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School Construction Management in San Mateo County

County Superintendent of Schools Should Act

Issue

What can the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools do to help San Mateo County school districts adopt and follow best practices for fiscal and construction management of large capital improvement projects?

Background

The 2004-2005 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury (prior Grand Jury) reported¹ on problems with school construction projects in San Mateo County (County), including cost overruns, defective construction, and construction-related legal problems, and recommended that the County Superintendent of Schools play a role in correcting these problems. The 2006-2007 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) revisited this issue to see what action the County Superintendent has taken.

San Mateo County has 23 local school districts each governed by a publicly-elected school board that is responsible for hiring a district superintendent. Superintendents are responsible for implementing Board of Trustees educational policies, preparing annual budgets, overseeing the routine maintenance of facilities and, on occasion, are also responsible for school construction projects. Managing major construction or renovation projects, usually in conjunction with a bond issue or state mandate, requires a skill set not normally associated with educators.

School districts are generally inexperienced in dealing with the complexities of construction management, so they depend on contractors and architects. This lack of experience can affect the cost, quality and timeliness of construction undertakings and the media routinely reports the resulting project cost overruns, delays, poor workmanship, and legal actions for remedies that can often be traced to the inadequate management

¹ "School Construction Management in San Mateo County," 2004-2005 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury report.

oversight. Although the Division of State Architect, a part of the California General Services Department, provides school construction design and oversight services, it provides no guidance for the management process. As long as building plans meet state standards and codes, no further guidance is provided by this division.

Local school districts are not the only entities that embark on complex school construction projects. After years of experience, the San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD) has developed proven policies and procedures for construction planning and management. These techniques have been employed successfully for capital improvement projects on the three SMCCCD campuses.

The prior Grand Jury recommended that the County Superintendent of Schools convene a blue ribbon panel of district superintendents, construction industry representatives, and architectural and construction management experts to develop a set of policies and procedures for use by local districts. These policies and procedures were to be modeled after those used by the SMCCCD and were to provide the basic structure for the control and management of school district construction projects. Each local district was free to modify the policies and procedures to meet unique requirements.

The former County Superintendent of Schools responded in August 2005 to the prior Grand Jury report as follows:

The County Superintendent agrees that school districts in our County and across the state face significant challenges when undertaking major construction and renovation projects. Guidance in these complex endeavors could be of assistance to school district superintendents and governing boards. Accordingly, the County Superintendent will work in conjunction with the San Mateo County Superintendents' Association to establish an appropriate panel to explore the development of policies and procedures for the planning and management of major construction and renovation projects. The past successes of the San Mateo Community College District and other local education agencies will serve as a key support in this effort. The County Superintendent of Schools will ask to have this item placed upon the agenda of the October meeting of the San Mateo County Superintendents' Association.

The current County Superintendent of Schools placed the grand jury's blue ribbon panel recommendation on the February 2006 agenda of the San Mateo County Superintendents' Association meeting; the superintendents voted against it. Instead, a link² was placed on the County Office of Education website. This website, which is unfortunately difficult to locate from the County Office of Education homepage, has references to books, articles, and websites related to school construction.

Meanwhile, school construction fiascoes at the district level continue. For example, the San Mateo Union High School District had significant cost overruns on its Measure D

² <http://www.smcoe.k12.ca.us/smerc/focus-construction.html>

projects, and is embroiled in controversy over its current Measure M contracting practices.

The school districts' need for guidance is underlined by a recent statement from Cathy Hicks, Chief of Program Services for California's Office of Public School Construction. *The San Mateo County Times* (April 18, 2007) quotes her as saying "In general, it's not uncommon for construction firms to charge districts as much as they think they can get...I think on a regular basis they overcharge districts, and I'm frustrated with the districts because they allow it to happen."

Findings

The SMCCCD employs policies and procedures that have proven effective for controlling and managing large capital improvement projects.

The San Mateo County Superintendents' Association rejected the County Superintendent of School's attempt to form a blue ribbon panel to formulate policies and procedures for the planning and management of capital improvement projects.

In the absence of policies and procedures for control and management of improvement projects, the residents of the County and the Grand Jury have witnessed debacles such as the recent San Mateo Union High School District Measure D cost overruns and Measure M contracting problems.

Conclusions

Local school districts and the residents therein can suffer from humiliating and costly errors when major school construction projects are not well managed.

Recommendations

The Grand Jury recommends that the:

1. San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.
2. Boards of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

**San Mateo County Office of Education Response
to the
2007 Grand Jury Recommendations**

School Construction Management in San Mateo County Report

Recommendation 1

San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

In response to this recommendation, I would first like to thank the Grand Jury for its continued focus on the subject of school construction project management. This is an area of critical importance with significant implications both for the fiscal health of our schools and for the trust extended to the educational establishment by the public at large.

Although the County Superintendent and the County Office do not adopt policies on matters such as management of capital improvement projects, it is well within our purview to develop and disseminate information related to best practices.

In specific response to your recommendation, I plan to consult with local (especially those at the San Mateo Community College District) and statewide experts to identify and collect information on the subject of best practices for managing capital improvement projects. When completed, the document will be available to all the school districts and posted in a prominent place on the County Office's website. In addition, I will request that this topic be placed on the San Mateo County Superintendents' Association meeting agenda for discussion in the Fall.

