600 per member. The District is committed to ensuring appropriate opportunities for continued professional development are provided to employees and Governing Board members, consistent with the institutional mission and accreditation expectations.

The expenses of the Governing Board are managed and monitored by the chancellor, with travel and training accommodations coordinated by the chancellor's administrative assistant. Travel and training opportunities are discussed during public Governing Board meetings, and related expenditures are reviewed by the chancellor throughout the year to ensure these expenses are appropriate and stay within budget. These expenses can vary year-to-year, particularly when new Governing Board members are elected and require additional professional development opportunities so they can effectively lead the District.

Recommendation 3

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, districts that provide health care benefits should consider whether it is appropriate to provide such benefits to their elected board members.

Response

The District **disagrees** with the recommendation. It will not be implemented because it is not warranted or needed.

Explanation for Recommendation 3

Health care benefits for Board members have been offered, in compliance with Education Code, since 1989 – a practice of 23 years. Governing Board members provide a very important function for the District, no less important than any other full-time employee. The expense of Board member health care benefits represents approximately .02 percent of the 2010-11 District budget, and total Board member compensation (monthly compensation plus health care) represents .05% of the 2010-11 District budget – not significant in terms of the budget or statewide practice, but especially not significant when one considers the service provided.

While they are not employees of the District, but rather elected officials, the District recognizes their important contribution by extending them the opportunity to participate in the District's benefit package as if they were full-time, active employees. This decision is codified in Governing Board Policy 2051, District-Paid Group Insurance Plans for Managers, Supervisors, Confidential Employees and Governing Board Members, and in Human Resources Procedure 4000.01, Governing Board Members' Compensation.

These and other policies and procedures are public documents that are available on the District's public website. They are reviewed on a regular basis, with revisions made as needed. Board Policy 2051 was last reviewed in 2011, and the last time revisions were made to this

policy occurred in 2004. Any changes in District policies and procedures, including those covering Governing Board compensation, must go through the District's shared governance process, and heard twice at public Governing Board meetings for public review and comment before they are approved.

As stated in our earlier responses, the expense of compensation and health benefits are a major cost to the District, and we will continue to monitor and assess this expense on an annual basis.

Lastly, I would like to clarify a point made in the background section of Grand Jury Report 1204, indicating the District has increased the per unit fee from \$20 to \$36, or by 80 percent. In California, only the State Chancellor's Office has the authority to raise community college tuition fees, not the District.

The Contra Costa Community College District appreciates the Grand Jury's interest in education board compensation. We are fully aware of the rising cost for compensation and health benefit for employees and members of the Governing Board, and understand the importance of spending our resources wisely at all times, especially during this difficult fiscal time.

We welcome the opportunity to address any questions the Grand Jury may have regarding our responses. Please do not hesitate to contact me (925-229-6820, email hbenjamin@4cd.edu) or Timothy Leong (925-229-6523, email tleong@4cd.edu) should you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Helen Benjamin, Ph.D.
Chancellor

cc: Governing Board



This workplace has been recognized by the American Heart Association for meeting criteria for employee fitness.



July 18, 2012

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553

Re: Responses to 2011-12 Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report No. 1204 Findings and Recommendations

Dear Foreperson Bell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Contra Costa County Governing Board (Governing Board) files this response with regard to the 2011-12 Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report #1204 Findings and Recommendations.

FINDINGS

Finding #1:

The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #1:

The Governing Board agrees and disagrees with this finding. Although the cost of board compensation can be an expense to some county offices facing financial challenges, the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) does not believe that the Governing Board's current \$26,019 expense in this regard is a significant expense. This expense is only about .04 percent of CCCOE's total budget.

Finding #2:

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #2:

The Governing Board agrees and disagrees with this finding. Although the cost of travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures can be an expense to county offices facing financial challenges, the CCCOE does not believe that the Governing Board's current \$4,360 expense in this regard is a significant expense. This expense is only about .006 percent of CCCOE's total budget.

Finding #3:

Health care benefits, or cash in lieu of health care, can be the costliest compensation component.

