

San Dieguito

Union High School District

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August 12, 2019

RECEIVED
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orig to L. Nicks

The Honorable Peter C. Deddeh
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
P.O. Box 122724
San Diego, California 92112

Re: Response to the Grand Jury Report: "School Safety in San Diego County"

Honorable Judge Deddeh:

In accordance with the requirements of the Penal Code of California, Section 933(c), the San Dieguito Union High School District has reviewed the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations and prepared the enclosed responses.

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Haley, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Enclosure

Grand Jury Report: “School Safety in San Diego County”

Finding 01

Overall, the San Diego County Schools studied are prepared to handle many kinds of emergencies, including active shooter situations, due largely to mandates from the State.

Response to Finding 01

The San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with Finding 01. The safety and security of schools is our top priority. All schools within the San Dieguito Union High School District are well prepared to protect and support students in the event of an emergency. This state of readiness is the product of sustained effort and ongoing partnerships with community stakeholders, including police, fire, parent groups, Red Cross, etc.

Finding 02

Overall, law enforcement, first responders, parents and other stakeholders have shown interest to work cooperatively with San Diego County school studied in the prevention of possible active shooter incident.

Response to Finding 02

The San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with Finding 02.

Finding 03

At the site level, there appears to be some lack of interactive collaboration with community stakeholders on the actual development of the plans.

Response to Finding 03

The San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with Finding 03 as a general characterization for San Diego County Schools. At San Dieguito Union High School District, all of our schools use a highly collaborative and interactive process to engage stakeholders in the development of their school safety plans, engaging the site safety committees at each of their sites, which consist of parents and community members. We work with our local first responders, as needed, when we update our plans.

Finding 04

The Grand Jury found that some of the schools reviewed had conducted a vulnerability study of their premises.

Response to Finding 04

We agree, vulnerability assessments have been conducted for all San Dieguito Union High School District schools.

Finding 05

Valuable learning from the recent Florida and Texas shootings is not fully reflected yet in the existing CSSPs.

Response to Finding 05

The San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with Finding 05. It can take many months of study in the aftermath of an active shooter event before official findings and recommendations are published. The Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission's initial report was published on Jan. 2, 2019, and no official report has been released on the attack on Santa Fe High School in Texas. The San Dieguito Union High School District is committed to developing high quality emergency operations plans for active shooter events and works closely with our local law enforcement and first responders, as well as other stakeholder groups to update these plans as best practices emerge.

Finding 06

Overall, school districts in San Diego County indicated a more focused approach to active shooter response through their efforts to improve communication, add site safety precautions and adopt guidelines for Options-Based Responses in this year's or next year's Comprehensive School Safety Plans/Emergency Operations Plans.

Response to Finding 06

The San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with Finding 06. The San Dieguito Union High School District has made significant investments to prevent, respond to, and recover from an active shooter event.

- District staff have completed the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE)'s "Options-Based Response" Training of Trainers course.
- All schools participate in lockdown drills.

Finding 07

All San Diego County Schools in the Grand Jury study claimed to have conducted or have scheduled drills within the current school year on emergency procedures directed towards intruders on campus, but not specifically armed assailants.

Response to Finding 07

The San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with Finding 07. All San Dieguito Union High School District schools conducted lockdown drills during the 2018-19 school year.

Finding 08

Drills (conducted or planned) center mainly on the presentation of procedures but are progressing toward becoming more realistic and dynamic, which helps create a "mental model" for preconditioning staff and students to act with immediacy.

Response to Finding 08

The San Dieguito Union High School District disagrees wholly with Finding 08 as it implies that "realistic and dynamic" drills are appropriate for students. In their "Best Practice Considerations for Schools in Active Shooter and Other Armed Assailant Drills" the National Association of School Psychologists and the National Association of School Resource Officers offer the following guidance regarding drill intensity:

For some participants, this intense exposure and practice may empower them with experience, options, and a sense of control. For others, this type of drill may be emotionally traumatic (Frosch, 2014). (p.4)

Schools should start with simple, low-cost, discussion-based exercises (e.g., introductions to crisis responders, orientation activities, use of instructional media, or tabletop drills) and, if the school safety team determines it appropriate, work their way toward more complex and expensive, operations-based exercises (e.g., walk-throughs, specific emergency drills, and crisis simulations). (p.5)

California Education Code gives local school site councils the responsibility and authority to revise and approve the Comprehensive School Safety Plans (and the Emergency Operations Plans included therein). In keeping with this, decisions about the type and intensity of emergency drills are best evaluated at the local level.

Finding 09

As a note of recognition, Sweetwater Union High School District has gone above and beyond state requirements for safety training by demonstrating excellent and thorough levels of preparation.

Response to Finding 09

The San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with Finding 09.

Finding 10

Funding for active shooter response and preparedness is given high priority for some districts.

Response to Finding 10

The San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with Finding 10. Providing funding for active shooter response and preparedness is a high priority for the San Dieguito Union High School District. The San Dieguito Union High School District has implemented a new communication system, conducted threat assessment team training, conducted crisis intervention team training and improved security measures districtwide.

With rising pension and special education costs, as well as declining enrollment putting pressure on school district budgets, additional state funding specifically for safety improvements would help the San Dieguito Union High School District finance additional school safety measures.