Millbrae School District
555 Richmond Drive
Millbrae, CA 94030

July 10, 2007

Hon. John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Grandsaert:

The Millbrae School District is in receipt of the Grand Jury Report of June 20, 2007 which contains findings and recommendations re: School Construction Management in San Mateo County Report.

In response to the Grand Jury's recommendations, the Millbrae School District submits the following:

1. **Recommendation:**
San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

District Response:
The County Superintendent's response is attached.
2. **Recommendation:**
Boards of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

District Response
The Millbrae School District Superintendent fully supports the response of the San Mateo County Superintendent to recommendation #1.

When the San Mateo County Superintendent completes the task of identifying and collecting information on the subject of best practices for managing capital improvement projects, the Millbrae School District will review the document and discuss the manner in which the information shall guide any future capital improvement projects.

Hon. John L. Grandsaert
July 10, 2007
Page 2

A San Mateo County Office of Education summary of best practices for managing capital improvement projects will be greatly appreciated as a resource to be utilized within the Millbrae School District in guiding our future endeavors. We agree that the subject of public school construction is one which deserves attention and should be given the critical importance it deserves as the Millbrae School District's responsibility both fiscally and to the educational and public community.

Sincerely,

Karen K. Philip
Superintendent

Attachment

c: Board of Trustees
Administrators
Dr. Martin
County Superintendent

ar

**Jefferson Union High School District Response
to the
2007 Grand Jury Recommendation**

School Construction Management in San Mateo County

Recommendation 2

Boards of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

In response to the Grand Jury's recommendation to all San Mateo County School Districts concerning policies and practices related to managing capital improvement projects, the Jefferson Union High School District will do the following:

1. Review the District's current practices to determine whether additional policies and safeguards are necessary.
2. Review the San Mateo County Community College District's best practices and policies to determine whether gaps may exist, if any, in the JUHSD's current practices.
3. Cooperate to the extent possible with the San Mateo County Superintendent's suggestions related to Recommendation #1 once the District has received and determined that such recommendations are applicable to the Jefferson Union High School District.



SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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SUPERINTENDENT

Barbara Olds

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Emanuele N. Damonte
Shirlee Hoch
Raymond Latham
Liza Normandy
Philip J. Weise

July 13, 2007

The Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Grandsaert

RE: School Construction Management in San Mateo County

This letter is in response to the San Mateo County Grand Jury's findings and recommendations relating to School Construction Management in San Mateo County. Attached to this cover letter is the School District's response to the findings and recommendations of the Grand Jury's Report.

If you have any questions, or if you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely

Barbara Olds
Superintendent

/cc

Enclosure

cc: Board of Trustees
John C. Fitton, Court Executive Officer
Thomas F. Casey III

South San Francisco Unified School District

Response to San Mateo County Grand Jury Report School Construction Management in San Mateo County

Finding 1:

The SMCCCD employs policies and procedures that have proven effective for controlling and managing large capital improvement projects.

SSFUSD Response: **Agrees**

Finding 2:

The San Mateo County Superintendents' Association rejected the County Superintendent of School's attempt to form a blue ribbon panel to formulate policies and procedures for the planning and management of capital improvement projects.

SSFUSD Response: **Agrees**

Finding 3:

In the absence of policies and procedures for control and management of improvement projects, the residents of the County and the Grand Jury have witnessed debacles such as the recent San Mateo Union High School District Measure D cost overruns and Measure M contracting problems.

SSFUSD Response: **Agrees. However, it should be noted that there are also many public school agencies that successfully manage capital improvement programs by implementing their own set of best practices and standards controls, without dictates from the San Mateo County Superintendent's Office (e.g.- the current Measure E work at San Carlos School District).**

Recommendation 1:

San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

SSFUSD Response: **Partially agree. The San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools should offer guidance to San Mateo County school districts in the form of current research into (and publication of) best practices with respect to construction management, bond management and capital improvement project management. It should be up to each school district to assess the value of each practice with respect to its own district, projects.**

Recommendation 2:

Boards of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

SSFUSD Response: **Partially agree. Board of Trustees should direct Superintendents to consider and review best practices as published by County Superintendent of Schools and to make recommendation to the Board with respect to adopting those that best fit the district's needs.**

HILLSBOROUGH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

August 6, 2007

Hon. John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, Ca. 94063-1655

Dear Honorable Grandsaert,

At the February 2006 San Mateo County Superintendents' Association meeting, the then newly appointed San Mateo County Superintendent explained to the San Mateo County Superintendents' Association that she had been asked by the Grand Jury to formulate policies and procedures to help the individual school districts manage their capital improvement projects. Through discussion it was determined that it would be helpful to have access to reference materials, books, articles and websites which may provide each individual district with support as each district responds to its unique building issues. The County Superintendent agreed to create a website where this information could be housed. I do not recall any vote regarding this subject, rather I recall the information presented in manner described above.

The Hillsborough City School District passed Measure B in 2002, providing this district with \$67,000,000 to renovate its schools and to add new buildings. We engaged in a two-year planning process, which included hiring an Assistant Superintendent to direct this building program and hiring a construction management company to assist in all planning and implementation stages of this large project. Literally hundreds of meetings have been held each year which include Trustees, the Construction Managers, the Assistant Superintendent, parents, staff and interested community members to review the scope of the work and the costs of construction. A Master Plan for construction which includes projected and actual costs has been created and is reviewed and updated frequently.

