

\$21 MILLION LOST TO COUNTY SCHOOLS

BACKGROUND:

Student absences from school resulted in the loss of \$21million in the form of Average Daily Attendance (ADA) payments to Tulare County Schools in the 2012-2013 school year.

In 1974, the Legislature enacted *California Education Code* (EC) §48325 to enhance the enforcement of compulsory education laws. To address attendance issues, School Attendance Review Boards (SARB) are composed of representatives from various youth-serving agencies, to help truant or non-compliant students and their parents or guardians solve school attendance and behavior problems through the use of available school and community resources. County SARB meetings are convened by the County Superintendent at the beginning of each school year as well as individual school districts. In her report titled "*In School on Track 2014*", California Attorney General Kamala D. Harris, outlines the extent to which truancy is impacting the State. The new Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) mandates school districts to establish goals for improving student attendance and reducing chronic absences/truancy.

REASON FOR INVESTIGATION:

This report highlights the fact that each of the State's 58 counties are adversely affected by student absenteeism. In Tulare County alone, the loss of **\$21 million school fund** ADA is attributable to truancy.

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION:

The report began with scheduled interviews with appropriate Administrators and/or Officers at selected school districts. Each responded to the same list of questions for conformity. The Grand Jury SARB investigation also included interviewing an Office of the District Attorney staff member and a Tulare County Superior Court Judge. During the course of its investigation, the Grand Jury examined applicable laws and regulations that pertained to SARB requirements. The Tulare County Grand Jury randomly selected the following school districts: Alpaugh Unified, Liberty Elementary, Tulare Joint Union High Schools, Tulare City Schools, Porterville Unified, Woodlake Unified, and Visalia Unified.

FACTS – BASIC INFORMATION:

1. The California Legislature defines a truant as any student missing more than 30 minutes of instruction without an excuse three times during the school year. In this event, a student must be classified as a truant and reported to the proper school authority.

2. Education Code §48325 provides several organizational structures for SARB at the local and county level to create a safety net for students with persistent attendance or behavior problems.
3. California compulsory education law requires everyone between the ages of six and eighteen years of age to attend school.
4. In the Attorney General's Report, LCAP discusses new ways for parents to engage in decision making.
5. Penal Code §270.1 provides a mechanism to offer parents one final opportunity to improve their child's attendance before imposing such penalties. When a parent is found guilty of violating Penal Code §270.1, he or she is guilty of a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine not to exceed \$2,000, or by imprisonment in a county jail not to exceed one year, or by both fine and imprisonment. Under the statute, the District Attorney and the Superior Court may decide to postpone a judgment (i.e., defer entry of judgment) and enroll the parent/guardian in a program designed to remove the barriers keeping a chronically truant child from school.
6. Penal Code §270.1 applies only to grades Kindergarten – 8th and does not apply to grades 9th – 12th.
7. Calculation of ADA includes grades Kindergarten – 12th.
8. Under Penal Code §270.1, the District Attorney may exercise his or her authority to charge the parent of a chronically truant student with a criminal misdemeanor, if the guardian has failed to reasonably supervise and encourage the child's attendance. This statute only applies to parents of children who are at least six years old and up to the 8th grade.
9. Education Code §48263.6 defines any student who is absent from school without a valid excuse for 10 percent or more of the school days in one school year (from the date of enrollment to the current date) is deemed a chronic truant.
10. Tulare County's public education system consists of 46 school districts, providing educational opportunities to 101,117 students from Kindergarten – 12th grade, in the 2012-2013 school year. Public education funding is allocated to districts according to complex formulas which are based on the ADA of each district. Maximizing attendance and/or minimizing absenteeism are important to the fiscal well-being of each district. Research indicates there is a direct correlation between chronic absenteeism and:

- a. Student failure to keep pace academically
- b. Dropping out of school

FACTS – OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY:

1. Office of the District Attorney does not currently practice any outreach programs to educate students and parents on SARB laws.
2. Office of the District Attorney does not participate in SARB proceedings or mediations unless invited.
3. Office of the District Attorney does not participate in organizations' or planning of truancy prevention.
4. Office of the District Attorney files SARB cases with the Tulare County Superior Court.
5. There were 720 SARB cases filed with the Office of the District Attorney from 2012-2014 school years.
6. California law Assembly Bill 214, effective January 2015, requires the Office of the District Attorney to report to the school districts on their SARB enforcement actions and activities.
7. The Office of the District Attorney has specific attorneys who file and prosecute SARB cases in the Tulare County Superior Court.

