

**Grand Jury Report
RESPONSE FORM**

Grand Jury Report Title: RE: Report Titled: *MIDLING THROUGH: A Report on
Four Mendocino County Middle Schools*

Dated: May 12, 2009

Response Form Submitted By: Lois Nash, Ed.D., Superintendent
Ukiah Unified School District
925 N. State Street, Ukiah, CA 95482

Response MUST be submitted per Penal Code §933.05, no later than: August 30, 2009

A. I have reviewed the report and submit my responses to the FINDINGS portion of the report as follows:

1. I (we) agree with the Findings numbered:
1, 2, 5, 7, 11-13, 15-17, 19-21, 23-25, 27-29, 31, 32-53, 55, 56-60, 62-64,
66, 106-117, 122-124

2. I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the Findings numbered below, and have attached, as required, a statement specifying any portion of the Findings that are disputed with an explanation of the reasons therefore.
3, 4, 6, 8-10, 14, 18, 22, 26, 30, 54, 61, 65, and 118-121

B. I have reviewed the report and submit my responses to the RECOMMENDATIONS portion of the report as follows:

1. The following Recommendation(s) have been implemented and attached, as required, is a summary describing the implemented actions:
3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9

2. The following Recommendation(s) have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, and attached, as required, is a timeframe for implementation:
1 (Eagle Peak), 2, 5, and 10

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- The following Recommendation(s) require further analysis, and **attached as required**, is an explanation and the scope and parameters of the planned analysis, and a time frame for the matter to be prepared, discussed and approved by the officer and/or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed: (This time frame shall not exceed six (6) months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury Report)
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- The following Recommendations will NOT be implemented because they are not warranted and/or are not deemed reasonable, **attached, as required** is an explanation therefore:
-

I have completed the above responses, and have attached, as required the following number of pages to this response form:

Number of Pages attached: 7

I understand that responses to Grand Jury Reports are public records. They will be posted on the Grand Jury website: www.co.mendocino.ca.us/grandjury. The clerk of the responding agency is required to maintain a copy of the response.

I understand that I must submit this signed response form and any attachments as follows:

First Step: E-mail (word documents or scanned pdf file format) to:

- The Grand Jury Foreperson at: grandjury@co.mendocino.ca.us
- The Presiding Judge: grandjury@mendocino.courts.ca.gov
- The County's Executive Office: ceo@co.mendocino.ca.us

Second Step: Mail all originals to:

- Mendocino County Grand Jury
P.O. Box 629
Ukiah, CA 95482

Printed Name: Lois J. Nash, Ed.D.

Title: Superintendent

Signed: 

Date: 08/28/09

ATTACHMENT 1

Grand Jury Report Response Form

SUPERINTENDENT, UKIAH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT ("District")

FINDINGS: 1-66, 106-124

See Exhibits A and B, attached.

RECOMMENDATIONS: 1-10

The following Recommendations have been implemented.

4. The District's Director of Curriculum and Instruction oversees the pursuit of new funding and renewal of existing sources. On an ongoing basis the District pursues grants and other funding sources to support and supplement programs by reviewing information available from various sources including, but not limited to, the U.S. Department of Education, California Department of Education, Mendocino County Office of Education, private foundations and staff. By meeting requirements of existing grants the District has been eligible for renewal funding.

8. The District works collaboratively with MCOE and will continue the partnership to support staff development through content specific programs and professional learning communities. The District currently works with MCOE on textbook adoption, SB 472 professional development programs, English Language Development training, and Program Improvement Initiative and Requirements.

9. The District has and will continue to work collaboratively with MCOE to provide educational technology and related support and maintenance.
 - MCOE serves as a regional center for the California Technical Assistance Program through which the District participates in professional development to support the use of technology in teaching and learning.
 - With MCOE's assistance the District submitted a grant proposal to the State for educational technology.
 - The District and MCOE have entered into an agreement for data monitoring which enables the District to analyze student test data and make adjustment as appropriate to improve student progress.

