



LARKSPUR SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Community of Learners

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Monica Bonny

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May 23, 2008

The Honorable Verna Adams
Marin County Superior Court
P.O. Box 4988
San Rafael, CA 94913-4988

Roberta Robinson, Foreperson
Marin County Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 275
San Rafael, CA 94903

Dear Judge Adams and Foreperson Robinson:

Attached you will find the Larkspur School District's Response to Grand Jury Report Form due June 13, 2008.

Respectfully,

Valerie Pitts

Enclosure

Valerie Pitts
Superintendent

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RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Report Title: **Emergency Communications at Marin Schools: A Tale of Catastrophe**

Report Date: **March 13, 2008**

Response by: **Board of Trustees, Larkspur School District**

By: **Valerie Pitts, Superintendent and Monica Bonny, Board President**

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F3, F9, F10, and F11
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: see attached.
(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 _____ have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered R1 and R2 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: 5/15/08

Signed: Valerie Pitts

Number of pages attached 2

Responses from the Larkspur School District

FINDINGS

- F5. The present public school emergency radio communication system is about to go belly up, leaving the schools with no emergency radio communication capabilities.**

Response: Each school entity in Marin County has prepared an Emergency Plan which includes provisions for emergency communications between individual school sites and school district offices. This structure is not affected by the public school emergency radio communications system. I do agree that the current countywide system used by district offices and the Marin County Office of Education is in need of upgrading, given the age of the equipment, etc.

- F11. An alternate plan to equip the schools with an emergency radio communications system that could be outside the MERA radio network is in an early stage of consideration.**

Response: These conditions will be coordinated and intensified by the Marin County Office of Education in the coming period of time with a preliminary report to the Marin County Civil Grand Jury by November 24, 2008 and a further report by March 1, 2009.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The Board of Supervisors, the Marin Emergency Radio Authority, the Disaster Council, the Marin County Office of Education, the Marin County Office of Emergency Services, the Marin County Department of Public Works, the Marin County Administrator's Office, the Marin County Department of Health & Human Services, the various public school districts and the private schools should immediately work together to fund and install the MERA system and its radios in all of Marin's public and private schools.**

Response: It is clear now that further planning on the part of the school entities is needed. The coordinated efforts of the Marin County Office of Education and the school entities will determine all of the needed steps and information to become a part of MERA once the study is complete and the ability of MERA to serve the school entities is determined, we will continue working with all of our partners to find a way to activate an updated system.

It is Larkspur School District's intention to participate in collaboration planning to design and implement an emergency communication system. We will participate in the effort

coordinated by Marin County Office of Education to prepare a further report to the Grand Jury on progress in this area by November 24, 2008.

- R2. In the event it is determined that MERA is not a feasible option for Marin's schools, an effective, alternative emergency radio communication network, independent of MERA, should be immediately modeled, funded and installed in Marin's public and private schools through the collection efforts of the entities identified in Recommendation (R1) above.**

Response: See the Response to R1.