FACTS – SUPERIOR COURT:

1. A Superior Court Judge is assigned as the Judge to preside over all SARB cases.
2. SARB is considered to be a civil infraction with the following fines within Tulare County Superior Court:
 - a. 1st fine - \$150.00
 - b. 2nd fine - \$250.00
 - c. 3rd and all successive fines - \$500.00 for each school day missed. But, there are not any successive 3rd day fines due to the SARB timeframe within a school year.
3. Judge can order a child to attend school and stipulate requirements on children and/or parent(s). If requirements are not followed, contempt of court may be filed.

4. Office of the District Attorney may file a SARB case under Penal Code §272, a misdemeanor in which the parents are held accountable for child neglect. Probationary orders may be issued requiring the child to attend school; these require court appearances, lawyers and the possibility of a trial. This is an expensive and lengthy process within the courts.

FACTS – STATISTICS:

1. Elementary School Truancy Rates & Loss of Funding by County (2012-2013)

COUNTY	2011-2012 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRUANCY RATE	2012-1013 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRUANCY RATE	CHANGE FROM 2011-2012 TO 2012- 2013	2011-2012 LOSS OF FUNDING	2012-2013 LOSS OF FUNDING	2012-2013 PER PUPIL LOSSES
Fresno	21.4%	21.78%	.38%	\$59,025,0930.00	\$62,1506,042.00	\$337.08
Kern	20.6%	25.15%	4.55%	\$55,346,113.00	\$58,252,522.00	\$345.12
Kings	21.5%	23.37%	1.87%	\$6,664,403.80	\$6,739,082.10	\$279.53
Madera	22.0%	15.5%	-6.5%	\$6,735,894.70	\$6,11,071.60	\$215.98
Tulare	16.4%	18.62%	2.22%	\$20,264,169.00	\$20,816,029.00	\$222.09

2. Truancy Report Tulare County 2012-2013*

School District	Cumulative Enrollment	Truant Students	Truancy Rate
Allensworth Elementary	99	17	17.17%
Alpaugh Unified	764	70	9.16%
Alta Vista Elementary	672	90	13.39%
Buena Vista Elementary	215	62	28.84%
Burton Elementary	4,533	512	11.29%

School District	Cumulative Enrollment	Truant Students	Truancy Rate
Citrus South Tule Elementary	67	0	0.00%
Columbine Elementary	205	81	39.51%
Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified	4,350	698	16.05%
Dinuba Unified	6,627	652	9.84%
Ducor Union Elementary	225	41	18.22%
Earlimart Elementary	2,096	50	2.39%
Exeter Unified	Inadequate Data Submitted		
Farmersville Unified	2,888	909	31.48%
Hope Elementary	233	37	15.88%
Hot Springs Elementary	15	2	13.33%
Kings River Union Elementary	488	134	27.46%
Liberty Elementary	362	40	11.05%
Lindsay Unified	4,448	767	17.24%
Monson-Sultana joint Union Elementary	483	61	12.63%
Oak Valley Union Elementary	491	90	18.33%
Outside Creek Elementary	120	8	6.67%
Palo Verde Union Elementary	592	65	10.98%
Pixley Union Elementary	1,286	457	35.54%
Pleasant View Elementary	605	14	2.31%

School District	Cumulative Enrollment	Truant Students	Truancy Rate
Porterville Unified	14,825	4,981	33.60%
Richgrove Elementary	725	127	17.52%
Rockford Elementary	440	152	34.55%
Saucelito Elementary	94	2	2.13%
Sequoia Union Elementary	351	4	1.14%
Springville Union Elementary	356	198	55.62%
Stone Corral Elementary	Inadequate Data Submitted		
Strathmore Union Elementary	911	29	3.18%
Sundale Union Elementary	820	73	8.90%
Sunnyside Union Elementary	395	26	6.58%
Terra Bella Union Elementary	987	84	8.51%
Three Rivers Union Elementary	152	11	7.24%
Tipton Elementary	668	159	23.80%
Traver Joint Elementary	240	72	30.00%
Tulare City	10,178	2,096	20.59%
Tulare County Office of Education	3,160	229	7.25%
Tulare Joint Union High	5,684	3,548	62.42%
Visalia Unified	30,073	13,865	46.10%
Waukena Joint Union Elementary	289	55	19.03%

School District	Cumulative Enrollment	Truant Students	Truancy Rate
Woodlake Unified	2,464	419	17.00%
Woodville Union Elementary	551	2	0.36%

*School districts featured in bold were randomly selected for interviews.