Response to Finding #3:

The Governing Board agrees and disagrees with this finding. Although the cost of health care benefits, or cash in lieu of health care, can be the costliest compensation component, the CCCOE does not believe that the Governing Board's current \$30,008 expense in this regard is a significant expense. This expense is only about .04 percent of CCCOE's total budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1:

All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.

Response to Recommendation #1:

The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented on an annual basis. The Governing Board will request the County Superintendent of Schools to submit to the

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
July 18, 2012
Page 3

Board as an agenda item once a year a report on "Total Board Compensation Components" in the form of the chart utilized by the Grand Jury in their report.

Recommendation #2:

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation #1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

Response to Recommendation #2:

The recommendation has already been implemented. The CCCOE has well established policies and regulations in this area. In addition, there are checks and balances in place to ensure only appropriate expenditures are made. This is evident by the fact that the Governing Board's current \$4,360 expense in this regard is only about .006 percent of CCCOE's budget.

Recommendation #3:

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation #1, districts that provide health care benefits should consider whether it is appropriate to provide such benefits to their elected board members.

Response to Recommendation #3:

The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented on an annual basis as part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation #1.

Sincerely,


Cynthia T. Ruehlig, President
Contra Costa County Board of Education

CTR:tf



JOHN SWETT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

400 Parker Avenue, Rodeo, CA 94572
Phone (510) 245-4300 ~ Fax (510) 245-4315

Mike McLaughlin, Ed.D.
Superintendent

June 14, 2012

To: Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
From: Mike McLaughlin, Ed.D.
Re: Response to Grand Jury Report No. 1204, **“Education Board Compensation, Leading By Example”**, by the 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury Report

Dear Mr. Bell,

Pursuant to California Code Sections 933 and 933.05, the Governing Board of the John Swett Unified School District Governing Board files this response to the 2011-2012 Grand Jury Report No. 1204, **“Education Board Compensation, Leading by Example”**.

Finding #1

The cost of total board compensation can be significant expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #1

The Governing Board agrees that board compensation can be a significant expense to a district. The John Swett Unified School District’s Governing Board strongly believes that our compensation does not fall into this category. The John Swett Unified School District Governing Board is compensated, \$240.00 per month. The John Swett Unified School District Governing Board does not take Health Insurance. We also disagree with the use of Per Student Cost as the formula to determine the significant expense to the district. Just because a district is small in ADA does not mean the board has less to do. Small Districts have to pass the same policies as large districts, oversee the same amount of financial reports as a large district, and are responsible for the same amount of state demanded reports as a large district.

The John Swett Unified School District Governing Board strongly believes that their compensation is appropriate and not a significant expense to the district.

Finding #2

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #2

The Governing Board agrees that board compensation for travel, mileage, for training can be a significant expense to a district. The John Swett Unified School District's Governing Board strongly believes that our compensation does not fall in this category. The John Swett Unified School District's Governing Board believes that to be a good board member you must attend trainings or workshops to attain strategies and knowledge to lead our district through these difficult times. The John Swett Unified School District's Governing Board only attends the trainings and workshops that we believe will provide us with the necessary elements to lead our district.

The John Swett Unified School District Governing Board believes that the compensation for travel, mileage, for training is appropriate and not a significant expense to the district.

Recommendation #1

All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.

Response to Recommendation #2

The recommendation will be implemented in the fiscal year, 2012-2013. The Governing Board will direct the Superintendent to the Governing Board an annual report on board compensation that will include all of the items listed in the recommendation.

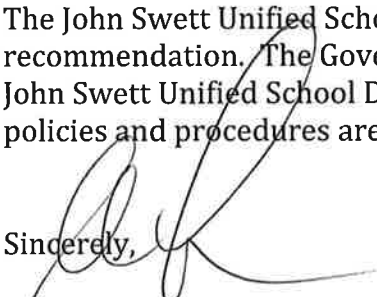
Recommendation #2

As a part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

Response to Recommendation #2

The John Swett Unified School District Governing Board is already implementing this recommendation. The Governing Board has established policies and procedures in this area. The John Swett Unified School District has internal and external oversight in place to ensure that these policies and procedures are being complied with.