Actual construction began during the summer of 2004 and continues into the present. We anticipate our last projects will be completed in 2011-2012. Assisting us with the financing of the Bond, the Trustees employed both Bond Counsel and underwriters and employed a financial advisor to both provide advice to the Board and to negotiate with the underwriters. In addition, our Citizens' Oversight Committee meets quarterly to review all financial records and quarterly reports in written format. The community is provided with the same financial, construction and building plan information through the Measure B newsletter which is sent quarterly to every Hillsborough resident. Additionally, the District maintains a Measure B website with building plans, construction, financial and Citizens' Oversight Committee meeting(s) proceedings. The building process in this District has direct, informed Board, staff and community oversight and is progressing according to our planned schedule.

Every school district in this County is unique and Board practices and policies reflect this uniqueness. Assuming that one set of practices or policies would be appropriate for each of the twenty-three districts is unrealistic. It is appropriate to request that each district have a detailed, long-term construction plan and realistic financial plan, for financing this construction and that these plans are reviewed frequently by the Board of Trustees. In our District, at each public school board meeting, the Board receives an update from both the Assistant Superintendent and from the Construction Managers regarding both construction and financial issues. Frequent study sessions allow the Board to review many issues so that the Trustees can make thoughtful decisions at the Board meetings. The practices and policies this district uses to insure that quality construction occurs in a timely and financially viable manner may be of benefit to other districts, but whether these are realistic practices for all district to adopt is questionable. Adopting practices from other districts or from the County which do not include all of the provisions described above would not be satisfactory for this district.

Based upon the above discussion, it our belief that the San Mateo County Superintendent acted appropriately in establishing a useful website of relevant materials. Equally, for the reasons described above, we find it unlikely that any particular policies or practices would be relevant for all of the unique school districts in this county.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Loushin-Miller
Superintendent, Hillsborough City School District



Pacifica School District

375 Reina Del Mar Avenue • Pacifica, California 94044
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Academic Excellence ★ Standards for Success

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District Administration

James Lianides, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Susan Vickrey
Assistant Superintendent
Josephine Peterson
Chief Business Official

August 28, 2007

Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Re: School Construction Management in San Mateo County

Dear Judge Grandsaert:

The Pacifica School District is in receipt of the June 20, 2007 San Mateo Civil Grand Jury Report which contains findings and recommendations regarding School Construction Management in San Mateo County.

In response to the Grand Jury's recommendations, the Pacifica School District submits the following:

1. Recommendation:

San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

District Response:

The Pacifica School District Board of Trustees agrees that all school districts should adopt an effective construction management model based on best practices and looks forward to the County Superintendent's upcoming report in which she will identify and collect information on best practices from a variety of expert sources in the industry.

2. Recommendation:

Boards of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

District Response

The Pacifica School District Board of Trustees partially disagrees with Recommendation #2 of the report based on its reliance on a single model for construction management (the San Mateo County Community College District model). Pacifica School District does not favor the blanket usage of the SMCCCD model because it was developed specifically for the building program of the college district and may not be applicable or efficient for building programs across other school districts with different building needs or scope of projects.

We agree that adopting policies and practices for use in each district related to the subject of public school construction is of critical importance. While the Pacifica School District has no large capital projects in the horizon, we will refer to the County Superintendent of Schools' findings on best practices as a basis for planning if any such projects are undertaken in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Lianides', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

James Lianides, Ed. D.
Superintendent

JL:sc

Cc: Pacifica School District, Board of Trustees



Las Lomas School District
1011 Altschul Avenue
Menlo Park, CA 94025
Phone (650) 854-6311 fax (650) 854-0882

August 14, 2007

Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Comments to the Grand Jury on School Construction Management in San Mateo County.

At its regular meeting on August 8, 2007, the Board of Trustees of Las Lomas Elementary School District held a public discussion on the Grand Jury Report "School Construction Management in San Mateo County." The discussion yielded two conclusions:

- 1.) The Las Lomas Elementary School District agrees with the findings of the Grand Jury Report.
- 2.) The Recommendation of the San Mateo County Office of Education in response to the Grand Jury Report will be implemented. It is our understanding that the Superintendent will be drawing together experts and resources that districts may consult when they are planning and carrying out large capital improvement projects. When these resources are made available, the Las Lomas Elementary School District will make use of them in any future capital improvement project. In addition, the Superintendent of the Las Lomas Elementary School District will participate in the discussion that is scheduled for an upcoming meeting of the County Superintendents' Association.

Sincerely,

Eric Hartwig
District Superintendent



District Office
181 Encinal Avenue
Atherton, California 94027
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FAX: 650-321-7184
www.mpcsd.org

Board of Education
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Chief Business Official

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Dir. Of Student Services

Jim Bowlby
Dir. Of Technology

Kathryn Tinio,
Human Resources

Ahmad Sheikholesiami
Facility Program Manager

Dennis Hatfield
Supervisor Maintenance,
Transportation,
Operations

September 12, 2007

Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Re: SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT IN SAN MATEO
COUNTY Report

In response to the request from the 2007-08 San Mateo County Grand Jury regarding the issue: *What can the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools do to help San Mateo County school districts adopt and follow best practices for fiscal and construction management of large capital improvement projects?*, the following response is submitted.