FINDINGS:

- F1. Some school districts do not have alternative programs in place to recover revenues for student absences.
- F2. School districts are not closely monitoring and analyzing attendance data for cause and effects.
- F3. Not all school districts provide a monthly attendance report to their Boards of Trustees.
- F4. Nearly all school districts are not including Probation and Office of the District Attorney staff in their SARB Committee meetings.
- F5. Research indicates that the negative impacts of truancy falls on disadvantaged children disproportionately. This worsens the problem to Tulare County schools in light of the socio-economic conditions existing throughout the County.
- F6. Several schools the Grand Jury visited are in the process of completing their LCAP goals and action plans.
- F7. One school district had a truant student that missed in excess of 300 days in a three year time period, grades 6 – 8.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. The Office of the District Attorney develop an action plan to educate students and inform parents of resources and the consequences parents face if they violate California Truancy Laws.
- R2. The Office of the District Attorney participate in the school district SARB and court level mediation process.
- R3. The Office of the District Attorney consistently use their authority and discretion to increase pressure on parents/guardians to fulfill their legal obligations related to school attendance.
- R4. The Office of the District Attorney implement AB 2141 to provide information to school officials of the outcomes of truancy related referrals.
- R5. School districts develop alternative programs for recovering lost student attendance revenues.

- R6. School districts monitor and analyze student attendance data on a monthly basis to determine cause and effect.
- R7. School districts provide all School Board Trustees with a Monthly Attendance Report.
- R8. School districts upgrade their SARB Committee to include Probation and Office of the District Attorney staff members.
- R9. School districts design and implement additional programs to communicate to the community that school attendance is critical to the school and students success.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

- 1. Office of the District Attorney ✓
- 2. Tulare County Superintendent of Schools ✓

Disclaimer

Grand Jury reports are based on documentary evidence and the testimony of sworn or admonished witnesses, not on conjecture or opinion. However, the Grand Jury is precluded by law from disclosing such evidence except upon specific approval of the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, or another judge appointed by the Presiding Judge (Penal Code Section 911, 924.1 (a) and 929). Similarly, the Grand Jury is precluded by law from disclosing the identity of witnesses except upon an order of the court for narrowly defined purposes (Penal Code Section 924.2 and 929).



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

May 21, 2015

The Honorable Brett D. Hillman
Tulare County Superior Court
221 S. Mooney Blvd., Rm. 303
Visalia, CA 93291

RE: Grand Jury Report Entitled "\$21 Million Lost to County Schools"

Dear Judge Hillman:

On April 1, 2015, the Office of the District Attorney received a copy of a portion of the 2014 / 2015 Tulare County Grand Jury Final Report related to the Department for review and response. The report contained four Recommendations for the Department. The four Recommendations have been addressed in an attached letter, but there were a few Facts contained in the report that I believe warrant clarification.

Fact 1: Office of the District Attorney does not currently practice any outreach programs to educate students and parents on SARB laws.

Since the creation of the Crimes Against Children Division in early 2013, the Office of the District Attorney has conducted a significant amount of school outreach, including motivational and informative talks, and career day presentations. Although not geared directly toward S.A.R.B. laws-- it should be noted that Attorney General Kamala Harris recognized that prosecution should be the last resort for addressing truancy in her report, "In School on Track 2014"-- the programs always end with encouraging remarks and examples of why school attendance and performance is important for future career opportunities and quality of life. We have taken a positive approach to encourage young people to stay in school.

The Office of the District Attorney provides a regular school presentation program at both public and private schools and at organized afterschool programs, educating students on the structure and process of the criminal justice system. These presentations always encompass specific encouragement to excel in school, pursue education, and avoid negative influences such as drugs and crimes. Prosecutors, Investigators, and Victim Advocates all take part in youth outreach and career day presentations. Since the Division's inception, approximately 40 such presentations have occurred.

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In addition to the Crimes Against Children Division outreach programs, our office has a Supervising Deputy District Attorney (S.D.D.A.) involved with the HEART Afterschool Program, a S.D.D.A. that assists with the Youth Summits that occur throughout the County, and an S.D.D.A. that chairs the Advisory Board for the Law, Justice, and Education Academy at Granite Hills High School in Porterville.