Sincerely,



Mike McLaughlin, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Secretary to the Board



Knightsen Elementary School District

1923 Delta Road / P.O. Box 265
Knightsen, CA 94548
925-625-0073
FAX 625-8766

Board of Trustees

Barbara Cecchini
Franklin Dell
Kristen Rhiner
Dorothy Walter
Liesel Williams

Superintendent

Theresa Estrada

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
PO Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

Re: Comments on 2011-12 Contra Costa Grand Jury Report No. 1204 Findings and Recommendations

Dear Foreperson Bell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Governing Board of the Knightsen Elementary School District files this comment with regard to the 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury Report #1204 Findings and Recommendations.

FINDINGS

Finding #1:

The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #1

The Governing Board agrees and disagrees with this finding. Although the cost of board compensation can be an expense to some districts facing financial challenges, we do not believe the District's current \$9,326 expense in this regard is a significant expense when compared to our total budget of \$3.7 million.

Finding #2:

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #2

The Governing Board agrees and disagrees with this finding. The Knightsen School District has not had any expenses of this type for many years. However this is due to having the same people serving as Board members for many years. As Board members retire from service or if new board members are elected, the Governing Board will have to weigh the costs for new board member training in relation to the benefits of ensuring that board members receive adequate



Knightsen Elementary School

1923 Delta Road
Knightsen, CA 94548
925-625-0073
FAX 625-4593

Theresa Estrada

Principal, K-4
Curriculum & Instruction Coordinator

Ray Witte

Principal, 5-8
Special Education Director



An equal opportunity provider and employer.

training to in making well-informed decisions for the students of the Knightsen Elementary School District.

Finding #3:

Health care benefits, or cash in lieu of health care, can be the costliest compensation component.

Response to Finding #3:

The Governing Board agrees that health care benefits can be the costliest compensation component.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1

All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.

Response to Recommendation #1

This recommendation has been implemented. The Governing Board reviewed the Grand Jury report #1204 on May 23, 2011 as an information item. The District's Superintendent will submit to the Board as an agenda item once a year a report on "Total Board Compensation Components" in the form of the chart utilized by the Grand Jury in their report.

Recommendation #2

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation #1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

Response to Recommendation #2

This recommendation has been implemented. Board Bylaw #9250 which was amended on 7/11/12 states that a Board member can only be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred if authorized in advance by the Board.

Recommendation #3

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, districts that provide health care benefits should consider whether it is appropriate to provide such benefits to their elected board members.

Response to Recommendation #3

The recommendation has been implemented. The Governing Board amended Board Bylaw #9250 on July 11, 2012 to limit District paid health and welfare Benefits for Board members to those who were initially elected to the Board prior to November 6, 2012. Benefits for these Board members have been capped at the 2011-12 levels. Future board members elected on or after November 6, 2012 will not be eligible for district paid benefits. Any Board member elected on or after November 6, 2012 may elect to purchase benefits from the District at their own expense.

Sincerely,



Theresa R. Estrada
Superintendent
Secretary to the Board



Lafayette School District

3477 School Street, Lafayette, CA 94549
Telephone: 925.927.3500 Fax: 925.284.1525
Website: <http://www.lafsd.k12.ca.us>

July 6, 2012

2011-2012 Contra Costa County Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

The following is our response to the findings and recommendations of Grand Jury Report No. 1204
"Education Board Compensation, Leading By Example."

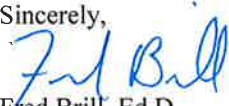
Responses to FINDINGS 1 and 2

- 1. The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.
 - (1) The Lafayette School District agrees with the finding.
- 2. Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.
 - (1) The Lafayette School District agrees with the finding.

Responses to RECOMMENDATIONS 1 and 2

- 1. All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.
 - (2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a time frame for implementation. At its regular meeting in June each year, beginning June 2013, the Lafayette School District Governing Board will conduct a public review of the total compensation provided to the board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. Currently Lafayette School District provides no compensation to its Governing Board members.
- 2. As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.
 - (2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a time frame for implementation. At its regular meeting in June each year, beginning June 2013, the Lafayette School District Governing Board will conduct a public review of board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

Feel free to contact me if you need further information

Sincerely,

Fred Brill, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Liberty Union High School District

20 Oak Street

Brentwood, CA 94513

Phone: (925) 634-2166 Fax (925) 634-1687

Eric L. Volta, Superintendent

July 9, 2012

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 911
Martinez, Ca 94553-0091

Governing Board of the Liberty Union School District Response to the 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury Report #1204 Findings and Recommendations

Dear Foreperson Bell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05 the Governing Board of the Liberty Union School District provides its response to the 2011-2012 Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report #1204 Findings and Recommendations.

