



RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

August 10th, 2016

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

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

Report Title: Marin Public Schools Fail to Beat Bullies

Report Date: June 2, 2016

Public Release Date: June 9th, 2016

Response by: August 10th, 2016

The following letter constitutes the Ross School District's response to the findings and recommendations of the Marin County Civil Grand Jury's report *Marin Public Schools Fail to Beat Bullies*. Consistent with the Grand Jury's report, our district is aware of and has done much to address the issue of bullying. This issue is one that impacts the entire community and, as such, any action should involve community partners. The Ross School District works diligently, strategically, and inclusively to ensure that all students feel safe and comfortable in schools and beyond.

The attached response reflects our focus that ALL students feel safe at school. The good news is that a vast majority of students, according to the 2013-2014 *California Healthy Kids Survey: Marin County Secondary Main Report* reported feeling "safe or very safe" at school. Moreover, the Ross School District ranks at the 99% in similar school and general school rankings related to key indicators of a healthy school climate and culture on the 2015-2016 California Healthy Kids Survey. Specifically, the School Climate Report Card in the Spring of 2016 indicated 49% growth in the School Climate Index which is an aggregate of student perception of overall support and engagement, low violence and substance abuse. As a result, of the Ross School District's actions harassment and bullying student-reported indicators have been dramatically reduced in the past several school years.

Thank you for being our partner in supporting the safety of the students in our schools.

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with findings numbered: 3
 - I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: 1 and 2
- (Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons therefor.)**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered 1,2,4,5, and 6 have been implemented. **(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)**
- Recommendations numbered 3 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: 8-10-16

Signed:  _____

Number of pages attached: 5



Ross School District Response to Marin County Civil Grand Jury
Marin Public Schools Fail to Beat Bullies
Response Date: August 10th

Finding #	Finding	RSD Response
F1	Bullying is a problem in Marin middle and high schools. Marin ranked above the State average overall in incidents for the 2011-13 school years and for two of the three grade levels surveyed in CHKS.	<p>Disagree. Assuming the factual statements set forth in the Grand Jury's report are accurate, there may be some schools that need for certain districts and schools to take immediate action to improve their bullying problems. Moreover, several CHKS reports have been produced since 2011-13 that may indicate substantial progress in reducing incidents of bullying. The Ross School District has shown dramatic reductions of reported incidents of bullying and currently ranks at the 99% percentile on the CHKS survey indicating a very healthy school climate and culture. Specifically, the School Climate Report Card in the Spring of 2016 indicated 49% growth in the School Climate Index which is an aggregate of student perception of overall support and engagement, and low violence and substance abuse.</p>
F2	Marin County schools do not fully comply with California anti-bullying law.	<p>Disagree. Assuming the factual statements set forth in the Grand Jury's report are accurate, there may be some schools that need to update their policies in accordance with the law.</p> <p>However, we can confirm that the Ross School District is in compliance. All of our schools prioritize student safety and are trained to respond to bullying incidents in accordance with the law.</p>

F3	Most schools do not have a direct link on their website home page to their anti-bullying policies and procedures.	Agree. The Ross School District includes anti-bullying policies and procedures on the website and in the student and parent handbook. However, the information is not directly linked on the website.

Recommendation #	Recommendation	RSD Response
R1	Each school in the district should review its policies and procedures to ensure full compliance with the requirements of Seth's law.	The recommendation has been implemented related to the Ross School District operated programs and policies. Internal staff and legal review has verified compliance with the law. Moreover, the Board subcommittee has recently reviewed and adopted new policies and practices that are aligned with California Assembly Bill 9, CSBA recommendations, and current research and practice.
R2	Each school in the district should review its policies and procedures to ensure that complainants are protected from retaliation and that their identities remain confidential as appropriate.	The recommendation has been implemented related to the Ross School District operated programs and policies. Internal staff and legal review has verified compliance with the law.
R3	Each school in the district should adequately publicize its anti-bullying policies and procedures through its website, including a direct link on the website's home page to the information (not simply linking to a lengthy student handbook, but directly to the anti-bullying	The Ross School District will include a specific link to information related to student safety and the results of our student perception data.

	policy and procedures themselves).	
R4	All procedures and forms for filing a bullying complaint, including an anonymous complaint, should be available on the school's website.	All procedures and forms regarding a bullying complaint are available on the school's website.
R5	Each school in the district's website should provide the option to complete and submit bullying complaints online.	The Ross School District provides students the option to submit information regarding bullying complaints online.
R6	Each school in the district should review its student and parent education programs to ensure they are relevant and current. Schools should consider using the No Bully Solution Team process that has been reported to be highly successful, or another equivalent program.	The Ross School District works with the site council, counseling department, and staff to identify programs that have been found to have a substantial impact on student education as it pertains to bullying.