



Lagunita Elementary School District

975 San Juan Grade Road, Salinas, California 93907

Daniel Stonebloom, Principal/Superintendent

To: The Honorable Stephanie E. Hulsey Judge of the Superior Court County of Monterey
240 Church Street Salinas, CA 93901

RE: Response to the 2017-2018 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report
"School Boards Make a Difference, Improving Education: The Role of Local School Boards"

Dear Honorable Judge Hulsey:

The 2017-2018 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report - "School Boards Make a Difference, Improving Education: The Role of Local School Boards" - focuses on the importance of effective practices for school boards.

Lagunita Elementary School District Trustees agree with the Grand Jury Report that improved student achievement requires the attention of a larger community. Below please find the Lagunita Elementary School District's and the Lagunita Superintendent's responses to the findings and recommendations.

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 a school district.

The Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree 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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree 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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree with this finding. We agree there can always be improvement on our efforts and will continue to prioritize effective local governance that is accountable to the community and produces improved district outcomes.

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

The Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree with this finding. We agree that public information, communication, and board development can always be improved, and they are priorities of our district leadership.

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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree with this finding, and they are priorities of our district leadership.

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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree with this finding as long as the intent is to support local school board autonomy and growth. Additional organizations, including CSBA and MCSBA, also provide strong leadership in this area.

F7. Information posted on Monterey County Office of Education and school district websites is insufficient and not userfriendly. 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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent find our website sufficient for the needs of our district.

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

The Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree that communication can always be improved and requires ongoing improvement efforts, and this is a priority of our district leadership.

Recommendations

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

The Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree that adopting “best practices” policies are important but also recognizes the unique needs of the Lagunita School District. While we frequently review and modify board policy in line with CSBA recommendations, we also maintain that Lagunita’s policies should reflect what is best for Lagunita’s students.

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

The Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree that ongoing training and attendance at workshops is an important priority and this is reflected in our policies. We feel at this point that making such involvement mandatory is unnecessary.

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

The Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree and already do so in accordance with the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) requirements for engaging all

stakeholders. The LCAP is presented at a public hearing and approved at a regular board meeting. The Superintendent regularly briefs the Board and the public on progress toward achieving Lagunita's goals and strategic priorities.

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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree.

R5. School 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 school board candidates.

The Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree, and have already taken steps to improve this portion of our website.

R6. School 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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree, and have already taken steps to do so.

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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree with Monterey County Superintendent of Schools and the Monterey County Board of Education in their position that local school district involvement is the most appropriate way for candidates to receive specific information relevant to their district.

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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree and assert that they currently do so.

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

The Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent agree and assert that they currently do so.

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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent find the MCOE website to be a useful resource.

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

The Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent find the MCOE website to be a useful resource.

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 Lagunita Elementary School District and the Lagunita Superintendent find the MCOE website to be a useful resource.

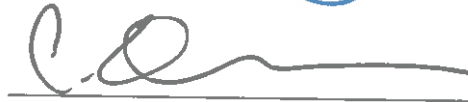
We thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the findings and recommendations of the 2017-2018 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report - "School Boards Make a Difference, Improving Education: The Role of Local School Boards."

Sincerely,

Don Chapin
Lagunita Board President



Chuck Shearn
Lagunita Board Clerk



Dick Johnson
Lagunita Board Member



Daniel Stonebloom
Superintendent/Principal



Signed 6/28/18