Finding #1:

The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to district facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #1:

The LUHSD Board of Trustees agrees that while total board compensation can be a significant expenditure for some districts, it does not believe that their compensation is a significant district expense to LUHSD. For instance, the total compensation to all Board members is only about 55% of the average total compensation to all Board members listed in the report. Thus, LUHSD is well below the county average for such expenditures. There is a community expectation that Board members attend a multitude of events associated with high schools, board member presence at such events bolsters ties with the community, and part of the compensation to the Board members defrays the costs associated with such travel. For instance, the stipend that Board members receive is commensurate with the extra duty stipends that faculty members receive when they have to travel or take on extra duties.

Finding #2:

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding # 2:

The LUHSD Board of Trustees agrees that while travel, mileage, and training can be a significant expenditure for some districts, it does not believe that such expenditures are a significant district expense to LUHSD. The Board believes that training and professional

development is necessary to allow trustees to be constructive members of the District's governance team. To have an uneducated, unaware, untrained Board could cost a district more in the long run in court costs, personnel decisions, staff time, negative public relations, and other common aspects of governing a public entity. Due to our Board's training and cohesiveness there is strong community support for the Board's governance of the District.

Recommendation # 1:

All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care, or cash-in-lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.

Response to Recommendation #1:

The LUHSD Board agrees with this recommendation and will implement the above recommendation in the upcoming school year. Once a year, the Board will place on the agenda of a regularly scheduled Board meeting an item for "Board Compensation and Training" in order to elicit public comment and discussion. As part of this meeting, the figures and documentation relating to Board compensation will be made available.

Recommendation #2:

As part of the public annual review discussed in recommendation 1, all districts should consider reviewing Board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

Response to Recommendation #2

The LUHSD Board agrees with this recommendation and will implement the above recommendation in the upcoming school year. Once a year, the Board will place on the agenda of a regularly scheduled Board meeting an item for "Board Compensation and Training" in order to elicit public comment and discussion. As part of this meeting, the figures and documentation relating to Board compensation will be made available.

Sincerely,



Eric L. Volta, Superintendent
Secretary to the Board of Trustees



MARTINEZ UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

"Together we will ensure diverse paths to educate students in their quest for knowledge and success."

SCHOOL BOARD

Denise Elskén
John L. Fuller
Vicki Gordon
Bobbi Horack
Kathi McLaughlin

DISTRICT STAFF

Superintendent
Rami Muth

Assistant Superintendent

Personnel Services
Rick Rubino

Chief Business
Official
Andi Stubbs

Director
Student Services
C.J. Cammack

Director
Curriculum and
Educational Technology
Audrey Lee

Chief Technology Officer
Max Eissler

SITE

ADMINISTRATORS

Alhambra High
Nermin Kamel
Principal

Vicente Martinez /
Briones School
Carol Adams
Principal

Martinez
Junior High
Helen Rossi
Principal

John Muir
Elementary
Lauran Hawker
Principal

John Swett
Elementary
Marj Pampe
Principal

Las Juntas
Elementary
Aaron Tarzian
Principal

Morello Park
Elementary
Jonathan Eagan
Principal

Martinez Adult
Education
Kathy Farwell
Director

April 30, 2012

Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report 1204

Re: "Education Board Compensation, Leading by Example."

California Government Code Section 933.5(a)

Finding #1 – The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges – **#1 The respondent agrees with the finding.**

Finding #2 – Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense in districts facing financial challenges. - **#1 The respondent agrees with the finding.**

Recommendations:

#1 All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation. – **#2 The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented on June 11, 2012.**

#2 As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary. - **#2 The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented on June 11, 2012.**

Sincerely,

Rami Muth
Superintendent



12-810
Bruce K. Burns
Superintendent
1540 School Street
Moraga, CA 94556
T: (925) 377-4101
F: (925) 376-6755
bburns@moraga.k12.ca.us

June 28, 2012

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report No. 1204. "Education Board Compensation, Leading By Example"

Dear Foreperson Bell,

Pursuant to your request in the letter dated April 23, 2012, and California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Governing Board of the Moraga School District responds accordingly:

Findings

In the matter of Finding #1, "The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges", the Governing Board of the Moraga School District agrees with the finding.

