



Bellevue Elementary School District

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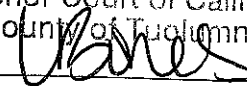
Carla J. Haakma
Superintendent/Principal

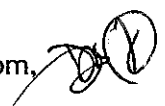
FILED

SEP 01 2016

August 11, 2016

Superior Court of California
County of Tuolumne

By:  Clerk

Dear Honorable Judge Donald Segerstrom, 

I would like to express my appreciation to Foreperson Sandi Romena and members of the 2015-2016 Grand Jury for the report dated July 12, 2016, which requested a response to its investigation of education-related items, such as school reorganization and a recommendation that a definitive study of the economic benefits and costs of this reorganization be undertaken. As Superintendent/Principal of the Bellevue School District, please accept this letter as our District's formal response.

While I do agree with both findings, I believe that both recommendations have already been implemented:

(F1) *"There is a redundancy in purchasing, bus fleet management and other management scenarios that would benefit from further transparency and that participation in a JPA appears to have potential for greater efficiencies and cost savings."*

(R1) *"A cost benefit analysis of opportunities for more JPA efforts should be undertaken by every school district, and greater purchasing by the JPA should be implemented where saving are apparent."* As outlined in Tuolumne County Superintendent, Margie Bulkin's response on this matter, I can attest that the districts in our County already collaborate with each other to share common school services, such as purchasing, information technology, insurance, instructional support, professional development, transportation and shared administrative support. I agree that we should continue to expand on this practice and research additional ways that we can share resources to stretch our limited funding from the State.

(F2) *"The high level of inter-district transfer requests creates administrative and enrollment issues for the districts."*

(R2) *"The Grand Jury recommends that an independent and definitive study of the economic benefits and costs of school district reorganization be undertaken. The results of this study, and the section of the California Education Code pertaining to school district consolidation, should be actively made available to all Tuolumne County taxpayers and elected officials. Grants from appropriate public or private agencies should be pursued to pay for this study."* I agree that a

School Board

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study would be helpful in determining potential costs & benefits of school reorganization. In 2000, School Services of California, Inc. conducted such a study. The consultants summarized that while "unionizing and/or unifying school districts makes a lot of sense from a practical standpoint...." that "...according to the majority of governing board members, administrators teachers, classified staff, and parents that we interviewed, there are concerns that the system replacing the existing system will not be better and may result in loss of identity, loss of access, creation of bureaucracies, reallocations of resources, elimination of programs, etc.". Since this study was conducted, districts have increased their practice of sharing resources throughout the County as outlined in R1. If the public feels a need to perform another study, I am not opposed to their efforts in securing private funding or grants to pursue this endeavor. The public had an opportunity to place this matter on a local ballot, but to date have failed to secure interest in the community with enough signatures to qualify.

In closing, the Belleview School Board has deliberated on this report at our public meeting on August 10, 2016 and believes that the Districts in Tuolumne County have worked together in a collaborative nature, and since the study conducted in 2000 continue to grow as we share resources and services and yet maintain local control.

Again, thank you to the Grand Jury for their diligent and dedicated efforts in fulfilling their role to the Court and citizens of Tuolumne County. I would be happy to discuss any further questions that you may have.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla J. Haakma
Superintendent-Principal, Belleview Elementary School District

School Board

Nick Schader - Andrea Van Sleet - Jason Vassar

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT

Report Title: School Reorganization Committee Report

Report Date: August 11, 2016

Response by: Carla J. Haakma Title: Superintendent/Principal, Belleview

FINDINGS

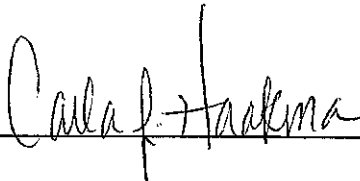
1. I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F1 and F2
2. I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: _____
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recommendations numbered R1 and R2 have been implemented.
(See letter attached)
2. Recommendations numbered _____ have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
3. Recommendations numbered _____ require further analysis.
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of the publication of the Grand Jury report.)
4. Recommendations numbered _____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: August 11, 2016

Signed: _____



Number of pages attached: two