



# UNION SCHOOL

5300 Red Hill Road  
Petaluma, CA 94952  
(707) 762-2047

September 8, 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 Dr. Rm. 303  
San Rafael, CA 94903

Your Honor and Madam Foreperson:

Attached are the responses for the Union Joint School District to the Marin County Grand Jury Report on "School Administration – is the Cost too High?" These responses reflect the views of our board as elected trustees of the district.

We thank the Grand Jury for producing an informative report and allowing us to comment on it.

Sincerely,

Charles Belford  
President  
Union 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:** Charles Belford and the **Title:** President – Board of Trustees  
Union 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: 9/8/04

Signed: 

Number of pages attached 2

**RESPONSES FROM THE UNION 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 Union Joint School District works closely with the Marin County Office of Education in providing all the requirements for processing financial related reports. Union Joint School District will provide coding to meet the needs of specialized statistical reports.

**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: Union Joint School District is a small rural school with an ADA of 17. Marin County Office of Education provides superintendent support, business services and other general administration to our district. This support is important to our small district and provides a means for a cost effective model to operate the small, rural West Marin districts.

**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: Union Joint School District participates with the other rural schools in a consortium coordinated by Marin County Office of Education. This model is a cost effective way to operate like a large district but have local decision making on the delivery model and quality of student instructional programs.

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

Response: It would seem logical that certain expenses, in particular salaries, would increase through a school district reorganization and may offset savings derived from the reorganization.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Response: Our district will code expenses to conform with the requirements of the functional system.

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

Response: Expense reports will be analyzed for all functional categories as per this recommendation with the support of the Marin County Office of Education accountant.