Fact 3: Office of the District Attorney does not participate in organizations' or planning of truancy prevention.

As a direct result of Attorney General Kamala Harris's focus on truancy issues in our state, in 2014, the California District Attorneys Association (C.D.A.A.) created a statewide Truancy Committee to review the issue. A Supervising Deputy District Attorney is representing Tulare County on the committee. The committee has been tasked with creating a Training Manual for prosecutors to be utilized statewide when addressing truancy issues. The committee is also tasked with reviewing proposed "Best Practices" to address truancy statewide.

Fact 4: Office of the District Attorney files SARB cases with the Tulare County Superior Court.

Fact 5: There were 720 SARB cases filed with the Office of the District Attorney from 2012 – 2014 school years.

One of the primary roles of the Office of the District Attorney is to review submitted criminal investigations and to file the appropriate criminal charges with the Tulare County Superior Court. The District Attorney has the authority to file criminal charges based on an investigation, but also has the authority to reject a case if charges are not warranted (e.g. there is insufficient evidence presented to prove that a crime was committed). The California Education Code permits school districts to submit cases to the Office of the District Attorney for issues regarding a minor's truancy once the minor's parents / guardians have failed to participate in the individual district's SARB process.

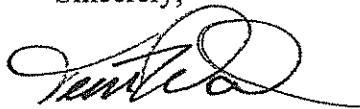
Between the beginning of 2012 and the end of 2014, 779 truancy cases were submitted to the Office of the District Attorney to review for the possible filing of criminal charges. Since more than one individual may be represented by a submitted case (e.g. a submitted case may name both parents as suspects), the 779 submitted cases actually represented 903 defendants. Of the 779 cases submitted, 774 cases were submitted as infraction violations of Education Code section 48293. All but 10 of the cases were filed. The 10 cases that were not filed were rejected for various reasons such as insufficient evidence of the violation, statute of limitations issues, or duplicate case submissions. The additional 5 cases submitted requested misdemeanor violations of Penal Code section 270.1(a). All 5 cases were filed as misdemeanors. In total, the Office of the District Attorney filed 769 cases with the Tulare County Superior Court.

The Honorable Brett D. Hillman

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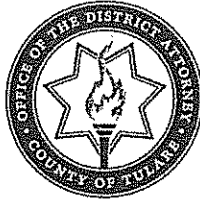
It is my intent that these clarifications will serve to enhance the Grand Jury's Final Report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Ward", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tim Ward
District Attorney
Enclosure – as indicated
TW:rg

cc: County of Tulare Grand Jury
County of Tulare Board of Supervisors



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

May 21, 2015

The Honorable Brett D. Hillman
Tulare County Superior Court
221 S. Mooney Blvd., Rm. 303
Visalia, CA 93291

RE: Grand Jury Report Entitled "\$21 Million Lost To County Schools"

Dear Judge Hillman:

On April 1, 2015, the Office of the District Attorney received a copy of a portion of the 2014 / 2015 Tulare County Grand Jury Final Report related to the Department for review and response. Following are our responses to the recommendations of the Grand Jury:

RI: The Office of the District Attorney develop an action plan to educate students and inform parents of resources and the consequences parents face if they violate California Truancy Laws.

RESPONSE: The recommendation has been implemented.

Prior to the Grand Jury Report, and as a direct result of Attorney General Kamala Harris's focus on truancy issues in our state, in 2014, the California District Attorneys Association (C.D.A.A.) created a statewide Truancy Committee to review the issue. A Supervising Deputy District Attorney is representing Tulare County on the committee. The committee has been tasked with creating a Training Manual for prosecutors to be utilized statewide when addressing truancy issues. The committee is also tasked with reviewing proposed "Best Practices" to address truancy statewide.

Our office has also been meeting directly with the new Educational Options Administrator for the Tulare County Office of Education (T.C.O.E.) who is working on countywide improvements for the School Attendance Review Board (S.A.R.B.) process. We are committed to working with the Administrator on the development of a Tulare County School Attendance Review Board, which can assist smaller school districts in the County that currently do not have a S.A.R.B. process in place. Our office has agreed to provide training as needed regarding the legal aspects of truancy prosecution.

As for direct outreach to students and parents in Tulare County, we have suggested to T.C.O.E. that if funding exists, perhaps a joint letter from the County Superintendent of Schools and the District Attorney addressing the importance of school attendance be developed and provided to the parent / guardian of every student at the beginning of the school year. In addition, if funding exists, a joint Public Service Announcement from the Superintendent and District Attorney could also be developed to be launched on radio and television at the beginning of each school year.