The question presented by the Grand Jury is directed to the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools. Following is the response from the perspective of this local school district.

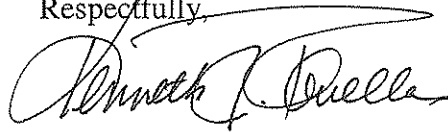
The Menlo Park City School District maintains that responsible fiscal management of all aspects of the District is essential. With the passage of our Measure U Construction Bond in June 2006, an infrastructure has been established to ensure that best practices of fiscal and construction management are in place and are followed. In September 2006, the District employed a highly qualified Facility Planner/Program Manger to oversee and facilitate District construction projects. He is a registered civil engineer with degrees from UC Davis and UC Berkeley in civil engineering and construction management. The services of a highly qualified architect and construction manager have also been retained. According to requirements of Proposition 39 school bonds, a Citizens' Oversight Committee has been established and meets on a quarterly basis. A representative District Facility Committee also meets on a regular basis. The District team is currently in the process of developing a Master Plan for the Bond Program which will chart the course of construction work and establish program budgets and schedules. The District Facility Committee works with the Board of Education on various suggested school configurations and design options. Public meetings have been and will continue to be scheduled regularly to provide the opportunity for Community input regarding District construction projects.

In conclusion, the Menlo Park City School District agrees that the responsible management of large capital improvement projects is of critical importance. Proactive steps have been taken to ensure that the fiscal responsibility of the District is met and maintained.

Furthermore, the District Superintendent will cooperate with the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools in an effort to identify best practices for fiscal and construction management that can be established as a reference for all County school districts.

If further information is desired, please contact my office at 650/321-7140, Ext. 5603.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth J. Ranella". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Kenneth Ranella
Superintendent

c: Governing Board
John C. Fitton, Court Executive Officer
(to be placed on file with the Clerk of the Court)
By email to: grandjury@sanmateocourt.org
Michael P. Murphy, County Counsel

San Mateo Union High School District

David Miller, Ph.D., Interim Superintendent

Ethel C. Konopka, Associate Supt. Human Resources-Admin. Serv.

Elizabeth McManus, Associate Supt. Business Services



650 North Delaware Street - San Mateo, CA 94401-1795

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September 14, 2007

The Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT IN SAN MATEO COUNTY
Report

Dear Judge Grandsaert:

On June 20, 2007, the Grand Jury of San Mateo County published its "School Construction Management in San Mateo County" report. We take the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations very seriously. Please find our specific responses in the paragraphs below.

Grand Jury Recommendation

1. San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

District Response

The San Mateo Union High School District supports any reasonable efforts by the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools to support us in our efforts to adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects.

Grand Jury Recommendation

2. Boards of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

District Response

The Board of Trustees supports all efforts on behalf of its Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools to adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Griffin, President
Board of Trustees



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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FOX SCHOOL
Chris Marchetti, Principal
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RALSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL
Jennifer Kollmann, Principal
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SANDPIPER SCHOOL
Linda McDaniel, Principal
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District Office:
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September 17, 2007

Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Grandsaert,

The Belmont-Redwood Shores School District has received the Grand Jury's letter dated June 20th, 2007 regarding school construction management.

The tenure of our District's Superintendent does not extend to February 2006 when the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools placed the prior grand jury's blue ribbon panel recommendation on an agenda of the San Mateo County Superintendents' Association meeting.

With regard to the recommendation on adopting policies and best practices, the Belmont-Redwood Shores School District's policies are reviewed and updated using the California School Boards Association policies as a guideline.

The District would also like to note that numerous unforeseen circumstances, both political and economic, could have a distinct bearing on whether or not a construction project runs well and or comes in on budget.

Recently the Belmont-Redwood Shores School District has completed the purchase of land in the Redwood Shores area for the purpose of constructing an elementary school. In order to purchase the land and construct a school, a School Facility Improvement Bond was passed in the Redwood Shores area to finance this undertaking. This construction project (as well as the selection of the land) has been with the oversight of a Citizens' Advisory Committee.

Our District Superintendent plans on attending the San Mateo County School Superintendents' Association meeting where this topic will be discussed with Dr. Holbrook, County Superintendent.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Wright
President, Board of Trustees

ms



San Mateo-Foster City School District

September 15, 2007

Hon. John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: Grand Jury Report on School Construction Management in San Mateo
County Report

Dear Judge Grandsaert,

The San Mateo-Foster City School District (District) is in receipt of the Grand Jury Report of June 20, 2007 which contains findings and recommendations regarding School Construction Management in the San Mateo County Report. In response to the Grand Jury's recommendations, the District submits the following:

1. Recommendation:

San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District Model.

District Response:

The County Superintendent's response is attached. The District fully supports the response of the San Mateo County Superintendent to Recommendation #1.