The following Recommendations requires further analysis.

5. The District will explore a variety of ways to eliminate potential tripping hazards at Pomolita.

By September 30, 2009, the District will post signs to remind students of campus safety rules (i.e., no running). The area of concern presently is supervised by staff. The District will assess use of the area and make adjustments in supervision as appropriate based upon the assessment.

The District will assign the Director of Maintenance and Operations to research repair options, alternatives and related costs and report back to the Governing Board by December 31, 2009. By February 28, 2010, the Governing Board will consider the repair options and alternatives, review the maintenance fund, consider other District maintenance projects, and develop a maintenance implementation plan as the budget allows.

See also Exhibits A and B.

EXHIBIT A
To
Grand Jury Report Response Form

SUPERINTENDENT
EAGLE PEAK MIDDLE SCHOOL
UKIAH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (“District”)

FINDINGS: 1-31, 32-55, 106-124

I disagree partially with the following Findings.

3. Scheduling is not “complex.” We have built into our schedule professional improvement days and weekly staff meetings to provide time for professional development and collaboration among teachers.
4. Some students need additional support in ELA and/or math, but the District offers a wide variety of electives that are available to all middle school students as their individual schedules allow.
6. The District’s funding for construction projects was not “frozen.” As of mid-January the funding already had been allocated. The District did not plan or proceed with any classified layoffs in 2008-09.
8. Eagle Peak Middle School’s (“Eagle Peak”) janitorial staffing level is sufficient to meet the school site’s needs.
9. Classified staff was not at “imminent risk of being laid off.” No classified staff members at Eagle Peak were laid off in 2008-09.
10. There were no “gaps” in transportation. Parents historically have provided transportation for middle school extra-curricular activities, and their support did not decline last year, and booster clubs provided necessary funding to continue the same programs offered the year prior.
14. Meal prices last increased by \$0.75 approximately 3-4 years ago. There has not been any decrease in the number of meals served since the increase.
18. This finding does not apply to Eagle Peak.
22. Eagle Peak has never had a lock-down.
26. Eagle Peak has a full athletics program including running, wrestling, track and field, soccer, softball, basketball, and volleyball. Our students compete in many sporting events with students from Willits Unified School District, Fort Bragg Unified School District, Anderson Valley Unified School District, Laytonville Unified School District, and some Lake County school districts.
30. Truancy is a problem for less than five percent of our students.

54. Parents are requested to review and sign their student's academic schedule.

118. Eagle Peak is able to provide required daily instructional minutes in ELA and mathematics without block scheduling. Students receive additional support in ELA and/or math, as needed, and a wide variety of electives are available to all middle school students as their individual schedules allow.

119. See response to 118.

120. Not applicable. Eagle Peak does not have block scheduling.

121. Eagle Peak's PI status will be determined based on whether it meets AYP.

RECOMMENDATIONS (1-3, 6-7, and 10)

The following Recommendations have been implemented.

3. Eagle Peak's Emergency Response Plan has been amended to designate the lead custodian ("Head of Plant") as the person responsible for ensuring that working fire extinguishers are in place in all classrooms at all times when students are present.

6. Eagle Peak will continue weekly meetings ("Collaborative Wednesdays") for professional development including grade level, subject matter, and district-wide meetings, trainings, and Professional Learning Communities.

7. Eagle Peak has a successful, ongoing after-school program. Our plans for improvement include the addition of a Lego Robotics program and after school math tutoring.

The following Recommendations have not been implemented but will be in the future.

1. By written notice Eagle Peak will remind staff to date and translate to Spanish all printed and electronic communications to student families. Notice will be prepared and given to staff by September 30, 2009.

2. Eagle Peak will update its Emergency Response Plan to include community ListServes, telephone and email contacts for all radio and television stations (including Spanish language stations) that broadcast in the county. The update will be complete by January 1, 2010.

