



June 23, 2006

Honorable Judge Janis Sammartino
Presiding Judge Superior Court
220 West Broadway
San Diego, California 92101

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SAN DIEGO
COUNTY GRAND JURY



Dear Judge Sammartino:

In concert with Director Riveroll and the board of directors of the Gompers Charter Middle School in compliance with California Penal Code 933(c) we are submitting the following response to the recommendations of the 2005-06 Grand Jury.

RECOMMENDATION 06-36:

Revise the charter of the Gompers Charter Middle School for grammar, sentence structure, and adherence to the terms of the memorandum of understanding

Response:

We do not support this recommendation

The charter document was developed by a committee of the founding members under a very short time line imposed by the district. Our board of directors is extremely concerned that with any changes made to the charter, the board of education may elect to reconsider their approval under the view that this constitutes a change in the agreement.

The fact that they approved the charter request by a 5-0 vote after their staff review and approval, indicates they were aware of any of the flaws observed by the grand jury

RECOMMENDATION 06-37:

Request UCSD to provide more tutors to Gompers Charter Middle School according to the charter and the memorandum of understanding.

Response:

We support this recommendation

We will work with the university and the student volunteers to see if it is possible to increase the additional volunteers to serve as mentors and tutors. Though the numbers assigned were smaller than the MOU indicated, the engagement and results of the students engaged with our students was outstanding.

The recommendations to the director of the Gompers Charter organization are as follows:

RECOMMENDATION 06-38

Address the need for teachers with more experience and diversity to complement and mentor teachers new to the profession.

Response:

We are aware that our teaching staff represents a high percentage of new teachers and that, as with most urban schools, we do not have a teaching core that matches the demographics of our student population. Because of the team teaching in place and under the guidance and direction of the leadership team and our director as a master teacher, providing ongoing training session we have developed a very effective and dedicated group that has raised the achievement level of our students.

The issue of diversity to provide the modeling for our students was one of our focuses when we began and will continue into the next term.



RECOMMENDATION 06-39

More security staff

Response:

We agree with the recommendation

While we agree with the recommendation it must be noted that the security staff accompanied by staff and family members who serve as additional security on campus we have had few problems this year.

Our off campus problems have been supported with the use of the school police and the city police assigned to our area. We recently were the recipient, along with others in our area of the court issuing an injunction for the two gangs in the area that would prevent them from engaging in activities and association with other gang members that would be a problem for our school and the community.

RECOMMENDATION 06-40

Additional counseling staff in order to meet the needs of current students

Response:

We agree with this recommendation

We continue to seek opportunities to secure the services of non profit organizations in the community who have the persons on staff qualified to engage both our students and their families both on and/or off campus to deal with problems that may interfere with the educational achievement of our student. In addition, GCMS plans to hire a guidance assistant for 06-07 school year.

RECOMMENDATION 06-41

Increase non-university programs for those not necessarily interested in university and expand elective subjects to include fields of study in vocational skills.

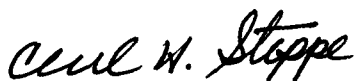
Response

We disagree with the recommendation

For this age group it is our perception that the standards based instruction currently in place will assist the student as they move into the 9th grade and better prepared by being equipped with the math, writing and attitudes regarding an educational pursuit, to function in a vocationally directed curriculum. Regardless of their choice of vocational pursuit they will need these skills to assist their business venture or selected vocation.

We are grateful to the grand jury for their devotion to their task and the quality of their work as reflected in their report titled Gompers Charter Middle School "Phoenix Rising." If more is needed I would welcome the opportunity to provide additional clarification as requested.

Sincerely,



Cecil H. Steppe

Board Chair