In the matter of Finding #2, "Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges", the Governing Board of the Moraga School District agrees with the finding.

Recommendations

In the matter of Recommendation #1, "All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed break of all components of the compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation", the Governing Board of the Moraga School District has not yet implemented Recommendation #1. Annually the Governing Board of the Moraga School District will direct the superintendent to submit a Board agenda item listing the total compensation provided to Moraga School District Governing Board members for public review, comment, and to discuss whether changes in compensation are warranted.

In the matter of Recommendation #2, "As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation #1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary." The Moraga School District Governing Board has not yet fully implemented Recommendation #2. Governing Board policy in this area is established, as is a process to verify the necessity of expenditures. Annually the Governing Board of the Moraga School District will direct the superintendent to submit a Board agenda item listing reimbursements provided to Moraga School District Governing members for public review and comment.

Sincerely,

Bruce K. Burns
Superintendent
Secretary to the Governing Board



MT. DIABLO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
JAMES W. DENT EDUCATION CENTER
1936 Carlotta Drive
Concord, California 94519-1397
(925) 682-8000

OFFICE OF
SUPERINTENDENT

July 18, 2012

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

Re: Grand Jury Report Number 1204, "Education Board Compensation, Leading By Example" by the 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury

Dear Foreperson Bell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Governing Board of the Mt. Diablo Unified School District ("Board") files this comment with regard to the 2011-2012 Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report Number 1204 Findings and Recommendations.

FINDINGS

FINDING 1

The cost of total Board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

RESPONSE TO FINDING 1

The Board agrees and disagrees with the finding. The Board agrees that the cost of Board compensation can be an expense to some districts facing financial challenges, but we do not believe that the Mt. Diablo Unified School District's current \$92,489 expense is significant in that it only constitutes approximately .03% of our total budget. Also, Mt. Diablo Unified School District is below the County cost per student average.

FINDING 2

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

RESPONSE TO FINDING 2

The Board agrees and disagrees with the finding. Although the cost of travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses can be an expense to districts facing financial challenges, we do not believe that the Mt. Diablo Unified School District's current \$3,874.00 expense is significant in light of a total Average Daily Attendance ("ADA") of 32,561 and a current budget of \$298,928,820. Also, the demographic diversity of the District and the impact of draconian state budget cuts require sophistication in governance. Training and conferences strengthen Board governance capacity and inform members of ever-changing legal, governance, and programmatic issues.

FINDING 3

Health Care benefits, or cash in lieu of Health Care, can be the costliest compensation component.

RESPONSE TO FINDING 3

The Board agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of the compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 1

The Recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented. The Board will direct the Superintendent to include Board compensation as a component of the District's annual budget. The District will identify any substantial changes to its Board compensation allocation.

RECOMMENDATION 2

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training, and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 2

The Recommendation has already been implemented. The Board and Mt. Diablo Unified School District have established policies and regulations concerning reimbursable expenses. In addition, the district has monitoring and oversight measures to ensure that only appropriate expenditures are made. This is evident by the negligible travel and training expense.

RECOMMENDATION 3

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, districts that provide health care benefits should consider whether it is appropriate to provide such benefits to their elected board members.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 3

The recommendation has already been implemented. The Board has considered addressing the issue of health benefits.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven Lawrence". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "S".

Steven Lawrence, Ph.D.
Superintendent



PITTSBURG UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

2000 RAILROAD AVENUE · PITTSBURG · CALIFORNIA 94565

Linda K. Rondeau, Superintendent

PHONE: (925) 473-2351

FAX: (925) 473-4274

June 26, 2012

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 911
Martinez, Ca 94553-0091

Re: Amended Comments on 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury Report No. 1204
Findings and Recommendations

Dear Foreperson Bell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code sections 993 and 993.05, the Governing Board of the Pittsburg Unified School District ("Governing Board") files this comment with regard to the 2011-2012 Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report #1204 Findings and Recommendations.

