

Laguna Joint School District

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August 25, 2004

The Honorable Terrence R. Boren
Marin County Superior Court
P.O. Box 4988
San Rafael, CA 94913-4988


Betty J. Mattea, Foreperson
Marin County Civil Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive, Rm. 303
San Rafael, CA 94903

Your Honor and Madam Foreperson:

On behalf of the Laguna Joint School District, I am forwarding the responses to the Marin County Grand Jury Report on School Administration. I and my fellow board members read with interest the report and appreciate being able to comment on it.

Thank you for your interest in our school district and the support you provide for public education.

Sincerely,


Sharon Hess
President
Laguna Joint School District
Board of Trustees

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Report Title: School Administration – Is the Cost Too High?

Report Date: June 10, 2004

Response by: Sharon Hess and the Laguna Board of Trustees **Title:** President-Board of Trustees

FINDINGS

- I/we agree with the findings numbered: 1, 2, 3, 4
- 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

- Recommendations numbered _____ have been implemented
 - ❖ Attach a summary describing the implemented actions
- Recommendations numbered R2 and R3 have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future
 - ❖ Attach a timeframe for the implementation *2004-2005 school year upon receipt of the required information from Marin County Office of Education.
- 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: 8/23/04

Signed: Sharon Hess

Number of pages attached 2

**RESPONSES FROM THE LAGUNA JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT TO THE
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2003-2004
MARIN COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY**

F1. Finding: The County Office of Education, while producing numerous statistical reports using the object codes, has produced no reports using the function codes even though this information is available for each district.

Response: The Laguna Joint School District will provide Marin County Office of Education with information that will assist in creating new statistical reports using function codes.

F2. Finding: The number of students in a school district does not appear to affect the percentage of the budget spent on general administration because the Office of Education provides the administration for the smallest school districts.

Response: Laguna Joint School District had an ADA of 26 for the 2003-2004 school year. Our administrative costs are kept at a minimal percentage level in comparison to our total budget because we receive administrative support from the Marin County Office of Education. This support allows our school district to manage our budget in a cost effective manner and target more resources for our student instructional program.

F3. Finding: Although consolidation of smaller districts is unlikely to produce administrative savings, unification appears to offer up to a 3% savings of the combined budgets.

Response: Our small school district is part of the Rural Schools Consortium. This consortium provides support in the delivery of instructional programs such as Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), Peer Assistance Review (PAR) and English language development. The Marin County Office of Education provides business services support and Special Education services providing an efficient and cost effective approach for our district. The needs of our district students can best be met by local community management.

F4. Finding: In any reorganization, savings in administrative costs may be offset by other costs of reorganization such as averaging up salaries.

Response: Any savings through school district reorganization would be offset by other expenses and salaries would most likely increase as has been shown in other communities throughout California.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R2. Recommendation: Every school district should ensure that it accurately codes expenses to conform with the functional system.

Response: All expenses will be coded to properly conform with the functional system.

R3. Recommendation: Every school district should analyze its breakdown of expenses for all functional categories.

Response: The Laguna Joint School District will review and analyze the breakdown of expenses for all functional categories and reports received from the Marin County Office of Education.