Finding 11

Before and after school programs need to be better addressed in safety plans.

Response to Finding 11

The San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with Finding 11. The planning cycle we use to create and revise school safety plans has continuous improvement as its goal.

Finding 12

Many districts expressed a need to train all adults on campus in safety procedures.

Response to Finding 12

The San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with Finding 12.

Recommendation 19-01

Increase the priority of funding in school budgets for training, equipment and infrastructure improvements to handle active shooter crisis as a matter of security for staff and student safety.

Response to Recommendation 19-01

Recommendation 19-01 has been implemented. The San Dieguito Union High School District has identified priorities and timelines for improving school safety. These include improved perimeter fencing, implementing visitor screening and management systems, training employees in Options-Based Responses, training student threat assessment teams, and creating classroom lockdown supply kits. Funding for school safety has been identified in the budget to maintain these priorities.

Recommendation 19-02

Explore alternate or creative sources of funding to supplement the school's needs to enhance safety measures regarding active shooter situations, including possible grants or community fund-raising efforts.

Response to Recommendation 19-02

Recommendation 19-02 has been implemented. The district has secured additional resources to support school safety initiatives:

- All district sites promote the use of SHP's "See Something, Say Something" and the WeTip crime reporting app.

The district also actively searches for grant and partnership opportunities to supplement our investment in school safety.

Recommendation 19-03

Conduct vulnerability studies at all school and use this data to guide the development of the CSSP and EOP.

Response to Recommendation 19-03

Recommendation 19-03 has been implemented. The district has conducted vulnerability assessments on all its schools using the expertise of a contracted safety expert. Site teams were assisted in this effort by district staff and members of our local police and fire departments.

Recommendation 19-04

Provide more safety precautions against active shooters, including threat awareness training/reporting, and site physical improvements.

Response to Recommendation 19-04

Recommendation 19-04 has been implemented. The district has implemented physical improvements needed to limit/control access to our campuses during school hours and activities. Additional safety precautions will be evaluated in response to data collected from vulnerability assessments conducted with each of our school sites as a part of the annual revision of their Comprehensive School Safety Plans.

Recommendation 19-05

Monitor individual school's planning meetings to develop the CSSP and EOP to ensure collaboration of multi-disciplinary partners (staff, parents, students, first responders, fire department and law enforcement, community agencies) at the local school level.

Response to Recommendation 19-05

Recommendation 19-05 has been implemented. The district has procedures that establishes the:

- Roles and responsibilities for district and site administrators
- Specific benchmarks and dates on which progress will be reviewed.

Composition of school safety teams and roles of stakeholder groups.

Recommendation 19-06

Include "Active Shooter" response language in the school's Comprehensive School Safety Plan and dedicated sections in the Emergency Operations Plans.

Response to Recommendation 19-06

Recommendation 19-06 has been implemented. All San Dieguito Union High School District school site CSSPs include emergency operations plans specific to active shooter prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery.

Recommendation 19-07

Promote the use of tip hotlines and tip apps by students and parents.

Response to Recommendation 19-07

Recommendation 19-07 has been implemented. After extensive analysis, San Dieguito Union High School promotes See Something, Hear Something, Say something. We teach our students to contact a trusted adult or call 9-1-1. We also promote the use of WeTip.

Recommendation 19-08

Include substitute teachers and all other adult workers in the **training and practice** provided to regular staff on active shooter awareness and responses specific to each school.

Response to Recommendation 19-08

Recommendation 19-08 requires further analysis. While the San Dieguito Union High School District agrees with the need to implement Recommendation 19-08, there are considerable challenges (logistical and financial) that must be considered. District staff will determine the job types, locations and potential number of temporary and contracted workers who will need training, as well as the frequency and

methods of training and potential costs that will be required to implement this recommendation. Staff will present recommendations to the district Governing Board not later than November 21, 2019.

Recommendation 19-09

Conduct active shooter drills with staff that are dynamic and produce “immediacy” of response consistent with the school’s approved safety plan.

Response to Recommendation 19-09

Recommendation 19-09 has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. The San Dieguito Union High School District is working closely with our local law enforcement agencies to plan active shooter drills for all our sites for the 2019-20 school year. The drills will be dynamic and will prepare staff quickly evaluate the response options (Run, Hide or Fight) and choose the response that is best suited to protect their students. Training will focus on developing heightened situational awareness and a safety mindset.

Recommendation 19-10

Use age-appropriate training methods in conducting lockdown and active shooter drills with students.

Response to Recommendation 19-10

Recommendation 19-10 has been implemented. The San Dieguito Union High School District conducts age-appropriate drills with students. The District’s Safety Team regularly reviews best practices for student drills using the “Best Practice Considerations for Schools in Active Shooter and Other Armed Assailant Drills” that was published jointly by the National Association of School Psychologists and the National Association of School Resource Officers.

Recommendation 19-11

Coordinate detailed emergency plans for school programs held on campus outside of normal school hours, inform all participants and involve the community’s support.

Response to Recommendation 19-11

Recommendation 19-11 has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. Safety plans for all sites will include plans specifically designed for our before and after school programs no later than March 1, 2020.