R2. The Office of the District Attorney participate in the school district SARB and court level mediation process.

RESPONSE: The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

As previously addressed in R1, a representative from our office has been in contact with and will continue working with the Educational Options Administrator for T.C.O.E. regarding the development of a Tulare County School Attendance Review Board. A representative from our office will participate on that Board, if and when it is created.

Presently, 11 of the 46 school districts in Tulare County submit truancy cases to our office for review. While a Tulare County S.A.R.B. is being developed, our office will be contacting the S.A.R.B. liaison for each of the 11 participating school districts to evaluate their individual needs and to explore the addition of a District Attorney representative to each of their respective Boards. This review will necessarily include a departmental analysis of the feasibility of staffing each individual Board.

The recommendation will be implemented immediately upon the creation of the Tulare County S.A.R.B.

R3: The Office of the District Attorney consistently use their authority and discretion to increase pressure on parents/guardians to fulfill their legal obligations related to school attendance.

RESPONSE: The recommendation has been implemented.

When reviewing truancy prosecution statistics, it should be noted that Attorney General Kamala Harris recognized that "prosecution should be the last resort for addressing truancy" in her report titled, "In School on Track 2014." Prosecution of parents / guardians should be pursued once all other avenues have failed. The goal of prosecution should be the deterrence of future absenteeism.

Between the beginning of 2012 and the end of 2014, 779 truancy cases were submitted to the Office of the District Attorney by County school districts to review for the possible filing of criminal charges. Since more than one individual may be represented by a submitted case (e.g. a submitted case may name both parents / guardians as suspects), the 779 submitted cases actually represented 903 defendants. Of the 779 cases submitted, 774 cases were submitted as infraction violations of Education Code section 48293. All but 10 of the cases were filed. The 10 cases that were not filed were rejected for various reasons such as insufficient evidence of the violation, statute of limitations issues, or duplicate case submissions. The additional 5 cases submitted requested misdemeanor violations of Penal Code section 270.1(a). All 5 cases were filed as misdemeanors. In total, the Office of the District Attorney filed 769 cases with the Tulare County Superior Court at the request of County school districts.

The Office of the District Attorney will continue to vigorously prosecute the cases that are submitted to our office for review and filed. Our office will continue following the ethical guidelines required by the Uniform Charging Standards Manual to establish a culture of deterrence, rather than increased pressure on parents when it comes to addressing truancy.

R4: The Office of the District Attorney implement AB 2141 to provide information to school officials of the outcomes of truancy related referrals.

RESPONSE: The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

Historically, school district officials have received information regarding case outcomes directly from the Tulare County Superior Court, because school district S.A.R.B. representatives would often attend the scheduled court appearances by parents / guardians that had been charged with truancy violations. In that respect, the spirit of Assembly Bill 2141 was already being implemented in Tulare County.

Our office has met with and has volunteered to work with T.C.O.E. in the development of a Tulare County School Attendance Review Board. One issue to be addressed during the development of the Board will be the necessary reporting of outcomes. Newly created Education Code Section 48297 recommends using the "most cost effective method possible" to share the outcomes. We will also be reaching out to the liaisons of the 11 school districts that currently submit truancy cases to our office, to determine the most efficient means for sharing the court outcomes.

The Honorable Brett D. Hillman
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The recommendation will be implemented within 6 months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Ward", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tim Ward
District Attorney

cc: County of Tulare Grand Jury
County of Tulare Board of Supervisors

Tulare County Office of Education

Committed to Students, Support and Service

May 12, 2015

Jim Vidak
County
Superintendent
of Schools

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The Honorable Judge Hillman
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221 South Mooney Boulevard
Visalia CA 93291

Tulare County Board of Supervisors
2800 W. Burrel Avenue
Visalia CA 93291

Tulare County Grand Jury
5963 South Mooney Boulevard
Visalia CA 93277

RESPONSES TO 2015 TULARE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORTS


Enclosed is the following:

1. **\$21 Million Lost to County Schools**

We extend our gratitude to the Tulare County Grand Jury for their diligent efforts in compiling these reports. Our responses to your recommendations include information gained through extensive research.

