



Children Are First

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November 28, 2007

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SAN DIEGO  
COUNTY GRAND JURY

Honorable Ken So  
Presiding Judge  
San Diego County Superior Court  
Main Courthouse, Third Floor  
220 West Broadway  
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: 2006-2007 Grand Jury Report Entitled "School Bus Emissions – You Take My Breath Away"

Dear Judge So:

Pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933(c), the Cajon Valley Union School District provides the following responses to the findings and recommendations in the above-entitled Grand Jury Report:

**Finding:** San Diego County school district diesel bus fleets pollute less than other counties in California and in other states. However, many older, polluting school buses are still on the road in San Diego County and pose a health threat for children who ride diesel school buses.

**Response:** *Agree with the finding.*

**Finding:** Diesel school buses purchased prior to 1987 can pollute four times as much as a bus purchased in 2006. Purchasing new, cleaner running diesel school buses will reduce emissions by a factor of four. Older diesel school buses purchased between 1990 and 2000 can be retrofitted with particulate traps or have the engine replaced or modified with electronic tune ups, recycling the exhaust, turbo charging and using cleaner diesel fuel. Replaced and retrofitted diesel school buses funded by San Diego County APCD have reduced PM and NOx emissions by nearly 200 tons.

**Response:** *Agree with the finding.*

**Finding:** Because of federal, state, and local laws momentum is growing in San Diego County to provide more emission reduction funding for the present and future. In 2006 the federal government distributed \$7 million for school bus replacement/retrofitting to school districts and qualified organizations with diesel bus fleets. The state has distributed APCD funds throughout California from the lower emissions school bus program. San Diego County APCD has received and distributed to volunteer school districts \$13 million since 2000. California State Proposition 1B approved in November 2006 will provide \$200 million for statewide school diesel bus replacement/retrofit.

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**Response:** Agree; however, the Cajon Valley Union School District has not participated in the retrofitting of our buses with particular traps based on the difficulties other school districts were having with the technology in the early phases of this program.

**Recommendation 07-18:** The San Diego Unified, Sweetwater Union High, and Cajon Valley Union School Districts that are currently processing bond issue funds, or will have bond issue funds available in the future, budget a portion of these funds for diesel school bus replacement or retrofit.

**Response:** The Cajon Valley Union School District implemented a school bus replacement program in 2006. The District expects to replace 15 out of 38 buses built before 2000; eight have already been replaced, four more will be replaced by the end of 2008/2009, and the last three will be replaced by the end of 2009/2010. Because of the advances in the particular trap technology, it is the District's intention to re-examine the retrofitting program through the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District. The District has 32 buses that meet the criteria for this program. Consideration will be given to applying for this program in 2008. While Cajon Valley Union School District did issue general obligation bonds for school facility improvement projects, these funds could not be used to purchase replacement buses.

Please call Larry Laxson, Director of Transportation, at (619) 588-3177 if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



G. Wayne Oetken  
Assistant Superintendent, Business Services

GWO/me

c: Larry Laxson  
Director of Transportation