

August 1, 2018
The Honorable Stephanie E. Hulsey
Judge of the Superior Court
County of Monterey
240 Church street
Salinas, CA 93901

Dear Honorable Judge Hulsey:

This is in response to the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final report titled "Schools Boards Make a Difference, Improving Education: The Role of Local School Boards"

Findings:

F1. Student achievement suffers when school districts are unproductive or dysfunctional. It can be very costly and take years to address problems if the Monterey County Office of Education and/or California Department of Education have to step in to support or save school district

The Mission Union School District agrees with this finding

F2. There are proactive steps that can be taken by the Monterey County Office of Education in collaboration with school boards to prevent many pitfalls of poor governance

The Mission Union School District agrees with this finding

F3. The Monterey County Office of education and local school boards can do more to promote effective local governance that is accountable to the community and produces better district outcomes

The Mission Union School District agrees with this finding

F4. Promoting effective local governance requires better information, communication, and a strong commitment to board development.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this finding

F5. Although each school district has individual priorities, school boards can each make a commitment to adhering to best practices, training, and ongoing professional development when it comes to school board governance.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this finding

F6. While the Monterey County Office of Education cannot dictate how school boards govern, they can provide strong leadership in promoting a culture of effective school board governance.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this finding

F7. Information posted on Monterey County Office of Education and school district websites is insufficient and not user friendly. It does not provide the public with adequate information about what school boards do, how to evaluate school board performance, or how to assess school district outcomes.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this finding

F8. School boards can do better in fulfilling their responsibilities to communicate with school district stakeholders.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this finding

Recommendations:

R1. School Boards should adopt a policy to commit to all National School Boards Association best practices.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this recommendation and will adopt a policy this current school year

R2. School Boards should adopt a bylaw to make initial training and ongoing workshops mandatory

The Mission Union School District partially agrees with this recommendation, as it has adopted such practice. The board members attend regular trainings offered by the CSBA and other entities such as the county office of education

R3. Schools Boards, along with their superintendent and teacher union representatives, should make annual public presentations on school district goals and students achievements.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this recommendation. Currently this takes place every year during the September meeting if and when the results of the state testing are ready and available

R4. Schools Boards should provide clear, concise and easy to find communications on their district's goals and outcomes on their district's website.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this recommendation. This shall be reported on the Mission Union School District website by December 2018.

R5. Schools Boards should provide information on their district's website about the role and responsibilities of school board members to educate parents, the public and potential board candidates.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this recommendation. This shall be reported on the Mission Union School District website by December 2018.

R6. Schools Boards should provide access to informational sessions to educate potential school board candidates on the duties and commitment associated with serving on a local school board.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this recommendation. This is already taking place informally at Mission Union School District.

R7. The Monterey County Office of Education should provide information sessions regarding the depth and breadth of school board service to people running for school board positions

The Mission Union School District disagrees with this recommendation, as it is not within the power of the Mission Union to act upon this

R8. The Monterey County Office of Education and the Monterey County School Boards Association should actively promote and provide the California School Boards Association Masters of Governance training in Monterey county

The Mission Union School District agrees with this recommendation. The county office is already providing the training.

R9. The Monterey County Office of Education and the Monterey County School Boards Association should adopt options for school training to increase attendance and engagement in school board training. For example, offer training throughout the county webinars, or onsite training.

The Mission Union School District agrees with this recommendation. The county office is already providing this kind of trainings and opportunities.

R10. The Monterey County Office of education should revamp its website in an effort to present useable information that is relevant for a public audience.

The Mission Union School District disagrees with this recommendation, as it is not within the power of the Mission Union to act upon this

R11. The Monterey County Office of Education and the Monterey County School Boards Association should provide information about school board best practices on their websites.


The Mission Union School District agrees with this recommendation. The county office is already providing this kind of trainings and opportunities.

R12. The Monterey County office of Education and the Monterey County School Boards Association should provide information on their website about the role and responsibilities of school board members to educate parents, the public and potential school board candidates


The Mission Union School District agrees with this recommendation. The county office is already providing this kind of trainings and opportunities.

We thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the findings and recommendations of the 2017-2018 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report :School Boards Make a Difference, Improving Education: The role of Local School Boards"

Sincerely,



Jinane Annous Ed.D.
Mission Union School District Superintendent



Christina Kaupp
Mission Union School Board president