



MARTINEZ UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

"Together we will ensure diverse paths to support all students to be college and career ready, equipped to compete and contribute in a global society."

September 21, 2016

SCHOOL BOARD

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Michael Simmons, Foreperson
2015-2016 Contra Costa County Grand Jury
Contra Costa County
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 431
Martinez, Ca. 94553-0091

Subject: Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report 1615

On behalf of the Martinez Unified School District Board of Education, please accept this letter as the legally required response regarding the findings and recommendations listed in Grand Jury Report 1615, "Truancy and Chronic Absence in Contra Costa County"

**Required Responses to Grand Jury findings in Report 1615 for findings three, four, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen.
(3,4,6,7,8,9,10,13,14,15,16):**

F3. The respondent agrees SART and SARB programs help maintain and improve attendance rates, thereby increasing ADA funding for each school in the District and in the CDE.

F4. The respondent agrees that some County school districts may not comply with the requirement found in California Education Code section 15497, that each district collect, track and report its chronically absent rates in an annual LCAP. The respondent also notes that Martinez Unified does report such information in our LCAP.

F6. The respondent agrees that complete and accurate data and a well-developed infrastructure are needed to identify students with attendance issues and resolve such issues quickly.

F7. The respondent agrees and does have its own software system for collecting attendance information and its own process and standards for collecting, storing and utilizing the truancy attendance information gathered, which are not necessarily the same as other districts in the County.

F8. The respondent agrees that a centralized attendance system among districts would be needed to gain a comprehensive picture of a student's attendance profile and patterns over multiple years or across districts.

F9. The respondent agrees that some districts may not have clear and regular communication with the COE, or with other districts about best practices, common

COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
100 CONGRESS, 1ST SESSION

The Committee on the Status of Women, U.S. House of Representatives, has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th day of June, 1987, regarding the proposed amendments to the Equal Pay Act of 1963.

The Committee is currently reviewing the proposed amendments and will report its findings to the House of Representatives in due course.

Very truly yours,
[Signature]

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achievement goals, and best data systems regarding attendance. However, the respondent notes that Martinez Unified is actively involved in such communication with the COE, and with other districts, as part of the Attendance Learning Network.

F10. The respondent agrees with the referenced findings from the California Attorney General, Kamala Harris, report from 2015, "In-School and on Track".

F13. The respondent agrees that students who are chronically absent or truant, who do not get back on track by age 18, are more likely to drop out of high school before graduation.

F14. The respondent agrees that Truancy Courts offer attendance support and are one of the last opportunities to alter a student's attendance behavior.

F15. The respondent agrees with the finding that attendance programs used by the County's Juvenile Courts, such as the Lincoln Child Center, ankle monitors, drug and mental health counselors and tutoring classes lack long-term funding. It is noted the respondent does not have direct access to the budget information for such programs, but is aware of a lack of funding in public education across the state of California, including the programs referenced above.

F16. The respondent agrees that Truancy/Resource Officers who work directly at school sites and directly with students help chronically absent and/or truant students get back on track.

Required Responses to Grand Jury recommendations in Report 1615 for recommendations six, nine, twelve, and fourteen (6,9,12,14):

R6. This recommendation has been implemented. As noted in the Grand Jury Report, Martinez Unified is part of the pilot program with the COE regarding Attendance Works.

R9. This recommendation has been implemented. School administration and District Office administration have included information related to the importance of regular attendance, and how to prevent students' school absences from affecting ADA and truancy rates, in regularly published newsletters and social media posts.

R12. This recommendation has been implemented. Martinez Unified has two administrators, who as a part of their larger job, collect, track, and analyze attendance data in order to follow up on students that appear to be at risk.

R14. This recommendation requires further analysis. The respondent agrees that incentivizing an increase in ADA by splitting the increased revenue with individual school sites is a proactive idea that may lead to improved attendance. However, the respondent notes that funding in public education, for some districts, is still hovering

around the same level of revenue received in 2008. Given the limited funding provided by the State of California to fund public schools, combined with underfunded or unfunded mandates from both the state and federal government, all resources and any increased funding must be carefully analyzed to maximize the efficiencies of expenditures. It is noted that any increased revenue from an increase in ADA rates would be revenue not previously budgeted. However, a district that may have a structural deficit in their budget might consider retaining all revenue for the purpose of addressing overall general fund expenditures. The respondent is not opposed to further consideration and potential implementation of such a strategy. In fact, the District has used this method eight to nine years ago. Further consideration will most certainly be given to the implementation of this recommendation within the next six months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CJ Cammack', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

CJ Cammack, Superintendent
Martinez Unified School District
ccammack@martinezusd.net