

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Report Title: Charter Schools: A Matter of Choice

Report Date: February 23, 2007

Response by: David M. Hellman

Title: Vice President

Marin County Board of Education

BOARD: Marin County Office of Education

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: _____
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: _____
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

See attached responses

- Recommendations numbered _____ have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ require further analysis.
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 5-16-07

Signed: _____

David M. Hellman

Number of pages attached 8

RESPONSES FROM THE MARIN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

**TO THE FINDINGS (F)
OF**

**THE 2006-2007 MARIN COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT
"Charter Schools: A Matter of Choice"**

F1: Marin charter schools are providing a choice for parents and students who seek something other than traditional teaching methods, one of the objectives of the charter school legislation.

Response: We concur. Charter schools are one tool in responding to the needs of all students in terms of offering alternative methods of instruction. They support the research that education is not a "one size fits all" activity.

F2: Phoenix Academy is offering a much-needed and highly valuable service to the students, to their families and the community.

Response: We concur and appreciate the Grand Jury's recognition of the positive results of the work of the Phoenix Academy staff and community partners in literally helping to save the lives of young people.

F3: Funding cuts at Phoenix Academy have necessitated a reduction in the family therapy program, which will surely reduce the program's effectiveness.

Response: The funding cuts in the Family Therapy program at Phoenix Academy were significant (\$125,000). The impact was that not every family in the program could be served. The families with the most serious needs are still receiving services. We have coordinated our efforts with other agencies like Community Mental Health (CMH) and Family Service Agency (FSA) to connect families with less serious needs outside of the school.

For the upcoming school year of 2007-2008, we are actively seeking additional funding. The Marin County Department of Mental Health has committed to continuing support. The Marin County Probation Department has agreed to coordinate with us on two new grants they have received that will provide services to families. We are confident this approach will be effective and our families will be adequately served.



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OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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MARIN COUNTY
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May 14, 2007

The Honorable Lynn Duryee
Marin County Superior Court
P.O. Box 4988
San Rafael, CA 94913-4988

Karin J. Hern, Foreperson
Marin County Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 303
San Rafael, CA 94903

Your Honor and Madame Foreperson:

At the regular meeting of the Marin County Board of Education on May 8, 2007, the attached responses to the report of the 2006-2007 Marin County Civil Grand Jury entitled *Charter Schools: A Matter of Choice* were agendized and approved by the Board (agenda enclosed). We very much appreciate the interest of the Grand Jury in charter schools. Our Board will continue to support the work of the Marin County Superintendent of Schools and the staff in keeping the program at Phoenix Academy alive and as well supported as resources will permit.

Thank you for this report and for the other work the Grand Jury has done both present and past to support public education in our community. Having the best possible schools requires the involvement of every citizen. The partnership of the Grand Jury over the years has made a difference in the lives of students and their families.

Sincerely,

DAVID M. HELLMAN, Vice President
Marin County Board of Education