10. During the 2009-2010 school year, Eagle Peak will be working with the City of Ukiah to increase student participation in the City's athletic programs by providing additional promotion of the programs. Eagle Peak will have an administrator present at every Title VII Native American parent night and will invite a number of dance troupes to promote the arts.

EXHIBIT B

To

Grand Jury Report Response Form

SUPERINTENDENT

POMOLITA MIDDLE SCHOOL

UKIAH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT ("District")

FINDINGS: 1-31, 56-66, 106-124

I disagree partially with the following Findings.

3. Scheduling is not "complex." We have built into our schedule professional improvement days and weekly staff meetings to provide time for professional development and collaboration among teachers.
4. Some students need additional support in ELA and/or math, but the District offers a wide variety of electives that are available to all middle school students as their individual schedules allow.
6. The District's funding for construction projects was not "frozen." As of mid-January the funding already had been allocated. In 2008-09 the District did not plan or proceed with any layoffs of classified employees assigned to the middle schools.
8. Pomolita Middle School ("Pomolita") janitorial staff is not "minimal." The staff includes three eight hour shifts which is sufficient to meet site needs.
9. Classified staff was not at "imminent risk of being laid off." No classified staff members at Pomolita were laid off in 2008-09.
10. There were no "gaps" in transportation. Parents historically have provided transportation for middle school extra-curricular activities, and their support did not decline last year, and booster clubs provided necessary funding to continue the same programs offered the year prior.
14. There has not been an increase in the amount students pay for lunch (\$2.50) in four (4) years.
18. The asphalt at Pomolita is "maintained" with periodic sweeping. It has not been replaced or resurfaced due to budget limitations.
22. The last "lock down" for security reasons at Pomolita was five years ago.
26. Pomolita has a full athletics program including all of the sports noted in Finding 65 and volleyball. Our students compete in many sporting events with students from Willits Unified School District, Fort Bragg Unified School District, Anderson Valley Unified School District, Laytonville Unified School District, and some Lake County school districts.

30. Truancy is a problem for less than five percent of our students.
61. Improvement in morale and collaboration among staff members is attributable to administration *and* staff's joint efforts to work together.
65. Pomolita also offers volleyball. Our students compete in many sporting events with students from Willits Unified School District, Anderson Valley Unified School District, Laytonville Unified School District, and some Lake County schools.
118. Pomolita is able to provide required daily instructional minutes in ELA and mathematics without block scheduling. Students receive additional support in ELA and/or math, as needed, and a wide variety of electives are available to all middle school students as their individual schedules allow.
119. See response to 118.
120. Not applicable. Pomolita does not have block scheduling.
121. Pomolita's PI status will be determined based on whether it meets AYP.

RECOMMENDATIONS (1-3, 6-7, and 10)

The following Recommendations have been implemented.

1. The referenced Findings do not pertain to Pomolita. Pomolita currently dates and translates to Spanish all printed and electronic communications to families.
3. Pomolita's Emergency Response Plan designates responsibility for periodically testing fire extinguishers to be sure they are all in working order to the custodian. There are fire extinguishers in all classrooms and in common areas.
6. Pomolita will continue weekly meetings ("Collaborative Wednesdays") for professional development including grade level, subject matter, and district-wide meetings, trainings, and Professional Learning Communities.
7. Pomolita has a successful after school program. In addition, the staff reviews and sets yearly goals for improvement to ensure that the quality of the program continues year-to-year.

The following Recommendations have not been implemented but will be in the future.

2. By December 31, 2009, Pomolita will add to its Safe School update of 2009-10 community ListServes, telephone and e-mail contacts for all radio and TV stations broadcast in the county.

10. It is the goal of Pomolita leadership to enter into three community partnerships by the end of the 2009-10 school year. Outreach efforts will include meeting with community clubs such as Lyons and Rotary to explore ways we can work together to form a partnership and invite important community members to visit the school possibly to serve as "principal for a day."