Finding #1:

The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to district facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #1:

The Governing Board partially agrees with this finding. For districts experiencing financial challenges, total board compensation may be an expense to be reviewed. We do not believe that the District's current \$14,760 compensation is significant as it represents .0002% of our total budget.

Response to Recommendation #1:

Total transparency of board compensation is a good practice. To this end, Board Policy #9250 is being revised to include "an annual public review of the total compensation provided to Board Members", and will be adopted in July 2012.

Finding #2:

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #2:

The training of Board Members to fulfill their responsibilities is critical to their roles. Failure to train results in inefficiencies, ill informed decision making, misunderstandings and poor governance. A well-trained Board can be proactive, especially in these financially difficult times. The Governing Board agrees that this may be an issue for financially challenged districts but disagrees that Pittsburg Unified is in that position.

Response to Recommendation #2:

As stated in the response to recommendation #1, board policy is being modified to include an annual review of Board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses along with the annual compensation review. The policy update will occur in July 2012.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda K. Rondeau". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Linda K. Rondeau
Superintendent
LKR:bj



May 23, 2012

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

**Re: Amended Comments on 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury Report No.
1204 Findings and Recommendations**

Dear Foreperson Bell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Governing Board of the Oakley Union Elementary School District ("Governing Board") files this comment with regard to the 2011-2012 Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report #1204 Findings and Recommendations.

FINDINGS

Finding #1:

The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #1:

The Governing Board agrees and disagrees with this finding. Although the cost of board compensation can be an expense to some districts facing financial challenges, we do not believe that the District's current \$15,142 expense in this regard is a significant expense. This expense is only about .0005% of our total budget.

Finding #2:

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #2:

The Governing Board agrees and disagrees with this finding. Although the cost of travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures can be an expense to districts facing financial challenges, the Oakley Union Elementary School District did not have any of these expenses, so we do not believe it is an expense for this District.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1:

All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.

Response to Recommendation #1:

The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented on an annual basis. The Governing Board will direct the District's Superintendent to submit to the Board as an agenda item once a year a report on "Total Board Compensation Components" in the form of the chart utilized by the Grand Jury in their report.

Recommendation #2:

As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation #1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

Response to Recommendation #2:

The recommendation has already been implemented. We have well established policies and regulations in this area. In addition, we have checks and balances in place to insure only appropriate expenditures are made. This is evident by the fact that the Board has no expenses of this type.

Sincerely,



Richard K. Rogers, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Secretary to the Board



June 20, 2012

Orinda Union School District
8 Altarinda Road
Orinda, CA 94563

925.254.4901 Phone
925.253.0719 Fax

Superintendent
Dr. Joe Jacquette

Board of Trustees
Tyson Krumholz
Matt Moran
Julie Rossiter
Pat Rudebusch
Dr. Chris Severson

Contra Costa County Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

By e-mail to clope2@contracosta.courts.ca.gov

Re: Grand Jury Report No. 1204, "Education Board Compensation, Leading By Example"

Finding	Section 933.5(a) Response
1. The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.	1. The respondent agrees with the finding
2. Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.	1. The respondent agrees with the finding
Recommendation	Section 933.05(b) Response
1. All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other form of compensation.	2. The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, and will be reported on annually each June.
2. As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.	2. The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, and will be reported on annually each June.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joe Jacquette
Superintendent

JJ/kf



PITTSBURG UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

2000 RAILROAD AVENUE · PITTSBURG · CALIFORNIA 94565

Linda K. Rondeau, Superintendent

PHONE: (925) 473-2351

FAX: (925) 473-4274

June 26, 2012

Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 911
Martinez, Ca 94553-0091

Re: Amended Comments on 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury Report No. 1204
Findings and Recommendations

Dear Foreperson Bell:

Pursuant to California Penal Code sections 993 and 993.05, the Governing Board of the Pittsburg Unified School District ("Governing Board") files this comment with regard to the 2011-2012 Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report #1204 Findings and Recommendations.

