



Educational Support Services

August 21, 2009

Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court
San Joaquin County Courthouse
222 East Weber Ave-Room 303
Stockton, CA 95202

RE: Truancy Reporting

Honorable Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court:

This letter provides responses from Lodi Unified School District to each of the findings and recommendations of the San Joaquin County Grand Jury for Case No. 11-08A.

The case involves contradictory reports on student truancy rates for 2007-08, that were reported to two separate state agencies by Lodi Unified School District.

The Lodi Unified School District's response to findings are as follows:

Finding 1: The respondent agrees with the finding.

Lodi Unified School District reported the truancy rate as 40% to the California Department of Education through the June 2008 Consolidated Application Part I.

Finding 2: The respondent agrees with the finding.

Lodi Unified School District submitted a truancy report to the State Controller's Office for 2007-08 fiscal year of 21%.

Finding 3: The respondent agrees with the finding.

The Educational Support Services Department responsible for submission of truancy rates in the Consolidated Application did not access the correct rates as generated by the Child Welfare and Attendance Department. ESS staff made a clerical error that resulted in the inaccurate rate reported on the June 2008 Consolidated Application.

1305 E. Vine St.
Lodi, CA 95240

209-331-7033 • 209-953-8176
209-331-7961 Fax

The Lodi Unified School District response to each of the recommendations of the San Joaquin County Grand Jury are as follows:

Recommendation 1: Lodi Unified School District to correct the inaccurate truancy reports made for the 2007-08 school year.

Response A:

The recommendation has been implemented. The June 2008 Part 1 Consolidated Application was re-submitted on June 9, 2009 with the corrected truancy data obtained from the Child Welfare and Attendance Department.

Recommendation 2: The Lodi Unified School District will work with the Technology Department to reorganize the manner of reporting truancy information.

Response B:

Submission of truancy data will become technology based during the 2009-10 school year through two software systems being implemented in the school district. A new student information system, eSchools, has the capability of generating reports of truant students from attendance information inputted at the school sites. Child Welfare and Attendance officers working with school attendance clerks will generate lists of truant students from the system in a timely manner, including generating parent letters. The data can also be accessed centrally for submission to state agencies.

As this student information is in the first year of implementation, central office staff will monitor implementation of the procedures associated with the new system.

Also in the 2009-10 school year, the district will implement CalPADS, California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System. This system will require the district to submit data as well as other data into this system that is accessible to the State of California. Many kinds of data will be submitted to the State Department of Education through the system. It seems logical to predict that use of this system will modify the submission of the Consolidated Application and that data submitted throughout the school year through CalPADS will also be used for the Consolidated Application. This will standardize submission by both the Educational Support Service Department and Child Welfare and Attendance.

The key to a successful implementation and use of both systems will be continuous training and monitoring for accuracy and proper submission.

The Director of ESS, Technology and the Coordinator of Child, Welfare and Attendance met with the Associate Superintendent to discuss the Grand Jury findings and develop a plan for organizing the manner of reporting truancy information with the new student information system and state data system.

Additional staff from technology met with the ESS, CWA and Technology Administrators to discuss the truancy reporting feature of eSchools and how it interfaces in Child Welfare and Attendance advisors responsibilities.

Recommendation 3:

Response to Recommendation A:

ESS staff and CWA have become aware of the need of submitting the same accurate data and did so for the June 2009 Consolidated Application, Part I. Regardless of the level of implementation of data systems to submit truancy rates, Lodi Unified School District staff is dedicated to the accurate submission of truancy data to all agencies and the public. Lodi Unified School District appreciates the guidance of the Grand Jury and agrees with all findings and recommendations. All staff desire to give state agencies the accurate data and rates and look forward to data systems assisting in the task. All staff members have become aware of the importance of reporting accurate and complimentary data to agencies and finally to the public.

Sincerely,



Dr. Cathy Washer, Superintendent

Under the direction of the Lodi Unified School District Board of Education

Copy to: Mr. Richard Jones, President, Board of Education

Dr. Odie Douglas, Associate Superintendent

Mrs. Lisa Kotowski, Administrative Director of Curriculum

Mrs. Lisa Hayes, Director of Educational Support Services