

Kara McClellan

Willits Elementary Charter School

Supplemental information for Grand Jury Report

May 8, 2013

F1. Advanced planning, private donations/loans and the dedicated work of parent volunteers enabled the school to become functional within six months.

F2. The charter school is meeting the needs of particular students at a cost to general educational funding for the Willits School District. *WECS does not receive funding from WUSD: WECS students are funded by the state.*

F3. State laws concerning requirements for schools are very specific; however schools may exempt themselves from these laws by a 2/3 vote of the governing board i.e.

*Willits Unified School District Board. Public schools are exempt from zoning codes. The Charter School Association of Willits (WECS' governing board) did vote to exempt ourselves from an environmental impact law. We met with WUSD board of directors who agreed that we were in compliance with state laws. We are required to and have closely adhered to safety and many other laws.*

F4. The school appeared suddenly at a problematic location after the Charter School

Board exempted themselves from all restrictions. The school has made an effort to

*overcome the problems of the location. There were pros and cons to all of the sites considered. Public schools are exempt from zoning codes. The Charter School Association of Willits (WECS' governing board) did vote to exempt ourselves from an environmental impact law. We met with WUSD board of directors who agreed that we were in compliance with state laws. We consider being located next to the public library, County Museum, Rec Grove and new Mendocino College campus to be an ideal location in many ways. We are also a more convenient choice for families who live within walking distance of our campus.*

F5. The GJ noticed the following areas of concern:

- a. the school ramps lack a non-skid surface: *All ramps were painted with paint that included a sand mixture. We recognize that the sand is not sufficiently "gritty" and plan to repaint all ramps this summer. During icy weather staff sanded each ramp to prevent students from slipping.*
- b. windows lack coverings: *parents are making curtains, rods have been donated and we have begun to hang them.*
- c. classroom doors do not have internal locks: *We need to explore this issue further; fire regulations also have specific rules regarding egress. The school director will research best practice and regulations by June 30.*
- d. cabinets for cleaning supplies require locks: *all cleaning supplies are now locked.*
- e. electrical panels need to be locked: *We plan to address this issue with our board president/maintenance crew.*
- f. classrooms need general cleaning to meet the sanitary and safety demands of a school environment: *we are actively addressing this issues through more effective use of parent volunteers.*
- g. the school has no public address system for early warning: *We use an intercom system and have PA system in our Music department. We plan to purchase a bullhorn with attached siren.*

R1. The charter school should continue and document the search for a permanent location that meets the needs of child safety and environmental regulations. (F4)

*The pros and cons of other potential sites are still being considered at a board level.*

R2. Install window coverings immediately and make every attempt to improve classroom safety and cleanliness. (F5) *Please see F5 b and f*

R3. Install internal locks and a public address system for school security. (F5)

*Please see F5 c and g*