Finding #1:

The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to district facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #1:

The Governing Board partially agrees with this finding. For districts experiencing financial challenges, total board compensation may be an expense to be reviewed. We do not believe that the District's current \$14,760 compensation is significant as it represents .0002% of our total budget.

Response to Recommendation #1:

Total transparency of board compensation is a good practice. To this end, Board Policy #9250 is being revised to include "an annual public review of the total compensation provided to Board Members", and will be adopted in July 2012.

Finding #2:

Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenditures are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response to Finding #2:

The training of Board Members to fulfill their responsibilities is critical to their roles. Failure to train results in inefficiencies, ill informed decision making, misunderstandings and poor governance. A well-trained Board can be proactive, especially in these financially difficult times. The Governing Board agrees that this may be an issue for financially challenged districts but disagrees that Pittsburg Unified is in that position.

Response to Recommendation #2:

As stated in the response to recommendation #1, board policy is being modified to include an annual review of Board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses along with the annual compensation review. The policy update will occur in July 2012.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda K. Rondeau". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Linda K. Rondeau
Superintendent
LKR:bj



SAN RAMON VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

699 Old Orchard Drive, Danville, California 94526

Steven W. Enoch, Superintendent

(925) 552-2933 • FAX (925) 838-3147

senoch@srvusd.net • www.srvusd.net

June 13, 2012

Lloyd D. Bell
Grand Jury Foreperson
Contra Costa County Grand Jury
725 Court Street
PO Box 911
Martinez, CA 94553-0091

Dear Mr. Bell,

This letter is in response to the Grand Jury Report No. 1204, "Education Board Compensation, Leading by Example" by the 2011-2012 Contra Costa Grand Jury.

Regarding the findings of the Grand Jury, please note the following:

1. Agree
2. Agree. It should be noted that the San Ramon Valley Unified School District has minimal expenses for the Board in these areas.
3. Agree

Regarding the recommendations of the Grand Jury, please note the following:

1. The recommendation has not been implemented. At the public meetings where the district approves its required Interim Budget Reports to the County and the State, the district will include a statement regarding the total compensation provided to board members. For the San Ramon Valley Unified School District this will include meeting stipends and training/conference expenses if any.
2. The recommendation has not been implemented. With the exception of an occasional training, the district has minimal expenditure for board expenses in the noted areas. A summary of these expenses will be included in the report as noted above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Steven Enoch', is written over a horizontal line.

Steven Enoch
Superintendent



**WALNUT CREEK
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

960 Ygnacio Valley Road
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
925/944-6850
Fax: 925/944-1768

GOVERNING BOARD

Angela P. Borchardt
Arthur M. Clarke
Jon-Michael Johnson
Katie Peña
Barbara Pennington

SUPERINTENDENT

Patricia Wool, Ed.D.

SCHOOLS

Buena Vista Elementary
2355 San Juan Avenue
Walnut Creek, CA 94597
925/944-6822
Fax 925/934-8907

Indian Valley Elementary
551 Marshall Drive
Walnut Creek, CA 94598
925/944-6828
Fax 925/935-1091

Murwood Elementary
2050 Vanderslice Avenue
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
925/943-2462
Fax 925/934-0356

Parkmead Elementary
1920 Magnolia Way
Walnut Creek, CA 94595
925/944-6858
Fax 925/939-2849

Walnut Heights Elementary
4064 Walnut Boulevard
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
925/944-6834
Fax 925/934-0648

Walnut Creek Intermediate
2425 Walnut Boulevard
Walnut Creek, CA 94597
925/944-6840
Fax 925/933-1922

To: Grand Jury

From: Patricia Wool, Ed.D. *Patricia Wool*
Superintendent, Walnut Creek School District

Re: Grand Jury Report No. 1204, "Education Board Compensation, Leading by Example"

Date: July 2, 2012

Walnut Creek School District's response to the findings and recommendations are as follows:

Findings:

1. The Walnut Creek School District agrees with the finding.
2. The Walnut Creek School District agrees with the finding.
3. The Walnut Creek School District agrees with the finding.

Recommendations:

1. The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in fall, 2012.
2. The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in fall, 2012.
3. The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in fall, 2012.



WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

1108 Bissell Avenue
Richmond, CA 94801-3135

Bruce Harter, Ph.D.
Superintendent

Telephone: (510) 231-1101
FAX: (510) 236-6784

July 19, 2012

Mr. Lloyd Bell, Foreperson
2011-12 Contra Costa County Grand Jury
725 Court Street
Martinez CA 94553

Subject: Education Board Compensation: Report 1204

Dear Mr. Bell:

The West Contra Costa Unified School District Board of Education is acutely aware of the hardships facing public schools and school districts during these dire fiscal times. Funding in California Education lags behind the rest of the nation and places our public education at great risk.

The Grand Jury Report correctly informs the public that the compensation afforded elected trustees of the school district is within legal parameters and recognizes that board members offer their time and expertise to support our public school system. The Board of Education for the West Contra Costa Unified School District has the duty to provide policy and oversight to 56 K-12 school sites as well as numerous programs housed in various locations throughout the region.

West Contra Costa Unified School District is the largest employer in the West Contra Costa County region even in comparison to Chevron's Richmond refinery. The Board of Education oversees a \$1.5 billion dollar construction program supported by taxpayers and budgets exceeding \$400 million dollars in 2012-13. The level of commitment, in terms of time and attention to complex matters, required of the Board for supporting the public schools is essential and should not go unrecognized. It is for this reason that Education Code allows for recognition of this service. It is with these facts in mind that the responses are provided to the Grand Juries findings and recommendations.

Findings:

1. The cost of total board compensation can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response: The total board compensation is 0.019% of the District's budget. In terms of significance, this is a relatively small line item. It should be noted that when benefits reductions and furloughs were implemented for employees of the District the Board implemented the equivalent reductions for their own compensation and benefits. The Board disagrees with this finding.

2. Travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses are not a direct form of compensation, but can be a significant expense to districts facing financial challenges.

Response: The reimbursement for board travel and training related to their responsibilities is essential. If elected officials were required to pay for their own travel and training it would disadvantage board members who may not have the means. It could mean that elected officials with families, fixed incomes or limited circumstances would be undertrained and unable to visit school sites to serve the public. The Board disagrees with this finding.

3. Health care benefits, or cash in lieu of health care, can be the costliest compensation component.

Response: The Health care component is, in fact (as stated in the Grand Jury report), not the costliest component for West Contra Costa Unified School District board members. The board has placed a maximum district contribution on health care benefits for board members who choose to participate in district benefits. Board members pay a portion of their premiums under the same health program contribution program as employees. The Board disagrees with this finding as it relates to the program within the West Contra Costa Unified School District.

Recommendations:

1. All education districts should consider conducting an annual public review of the total compensation provided to their board members and address whether changes in compensation are warranted. The review should include a detailed breakdown of all components of that compensation, including meeting compensation, fees, stipends, allowances, health care or cash in lieu of health care, life insurance, employer-paid retirement plans, other post-retirement benefits, technology equipment and services, and any other forms of compensation.

Response: The Board will undertake a review of policies related to board compensation on an annual basis. A budget by component will be provided to the Board at that time. This recommendation will be implemented effective the 2012-13 school year.

2. As part of the public annual review discussed in recommendation 1, all districts should consider reviewing their board travel, mileage, training and other reimbursed expenses to verify that they were necessary.

Response: Board Bylaws require prior approval for travel and conferences that the individual Board members attend. These items are on the agenda for the public to review prior to the time that Board members travel. On an annual basis the Citizens Budget Oversight Committee will review Board travel expenditures. This recommendation will be implemented effective the 2012-13 school year.

3. As part of the public annual review discussed in Recommendation 1, districts that provide health care benefits should consider whether it is appropriate to provide such benefits to their elected members.

Response: The Board will undertake a review of policies related to board compensation and health benefits on an annual basis. This recommendation will be implemented effective the 2012-13

Mr. Lloyd Bell
Page 3
July 19, 2012

school year.

While the Board disagrees with the findings of the Grand Jury, WCCUSD Board members are committed to fiscal responsibility and transparency. It is in that spirit that the Board commits to these annual reviews; and as always all information regarding the expenses of the Board are a matter of public record.

Sincerely yours,



Bruce Harter
Superintendent