2. Recommendation:

Boards of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation #1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

District Response:

As noted above, the District fully supports the response of the San Mateo County Superintendent to Recommendation #1. When the San Mateo County

Board of Trustees:

Jack E. Coyne, Jr.
Mark D. Hudak
Lory Lorimmer
Lawson
Melodie Lew
Cathy Rincon

Superintendent:

Pendery A. Clark,
Ed.D

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Foster City, CA
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Superintendent completes the task of identifying and collecting information on the subject of best practices for managing capital improvement projects, the District will review the document and discuss the manner in which the information shall guide any future capital improvement projects.

A summary of the San Mateo County Office of Education's best practices for managing capital improvement projects will be greatly appreciated as a resource to be utilized within the District in guiding our future endeavors.

We agree that the subject of public school construction is one which deserves attention and should be given the critical importance it deserves.

Sincerely,

Pendery A. Clark, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Attachment

cc: Board of Trustees
Cabinet
County Superintendent

**San Mateo County Office of Education Response
to the
2007 Grand Jury Recommendations**

School Construction Management in San Mateo County Report

Recommendation 1

San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

In response to this recommendation, I would first like to thank the Grand Jury for its continued focus on the subject of school construction project management. This is an area of critical importance with significant implications both for the fiscal health of our schools and for the trust extended to the educational establishment by the public at large.

Although the County Superintendent and the County Office do not adopt policies on matters such as management of capital improvement projects, it is well within our purview to develop and disseminate information related to best practices.

In specific response to your recommendation, I plan to consult with local (especially those at the San Mateo Community College District) and statewide experts to identify and collect information on the subject of best practices for managing capital improvement projects. When completed, the document will be available to all the school districts and posted in a prominent place on the County Office's website. In addition, I will request that this topic be placed on the San Mateo County Superintendents' Association meeting agenda for discussion in the Fall.



PVSD

PORTOLA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

4575 Alpine Road • Portola Valley, CA 94028

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Anne E. Campbell, Superintendent

Board of Trustees

Donna Carano

Donald Collat

Teresa Godfrey

Karen Jordan

Ray Villareal

September 5, 2007

Hon. John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Grandsaert,

The Portola Valley School District Governing Board has received the Grand Jury's recommendation regarding school construction management. In addition, the Governing Board has read the response of County Superintendent Jean Holbrook.

Based upon Dr. Holbrook's response, the Portola Valley Governing Board has requested that Superintendent Anne Campbell stay apprised of the work being done by Dr. Holbrook in compiling information on best practices for managing capital improvement projects. In addition, Superintendent Campbell will attend the September San Mateo County School Superintendents' Association meeting where Dr. Holbrook will discuss this issue.

The Portola Valley School District does not anticipate any capital improvement projects in the immediate future, having recently completed an extensive renovation of all the schools in the district made possible by the community's generous approval of two bond measures. This work was completed on-time, on budget, and with the oversight of a Citizens' Advisory Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond regarding this important issue.

Very truly yours,

Karen Shishino Jordan
Board President

To: Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center-2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

From: San Carlos School District
Steven G. Mitrovich, Superintendent
826 Chestnut Street
San Carlos, CA 94070

RE: Response to San Mateo County Grand Jury Report: School Construction
Management in San Mateo County

Finding 1:

The SMCCCD employs policies and procedures that have proven effective for controlling and managing large capital improvement projects.

SCSD Response: Agrees

Finding 2:

The San Mateo County Superintendents' Association rejected the County Superintendent of School's attempt to form a blue ribbon panel to formulate policies and procedures for the planning and management of capital improvement projects.

SCSD Response: Agrees

Finding 3:

In the absence of policies and procedures for control and management of improvement projects, the residents of the County and the Grand Jury have witnessed debacles such as the recent San Mateo Union High School District Measure D cost overruns and Measure M contracting problems.

SCSD Response: Agrees. It should be noted that residents also have the experience of successes as evidenced by the current Measure E work at San Carlos School District. That project is being effectively managed and has not had cost overruns.

Recommendation 1:

San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

SCSD Response: Partially agree. The San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools should offer guidance to San Mateo County school districts in the form of current research into (and publication of) best practices with respect to construction management, bond management and capital improvement project management. Each school district and the elected school board has the fiduciary responsibility to manage the capitol improvements for their own district.

Recommendation 2:

Boards of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

SCSD Response: Partially agree. Board of Trustees should direct Superintendents to consider and review best practices as published by County Superintendent of Schools and to make recommendation to the Board with respect to adopting those that best fit the district's needs.

October 2, 2007

Grand Jury, County of San Mateo
Hon. John L. Grandsaert
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, Ca 94063-1655

RE: Fiscal Accountability

Dear Judge Grandsaert,

The Cabrillo Unified School District and the Superintendent understand and agree with the Grand Jury recommendations regarding fiscal accountability and will assist in working with the County Superintendent to achieve the recommendations.

Sincerely,

John Bayless, Ed.D.
Superintendent

JB/cmd



"OUR CHILDREN – OUR FUTURE"

Ravenswood City School District

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

2120 Euclid Avenue, East Palo Alto, California 94303
(650) 329-2800 Fax (650) 323-1072

Board Members:

Jacqueline Wallace Greene, President
John Bostic, Vice President
M. F. Chester Palesoo, Clerk
Marcelino López, Member
Larry Moody, Member

María M. De La Vega
Superintendent

October 3, 2007

Hon. John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: Grand Jury Report on School Construction Management in San Mateo County Report

Dear Judge Grandsaert,

The Ravenswood City School District has received the Grand Jury's report which contains findings and recommendations regarding school construction management. In response to the Grand Jury's recommendations, the Ravenswood City School District submits the following:

1. Recommendation:

San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt polices and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College Model.

