

June 23, 2016

The Honorable Kelly V. Simmons
Presiding Judge
Marin County Superior Court
P.O. Box 4988
San Rafael, CA 94913-4900

John Mann, Foreperson
Marin County Civil Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room #275
San Rafael, CA 94903

Dear Judge Simmons and Mr. Mann:

Attached to this letter is a resubmitted response from San Rafael City Schools to the findings and recommendations of the Marin County Civil Grand Jury Report ***Head Injuries and Concussions: Are Our High Schools Keeping Our Children Safe?*** as requested in your letter of June 14, 2016.

Requested changes in the responses to Recommendations 7 and 8 are in italics in the attached response.

Please let us know if you need anything further. Thank you again for your support with the safety and well-being of all our students and families.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL WATENPAUGH, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Enclosures:

Response Form
Resubmitted Response from San Rafael City Schools
Attachment #1

RESUBMITTED

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT

Report Title: *Head Injuries and Concussions: Are Our Schools Keeping Our Kids Safe?*

Report Date: February 19, 2016

Agenda Date: May 10, 2016

Response by: Dr. Dan Zaich Title: Director, Strategic Initiatives

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F1, F3, F4, F5, F6
- I (we) disagree *partially* with the findings numbered: _____
- I (we) disagree *wholly* with the findings numbered: F2

(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered R1, R2, R3, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, See attached response have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered R4, See attached response have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ See attached response 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 _____ See attached response will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 6/23/16

Signed: 

Number of pages attached 1

San Rafael City Schools (SRCS)
Resubmitted Response to the 2015-2016 Marin County Civil Grand Jury Report
Head Injuries and Concussions: Are Our High Schools Keeping Our Children Safe?

FINDINGS

- F1. Neurocognitive baseline testing provides a record of cognitive functioning in student-athletes prior to their participation in sports. Re-testing the student after a suspected head injury is a valuable tool in helping medical professionals evaluate if a student has recovered.

Response: Agree

- F2. Marin County high schools are using baseline testing to varying degrees and are often not retesting.

Response: Disagree

Comments: San Rafael City Schools (SRCS) has begun mandatory baseline testing and retesting. Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, SRCS will be implementing a required athletic administrative system to track students' head injuries and retesting.

- F3. The costs of neurocognitive testing for high school athletes is currently funded in various ways, including booster clubs and other outside sources.

Response: Agree

Comments: San Rafael City Schools neurocognitive testing is being funded by both the school district and fundraising from our parent booster associations.

- F4. Certified Athletic Trainers, as medically-trained individuals, provide a necessary resource for protecting the health and safety of student-athletes.

Response: Agree

Comments: San Rafael City Schools has trained its coaches to take proper precautions in accordance with the CIF Return to Play Protocol. For example, under the supervision of the Athletic Director, the trainers keeps a file on every student sustaining a sports head injury, with the files from their medical doctor, and follows the CIF Return to Play Protocol.

- F5. Student-athletes and their parents do not receive adequate education in recognizing concussion and the importance of prompt reporting of symptoms.

Response: Agree

Comments: San Rafael City Schools provides information to students, parents, and athletes; please see Attachment #1. However, we recognize that additional education is prudent and are including more opportunities to highlight head injury information to families.

- F6. Data regarding head injuries sustained by high school student-athletes in Marin County high schools is not currently being maintained in a central database.

Response: Agree

Comments: We currently collect this information by school site.

Additional Comments/Key Points related to F1 thru F7

Clearly these findings show the commitment of the Marin County Civil Grand Jury to providing maximum safety for student-athletes. San Rafael City Schools primary concern for all students, in every one of our schools, is ensuring student safety and well-being. To this end, San Rafael City Schools supports these findings, and would like to provide the following additional comments for consideration:

- The San Rafael City Schools budget is governed by our elected Board of Education and resources are allocated based on specific local needs/priorities outlined in our Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP);
- Some of the findings can be implemented in a cost effective and efficient manner such as collaborating with other districts, the county office of education, and community partners on head injury education;
- We are working with our parent leaders, coaches, and athletic staff to highlight the safety issues related to head injuries, as well as asking for support from our parent groups and booster organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. Each district should require mandatory annual neurocognitive testing of all high school athletes and mandatory re-testing post-injury.

Response: Agree

Comments: San Rafael City Schools will implemented a head injury tracking system with the start of the 2016-17 school year. We already have electronic head sensors in place in gear for many high school sports and are tracking student head contact during play. Currently, district resources support one full-time the Athletic Trainer in place (part-time at each high school). Additionally, at this time, this position is being supplemented by Booster Club support at San Rafael High School (SRHS) to allow SRHS an additional 20 hours. We are committed to collaborating with other community partners to provide a more robust Head Injury Prevention program to protect our SRCS athletes.