If I can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Jim Vidak
Tulare County Superintendent of Schools

JV:mm

Enclosure

May 12, 2015

The Honorable Judge Hillman
County Civic Center, Room 303
221 S. Mooney Boulevard
Visalia CA 93291

Tulare County Grand Jury
5963 S. Mooney Boulevard
Visalia CA 93277

Tulare County Board of Supervisors
2800 W. Burrel Ave
Visalia CA 93291

Subject: Written Response of the **Tulare County Office of Education** pursuant to
California Penal Code § 933(c)
Report Name: **\$21 Million Lost to County Schools**

FINDINGS

F1. Some school districts do not have alternative programs in place to recover revenues for student absences.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education and County Superintendent of Schools agree with this finding.

F2. School districts are not closely monitoring and analyzing attendance data for cause and effects.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education and County Superintendent of Schools agree with this finding.

F3. Not all school districts provide a monthly attendance report to their Boards of Trustees.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education and County Superintendent of Schools agree with this finding.

F4. Nearly all school districts are not including Probation and Office of the District Attorney staff in their SARB Committee meetings.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education and County Superintendent of Schools agree with this finding.

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F5. Research indicates that the negative impacts of truancy falls on disadvantaged children disproportionately. This worsens the problem to Tulare County schools in light of the socio-economic conditions existing throughout the County.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education and County Superintendent of Schools agree with this finding.

F6. Several schools the Grand Jury visited are in the process of completing their LCAP goals and action plans.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education and County Superintendent of Schools agree with this finding.

F7. One school district had a truant student that missed in excess of 300 days in a three year time period, grades 6 – 8.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education and County Superintendent of Schools agree with this finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. The Office of the District Attorney develop an action plan to education students and inform parents of resources and the consequences parents face if they violate California Truancy Laws.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education, County Superintendent of Schools feels that it would have been more appropriate for the Grand Jury to send its report to the individual school districts for comment rather than to the County Office since the county Office has no responsibility for student attendance at the various school districts in the County.

R2. The Office of the District Attorney participate in the school district SARB and court level mediation process.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education, County Superintendent of Schools feels that it would have been more appropriate for the Grand Jury to send its report to the individual school districts for comment rather than to the County Office since the county Office has no responsibility for student attendance at the various school districts in the County.

R3. The Office of the District of Attorney consistently use their authority and discretion to increase pressure on parents/guardians to fulfill their legal obligations related to school attendance.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education, County Superintendent of Schools feels that it would have been more appropriate for the Grand Jury to send its report to the individual school districts for comment rather than to the County Office since the county Office has no responsibility for student attendance at the various school districts in the County.

R4. The Office of the District Attorney implement AB 2141 to provide information to school officials of the outcomes of truancy related referrals.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education, County Superintendent of Schools feels that it would have been more appropriate for the Grand Jury to send its report to the individual school districts for comment rather than to the County Office since the county Office has no responsibility for student attendance at the various school districts in the County.

R5. School districts develop alternative programs for recovering lost student attendance revenues.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education, County Superintendent of Schools feels that it would have been more appropriate for the Grand Jury to send its report to the individual school districts for comment rather than to the County Office since the county Office has no responsibility for student attendance at the various school districts in the County.

R6. School districts monitor and analyze student attendance data on a monthly basis to determine cause and effect.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education, County Superintendent of Schools feels that it would have been more appropriate for the Grand Jury to send its report to the individual school districts for comment rather than to the County Office since the county Office has no responsibility for student attendance at the various school districts in the County.

R7. School districts provide all School Board Trustees with a Monthly Attendance Report.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education, County Superintendent of Schools feels that it would have been more appropriate for the Grand Jury to send its report to the individual school districts for comment rather than to the County Office since the county Office has no responsibility for student attendance at the various school districts in the County.

R8. School districts update their SARB Committee to include Probation and Office of the District Attorney staff members.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education, County Superintendent of Schools feels that it would have been more appropriate for the Grand Jury to send its report to the individual school districts for comment rather than to the County Office since the county Office has no responsibility for student attendance at the various school districts in the County.

R9. School districts design and implement additional programs to communicate to the community that school attendance is critical to the school and students success.

Response: The Tulare County Office of Education, County Superintendent of Schools feels that it would have been more appropriate for the Grand Jury to send its report to the individual school districts for comment rather than to the County Office since the county Office has no responsibility for student attendance at the various school districts in the County.

We will make note of all the recommendations suggested and will be sure we share these recommended improvements. Once again, we extend our gratitude to the Tulare County Grand Jury for their diligent efforts in compiling these findings and recommendations.