District Response:

The Ravenswood City School District supports the response of the San Mateo County Superintendent's response to the Grand Jury's Recommendation #1.

2. Recommendation:

Board of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with County Superintendent in implementing Recommendation #1, and adopting those polices and practices for use in each district.

District Response:

Ravenswood City School District fully supports the response of the San Mateo County Superintendent to Recommendation #1. When the San Mateo County Superintendent completes the task of identifying and collecting information on the subject of best practices for managing capital improvement projects, Ravenswood City School District will review the document and discuss how the information will be aligned with our school district's best practices for future capital improvement projects.

If you have any questions, or if you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Respectfully,

Maria Meza De La Vega, Superintendent of Schools

Brisbane School District

One Solano Street, Brisbane, Ca 94005
Tel: 415-467-0550 Fax: 415-467-2914

Board of Trustees

Joseph Blank
Diane Crampton
Robert Dettmer
Thomas Ledda
Ken walker

Bayshore School District

One martin Street, Daly city, ca 94014
Tel: 415-467-5443 Fax: 415-467-1542

Board of Trustees

Anita Fletcher
Rachel garibaldi
Theresa Gerigk
Cecil t. owens
Edith renderos

Superintendent

Stephen J. Waterman, Esq.

October 2, 2007

Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice and Records
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Re: School Construction Management Recommendations of the Grand Jury

Dear Judge Grandsaert:

This is a response on behalf of both the Bayshore and Brisbane School Districts and specifically responds to two recommendations of the Grand Jury referring to construction projects:

1. Recommendation

The Grand Jury recommends that the San Mateo County Superintendent adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

District Response

The County Superintendent is responding or has responded to this recommendation.

2. Recommendation

The Grand Jury recommends that the board of trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct its superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent in implementing recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use by each district.

District Response

Both school districts and their boards accept this recommendation. The districts will cooperate in the County Superintendent's study and once the County Superintendent has completed her study, the boards and superintendent will develop a plan of adoption based on the sizes of the districts.

Sincerely,

Stephen J. Waterman
Superintendent

Brisbane School District

One Solano Street, Brisbane, Ca 94005
Tel: 415-467-0550 Fax: 415-467-2914

Board of Trustees

Joseph Blank
Diane Crampton
Robert Dettmer
Thomas Ledda
Ken walker

Bayshore School District

One martin Street, Daly city, ca 94014
Tel: 415-467-5443 Fax: 415-467-1542

Board of Trustees

Anita Fletcher
Rachel garibaldi
Theresa Gerigk
Cecil t. owens
Edith renderos

Superintendent

Stephen J. Waterman, Esq.

October 2, 2007

Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice and Records
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Re: School Construction Management Recommendations of the Grand Jury

Dear Judge Grandsaert:

This is a response on behalf of both the Bayshore and Brisbane School Districts and specifically responds to two recommendations of the Grand Jury referring to construction projects:

1. Recommendation

The Grand Jury recommends that the San Mateo County Superintendent adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

District Response

The County Superintendent is responding or has responded to this recommendation.

2. Recommendation

The Grand Jury recommends that the board of trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct its superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent in implementing recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use by each district.

District Response

Both school districts and their boards accept this recommendation. The districts will cooperate in the County Superintendent's study and once the County Superintendent has completed her study, the boards and superintendent will develop a plan of adoption based on the sizes of the districts.

Sincerely,

Stephen J. Waterman
Superintendent

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Russ Hanley
William J. Henderson Jr.
Christopher P. Kiely
Kevin J. Martinez
James R. Prescott



ADMINISTRATION
David E. Hutt, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Lynn Orong
Chief Business Officer

October 10, 2007

The Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: School Construction Management in San Mateo County

Dear Judge Grandsaert:

The following represents the District's response to the findings and recommendations of the Grand Jury relative to School Construction Management in San Mateo County.

Recommendation 1

The District agrees with the recommendation. Further, the District is working with the County Superintendent in consultation to ensure that best practices for managing capital improvement projects are followed.

Recommendation 2

The District agrees with the recommendation. Further, a review of current District policies and regulations will be conducted when the San Mateo County Superintendent completes the task of identifying and collecting information on the subject of best practices for managing capital improvement projects.

Sincerely,

Charles (Russ) Hanley
President, San Bruno Park School District Governing Board

cc: Governing Board Members, SBPSD
San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools



Burlingame School District
1825 Trousdale Drive
Burlingame, California 94010

October 2, 2007

Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
200 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, Ca 94063-1655

Re: School Construction Management in San Mateo County

Dear Judge Grandsaert,

The Burlingame School District is in receipt of the June 20, 2007 San Mateo Civil Grand Jury Report which contains findings and recommendations regarding School Construction Management in San Mateo County.

