

**RESPONSE TO THE CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT****FROM****MARY JANE BURKE  
Marin County Superintendent of Schools****FINDINGS**

I generally agree with **FINDINGS** 1-9 except as noted in the responses to the recommendations.

**RECOMMENDATIONS****Recommendation #1**

All public school districts should review their emergency, safety, and/or disaster manuals and protocols in each of their schools and in the district office (including MCOE) to ensure that they are in compliance with the law. These plans should be updated to include the latest information and requirements pertaining to hazardous materials, intruders and terrorism. They should coordinate with each other, with the MCOE taking the lead. The "Intruder on Campus" procedure should be merged into The Model School Emergency Disaster and Incident Preparedness Plan. A single manual should incorporate all the emergency safety and security procedures at each school.

**Response:**

The California Education Code requires annual reviews and necessary updating of school emergency plans and safety manuals. Working with the Marin Schools Emergency Preparedness Council and the Marin County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services, the Marin County Office of Education will develop procedures for response to terrorism to be included in updated emergency plans and school safety manuals. The protocol for "Intruder on Campus" that was developed by the Marin County School/Law Enforcement Partnership and the new terrorism procedures will be incorporated into The Marin Schools Model Disaster Emergency and Incident Preparedness Plan.

The Marin Schools Model Disaster Emergency and Incident Preparedness Plan is posted on the Marin County Office of Education website. The website provides easy access by schools and school districts to download the model plan and other information as they customize each school emergency plan as a part of their overall School Safety Plan.

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**Recommendation #2**

As required by California Penal Code Title 15, Chapter 1.1 Section 627, all schools and district offices (including MCOE) should post signs at all points of entry to their campuses or buildings from streets and parking lots. These signs should direct outsiders to the reception point. The signs should indicate that failure to register subjects visitors to prosecution for trespass.

**Response:**

Marin County school district Boards of Trustees have adopted policies regarding visitors on campus. These policies are communicated to the public in various ways, including, but not limited to, annual notification to parents and signage. The language and placement of signage may vary from school to school. In order to develop a more standardized approach, the Marin County Office of Education will research the legal requirements and prepare a template containing the appropriate language and legal citations for informing visitors about the requirements for entering a public school site. The template will be used for Marin County Office of Education sites and will be shared with school districts.

**Recommendation #3**

All school district personnel should be directed to question strangers and visitors on campus to ensure that procedures are followed.

**Response:**

Schools belong to the public of Marin County. As a part of the community, schools partner with various groups such as parents, business, nonprofit agencies, governmental entities, and community members to offer services to students. These partnerships result in many visitors to school campuses throughout the day. School staff will be annually reminded to enforce school policies for Visitors on Campus.

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**Recommendation #4**

All school districts should provide knowledgeable evaluators at every drill conducted by their schools. These could be district staff, firefighters, law enforcement officers, County safety personnel and experienced school administrators from other schools. Inexperienced persons in responsible positions should be sent to observe programs and drills at schools where programs and drills are considered good.

**Response:**

Sharing of best practices and observation of model emergency activities among school districts has occurred on a limited basis among the school districts of Marin County. Expansion of such practices will be sought. In addition, The Marin Schools Emergency Preparedness Council will work with the Marin County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services and local police and fire agencies to enlist their assistance in the review and evaluation of school drills.

**Recommendation #5**

Appropriate emergency materials, equipment and food for 72 hours should be acquired, inventoried and stored in a suitable location. Supplies not required in the classroom emergency kits should be stored away from buildings.

**Response:**

The goal of the Marin County Office of Education and all school districts in Marin County is to establish and maintain the 72-hour standard for the availability of food and medical supplies during emergencies. This goal must be considered by local school boards in the context of all of the demands made on district resources. Funding by the state for each school district in our county is different. Each district allocates financial and staff resources to meet the emergency 72-hour food and medical supply standard in different ways. Schools are working to meet this goal by seeking support of parent-teacher associations, home-and-school clubs, local school foundations, and business community partnerships. Some districts have achieved this goal, as noted by the Grand Jury. Every district will continue this effort in an aggressive manner.

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**Recommendation #6**

Each school administration should determine the closest designated shelters and provide this information in its plans, along with directions to the shelters and contact information for the people responsible for the shelters. Parents should be informed. Every responsible person on campus should have this knowledge or immediate access to it. The Red Cross should be contacted annually to update procedures.

**Response:**

The American Red Cross has the responsibility for the designation and activation of community shelters. Red Cross Shelter Agreements exist with the public schools of Marin County. Schools are community shelters. The Marin Schools Emergency Preparedness Council will review these agreements with the Red Cross and will coordinate any training for school personnel as to their role and responsibilities for sheltering during emergencies that the Red Cross determines is appropriate or needed.

**Recommendation #7**

School district administrators should review the emergency preparedness knowledge and experience of responsible school staff. Site and classroom training should be scheduled as soon as practicable where needed and conducted annually thereafter. Available self-study materials and videos should be provided.

**Response:**

School district administrators and site and classroom personnel have many requirements and mandates for training from the state. Resources and time for training continues to be a challenge for our schools. Safety and emergency training continues as a high priority within the overall training requirements and time constraints. The Marin Schools Emergency Preparedness Council and the Marin County School/Law Enforcement Partnership will review the need for on-going training and offer resources to the school districts and school sites. The Marin County Office of Education will provide information on low-cost training programs and materials through the Marin Schools Emergency Services website.

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**Recommendation #8**

School districts should evaluate the communication requirements and procedures of each school to ensure that procedures are in place for the possibility that all power and phone systems are out.

**Response:**

Standardized communications is a central component of schools being prepared during emergencies. The backbone of our current system is the 800mh Marin School Emergency Radio System. Each school district participates in monthly drills using this system. Schools also use short-wave radios and cell phones, depending on location. Schools have prepared emergency phone trees and procedures for contacting parents, staff, fire departments, and law enforcement agencies. Schools will be a part of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA) when the system comes on-line and funding is secured. MERA training and equipment will help to standardize the communication capabilities and responses by school districts and school sites in emergency situations.

A follow-up on the activities listed in these responses will be provided in approximately six (6) months.

Respectfully submitted,

MARY JANE BURKE  
Marin County Superintendent of Schools