

# COMPTCHE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## A Quaint and Charming Country School

June 2, 2014

### SUMMARY

Comptche Elementary School, a quaint and charming school in the town of Comptche, has two classrooms for kindergarten through third grade (K-3). When the 2013-2014 Grand Jury visited the school, the staff consisted of a part-time principal, one full-time teacher, and two part-time paraprofessionals serving a total enrollment of 18 students.

It is a well-equipped school that addresses the needs of all students. The staff was found to be both caring and dedicated to the students and the school. Parents and volunteers are an essential asset to the learning environment. The students are well supervised at all times. The Grand Jury was favorably impressed by what they observed at this small school.

### GLOSSARY

Free and Reduced Lunch Program This is a federally funded program called “The National School Lunch Program” that assists schools and other agencies in providing nutritious lunches to children at free or reduced prices.

### BACKGROUND

The Grand Jury selected Comptche Elementary School for a routine investigation because of its rural location and small size. The Comptche Elementary School, at its current location, had not been investigated by the Grand Jury since its construction in 1985.

### APPROACH

The Grand Jury visited the kindergarten through third grade elementary school located in Comptche. The Grand Jury interviewed the principal, spoke with the teacher and a paraprofessional, and toured the facilities. The Grand Jury reviewed *The Mendocino K-8 School Parent and Student Handbook 2013-2014* and the school’s organizational chart.

### FACTS

The Comptche Elementary School is in the Mendocino Unified School District and educates students from kindergarten through third grade. At the time of the Grand Jury’s visit, there were 18 students enrolled for the 2013-2014 school year. The school is staffed by one full-time teacher and two part-time paraprofessional aides. The principal for Comptche Elementary School is also the principal for the Mendocino Elementary School, a kindergarten through eighth grade school, and the Albion School, a kindergarten through third grade school.

There is an adult present at the school by 7:45 a.m. each school day. Kindergarten starts at 10:00 a.m. and ends at 2:20 p.m. The first through third grades start at 8:30 a.m. and end at 2:20 p.m.

Lunches are prepared at the Mendocino Elementary School cafeteria and transported to the Comptche Elementary School where they are distributed to the students at meal time by a

paraprofessional. The Free or Reduced Lunch Program serves 43% of the students. The remainder of the students may purchase the lunches at a reasonable price.

The two story school building consists of two classrooms, a kitchen, and two restrooms. A multi-purpose room is used as a lunchroom and for other student activities. The second floor of the building was once used for fourth and fifth grade classes, but is now used for storage.

Educational materials are stored neatly and displayed on the walls in the classrooms. The educational materials observed were clean and up-to-date. The grounds are spacious with playground equipment concentrated in one area.

Parents are very involved in classroom activities. A volunteer teaches keyboarding skills to the third grade students in the computer lab. A local artist volunteers to teach art. Parents and volunteers also help in the kitchen and with recess activities on the playground.

At the time of the visit, the school site and the facility were clean throughout. The outside grounds were well-maintained and litter free. The Grand Jury noticed some protruding nails on the exterior of the building. Some faucets were found to be leaking.

## **FINDINGS**

- F1. Overall, the school was clean and safe.
- F2. The existence of protruding nails on the exterior of the building is a safety concern.
- F3. The existence of leaky faucets is an environmental concern.
- F4. Comptche Elementary School is a well-managed small school. The environment is one in which students and staff work well together.
- F5. The Grand Jury commends the staff at Comptche Elementary School for their excellent work.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Grand Jury recommends that:

- R1. Protruding nails on the building exterior be fixed. (F2)
- R2. Faucets be inspected for leaks and repaired, if necessary. (F3)

## **RESPONSES**

Pursuant to Penal Code §933.05, responses are required from the following individuals:

- Superintendent, Mendocino Unified School District (F2 ,F3 and R1, R2)
- Principal, Comptche Elementary School (F2 ,F3 and R1, R2)

Reports issued by the Civil Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code §929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Civil Grand Jury.