In response to the Grand Jury's recommendations, the Burlingame School District submits the following:

Recommendation 1. San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

Burlingame School District's response: Agree. Burlingame School District has adopted policies regarding New Constructions in June of 2006. The policies included Architectural and Engineering Services and Methods of Financing and participation of planning. Burlingame School District will evaluate the policies of SSCCCD to improve and enhance the existing policies in areas needed.

Recommendation 2. Boards of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

Burlingame School District's response: Partially Agree. Burlingame School District Board of Trustees appointed the Superintendent as the representative for this district to incorporate best practices. The District shall re-visit the existing policies regarding construction and strengthening the areas on management and accountability. Burlingame School District is unique in that the District has a

strong Budget Advisory Committee which has long been an oversight committee. The committee evaluates in great length the district's expenditures in all areas within the budget including the construction projects and the validity of the costs. The District had successfully appointed professional construction managers in the past handling major construction projects such as painting and district-wide paving projects given a budget not to exceed. Should the District passes its bond election, the oversight committee will take on the role as citizens' watchdog group and monitor how the tax dollars are spent from day one.

Sincerely,

Sonny H. DaMarto

Superintendent, Burlingame School District



WOODSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

3185 Woodside Road

Woodside, California 94062-2598

Daniel A. Vinson, Ed.D., Superintendent-Principal

(650) 851-1571

Robert S. Sherman III, Assistant Principal

FAX (650) 851-5577

Timothy L. Hanretty, Assistant Superintendent

(650) 851-1777

FAX (650) 851-3700

September 2007

Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

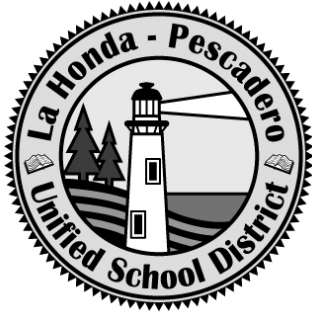
Re: School Construction Management in San Mateo County Report

Woodside Elementary School District supports the recommendation and appreciates the support and guidelines received from the County Superintendent of Schools. The District will cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing the Grand Jury recommendation.

Sincerely,

Daniel A., Vinson, Ed.D
Superintendent/Principal

cc: Board of Trustees



LA HONDA-PESCADERO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
P.O. Box 189 • 620 North Street, Pescadero, CA 94060
650-879-0286 • FAX 650-879-0816

Timothy A. Beard, Superintendent

November 8, 2007

Hon. John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: Grand Jury Report on School Construction Management in San Mateo County

Hon. Judge Grandsaert:

This letter is in reference to the 2007-08 County Grand Jury report on School Construction Management in San Mateo County. The La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District has considered the Grand Jury's findings and submits this letter in response to the recommendations to school districts in the County.

On November 7, 2006, the voters of the District passed Measure I, approving the issue of \$15,000,000 of bonds to improve the quality of our schools. The District has employed a financial advisor and bond counsel to provide advice to the Board. We have worked with County Counsel and the County Tax Collector to negotiate favorable terms with the underwriter. And we have established an Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee pursuant to Education Code and the bond measure to review expenditure reports and provide an annual written report to the Board.

As Superintendent, I supervise all modernization and construction projects and work with a bond management firm to assist in the planning and implementation of these projects. These plans are reviewed monthly at public board meetings, and a periodic report is provided to the community on the progress of bond projects.

The District is in agreement with Recommendation 2 related to public school construction in our County. I will cooperate with the County Superintendent and other district superintendents to review best practices and make recommendations to the Board to adopt those that best fit our district's needs.

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Beard,
District Superintendent

SEQUOIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

480 JAMES AVENUE, REDWOOD CITY, CALIFORNIA 94062-1098

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES (650) 369-1412

October 17, 2007

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DON GIBSON
GORDON LEWIN
OLIVIA G. MARTINEZ
LORRAINE RUMLEY
SALLY D. STEWART

PATRICK R. GEMMA
SUPERINTENDENT

EDWARD J. LAVIGNE
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Honorable John L. Gransaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, Second Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Re: 2007 Grand Jury Recommendations, *School Construction Management in San Mateo County*

Recommendation One: San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

Sequoia Union High School District would like to thank the Grand Jury for its continued focus on the subject of school construction project management and for adopting a recommendation that all school capital improvement projects follow a "best practices" model, perhaps as implemented at San Mateo Community College. Employing "construction best practices" is a way of ensuring the physical health of our schools into the future and for honoring the financial trust extended to Sequoia Union HSD by our residents.

Sequoia UHSD looks forward to working with the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools and receiving information on construction best practices and modifying current management processes wherever necessary.

Brief Overview of Sequoia Union High School District

As you may know, selection of architects generally precedes selection of school construction methodology. In the summer of 2004, Sequoia UHSD requested a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) / Request for Proposals (RFP) from a lengthy list of Bay Area architectural firms and selected six for subsequent interviews. Client and project references were thoroughly checked. This competitive process resulted in the Board of Trustees awarding contracts to two firms, Spencer and Associates in addition to Cody, Anderson & Wasney.

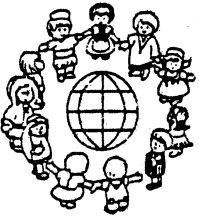
In 2005, construction management firms were invited to present to District staff using the same RFP / SOQ process with special attention paid to firms that had managed the multiple prime delivery method, construction manager at risk method, and the lease lease-back method for larger, more complex projects. Again, two firms (Blach Construction and AlfaTech Cambridge) have emerged from that process with contracts for current projects.