Additionally, in preparation for our upcoming SRCS sports orientation programs with students and parents, we will be implementing a video based introduction to the dangers of sports head injuries.

- R2. A certified athletic trainer should administer and interpret all tests.

Response: Agree

Comments: Currently, the Athletic Trainers administer and interpret the immediate test results. Then the Athletic Trainers document and report the head injury to student-athlete, parent, school counselor, and school nurse. The school counselor and school nurse track both the student's academic progress and medical doctor's report indicating when the student is cleared to return to sports.

- R3. A certified athletic trainer should attend high-risk high school sporting events.

Response: Agree

Comments: Our SRCS Athletic Trainers attend all high-risk school sporting events. Sometimes this is challenging when multiple sporting events occur at the same time.

- R4. Each district should add the cost of neurocognitive testing to its annual budget.

Response: Disagree

Comments: San Rafael City Schools is looking at the cost of testing for the future and is exploring alternative funding methods.

R5. Each district should hire a certified athletic trainer for each of its high schools.

Response: Agree

Comments: San Rafael City Schools currently funds a part-time Certified Athletic Trainer (CAT) on staff at each high school. These hours are being supplemented when possible, by booster club support (20 additional hours at SRHS). With budget resources being very limited, resources may not be available to maintain these positions in the future.

R6. Each district should adopt a protocol for reporting a head injury so that all relevant persons are informed of a student's head injury and can work together as a team to ensure full recovery in the classroom and on the field.

Response: Agree

Comments: San Rafael City School's protocol for head injury follows CIF Concussion Return to Play Protocols.

R7. Each school should adopt Return-to-Play, and Return-to-Learn Protocols for all athletes.

Response: Agree

Comments: San Rafael City Schools *has adopted* the CIF Concussion Return to Play (RTP) Protocol that is in state law. In addition, the school Athletic Director is responsible to ensure that all of our coaches are following these procedures with student-athletes.

R8. Mandatory concussion education for student-athletes such as the Barrow Brainbook, the HEADS UP concussion training or some other equivalent education should be adopted by each school district. No student-athlete should begin participation before completing this education.

Response: Agree

Comments: Prior to participation, San Rafael City Schools' *student athletes will receive mandatory concussion education* and families receive information about concussion education (please see Attachment #1).

- R9. The Marin County Office of Education should collect head injury data and compile the data in a centralized database. Data should include date of injury, sport, type of injury, diagnosis, recovery information and other critical details. The data should be reported to MCAL and CIF for analysis and summary and the results published for the public annually while keeping all names of students confidential.

Response: Agree

Comments: Collection by the Marin County Office of Education would be of great value for our high school district. There may be other options as well, such as the Marin County Public Health Department. The challenge is that this information also has to remain at the school site within a structured set of protocols and procedures for our SRCS staff/ team.

**San Rafael City Schools Response to
2015-16 Marin Civil Grand Jury Report:
Head Injuries and Concussions: Are Our High Schools Keeping Our Children Safe?**

**RESPONSE
ATTACHMENT #1**

TERRA LINDA HIGH SCHOOL

Concussion Information Sheet

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headaches• “Pressure in head”• Nausea or vomiting• Neck pain• Balance problems or dizziness• Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision• Sensitivity to light or noise• Feeling sluggish or slowed down• Feeling foggy or groggy• Drowsiness• Change in sleep patterns | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amnesia• “Don’t feel right”• Fatigue or low energy• Sadness• Nervousness or anxiety• Irritability• More emotional• Confusion• Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)• Repeating the same question/comment |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:

- Appears dazed
- Vacant facial expression
- Confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily or displays incoordination
- Answers questions slowly
- Slurred speech
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can’t recall events prior to hit
- Can’t recall events after hit
- Seizures or convulsions
- Any change in typical behavior or personality
- Loses consciousness

TERRA LINDA HIGH SCHOOL
Concussion Information Sheet

RETURN THIS SHEET TO THE ATHLETICS OFFICE

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns to soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athlete will often under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete's safety.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. The new CIF Bylaw 313 now requires implementation of long and well-established return to play concussion guidelines that have been recommended for several years:

“A student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time and for the remainder of the day.”

and

“A student-athlete who has been removed may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and received written clearance to return to play from that health care provider”.

You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion Remember its better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

Student-athlete Name Printed

Student-athlete Signature

Date

Parent or Legal Guardian Printed

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

Date

Adapted from the CDC and the 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport
Document created 5/20/2010