Two additional components of the Capital Management Process are peer reviews by an outside analyst (RGM & Associates) and quarterly meetings between staff and the Bond Oversight Committee. The most recent peer review was presented to the Oversight Committee in addition to an internal review with district construction staff.

Sincerely,



Edward J. LaVigne
Assistant Superintendent
Administrative Services



Jefferson School District

*Martin Luther King Jr. Education Center
101 Lincoln Ave. • Daly City, CA 94015
(650) 746-2400 • Fax (650) 997-0273
Web Address: www.jsd.k12.ca.us*

Governing Board
*Marie Brizuela
Hans E. Hansen
K. Annette Hipona
Marianne E. Petroni*

Interim Superintendent
John T. McIntosh

November 2, 2007

Honorable John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Grandsaert:

The Jefferson Elementary School District is in receipt of the Grand Jury Report of June 20, 2007 which contains findings and recommendations regarding School Construction Management in San Mateo County.

In response to the Grand Jury's recommendations, the District submits the following:

1. Recommendation:

San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District Model.

District Response:

The Jefferson Elementary School District fully supports the response of the San Mateo County Superintendent to Recommendation #1.

2. Recommendation:

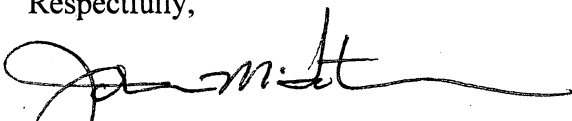
Boards of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation #1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

District Response:

The Jefferson Elementary School District supports the response of the San Mateo County Superintendent to Recommendation #1. When the San Mateo County Superintendent completes the task of identifying and collecting information on the subject of best practices for managing capital improvement projects, the Jefferson Elementary School District will review the document and determine how the information will help guide any future capital improvement projects.

The Jefferson Elementary School District agrees that the subject of public school construction is very important and looks forward to utilizing the San Mateo County Office of Education's best practices for help in managing future construction projects.

Respectfully,



John T. McIntosh
Interim Superintendent



REDWOOD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

750 Bradford Street
Redwood City, California 94063-1727
(650) 423-2200

Board of Education

Shelly Masur, President
Maria Diaz-Slocum, Vice-President
Dennis McBride, Clerk
Alisa MacAvoy
Vacancy

Jan Christensen
Superintendent

January 9, 2008

Hon. John L. Grandsaert
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Grandsaert,

The Redwood City School District is in receipt of the June 20, 2007 San Mateo Civil Grand Jury Report which contains findings and recommendations regarding School Construction Management in San Mateo County.

In response to the Grand Jury's recommendations, the Redwood City School District submits the following:

Grand Jury Recommendation 1: San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools adopt policies and best practices for managing capital improvement projects based on the San Mateo County Community College District model.

District Response: The Redwood City School District ("RCSD") disagrees with the Grand Jury Recommendation 1. However, RCSD agrees with the response from the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools as stated below:

"In response to this recommendation, I would first like to thank the Grand Jury for its continued focus on the subject of school construction project management. This is an area of critical importance with significant implications both for the fiscal health of our schools and for the trust extended to the educational establishment by the public at large.

Although the County Superintendent and the County Office do not adopt policies on matters such as management of capital improvement projects, it is well within our purview to develop and disseminate information related to best practices.

In specific response to your recommendation, I plan to consult with local (especially those at the San Mateo Community College District) and statewide experts to identify and collect information on the subject of best practices for

managing capital improvement projects. When completed, the document will be available to all the school districts and posted in a prominent place on the County Office's website. In addition, I will request that this topic be placed upon the San Mateo County Superintendents' Association meeting agenda for discussion in the Fall."

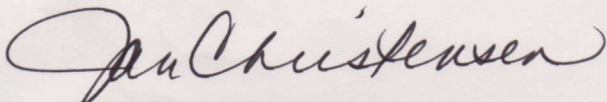
While the San Mateo County Community College District ("SMCCCD") model might have completed a successful capital improvement project, adopting policies based on this model may not apply to other school districts. Managing capital improvement projects could be contributed by a variety of factors that might be unique to a school district and not present in the SMCCCD model. Certainly, a compilation of policies and best practices are helpful guides for school districts as a reference.

Grand Jury Recommendation 2: Board of Trustees in each school district in San Mateo County direct their appointed Superintendent to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools in implementing Recommendation 1, and adopting those policies and practices for use in each district.

District Response: RCSD disagrees with the Grand Jury Recommendation 2. However, RCSD supports the response from the County Superintendent of Schools on Recommendation 1. As stated on the District's response on Recommendation 1, adopting a policy and best practices is not necessary due to the unique nature of every capital improvement project in each school district. One model may not provide an all inclusive policy and procedure for each construction project at each school district. However, a compilation of policies and best practices are helpful guides for school district as a reference.

Please feel free to contact me, if you have any questions at (650) 423-2230.

Very truly yours,



JAN CHRISTENSEN,
Superintendent

cc: Redwood City School District Board of Education