

May 30, 2024

Ross Valley School District Cover Letter
Response due by July 19, 2024

The Honorable Judge Mark Talamantes
Marin County Superior Court
P.O. Box 4988
San Rafael, CA 94913-4988
Email PDF to: CourtroomL@marin.courts.ca.gov

Rod Kerr, Foreperson
Marin County Civil Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room #275
San Rafael, CA 94903
Email PDF to: grandjury@marincounty.org

Dear Judge Talamantes and Foreperson Kerr,

Attached please find the response requested by the 2023-2024 Marin County Civil Grand Jury from the Ross Valley School District to findings (F1-F5) and recommendations (R1-R7) from the **A Free Public Education Includes School Supplies** report.

Thank you for your continued interest in and support of our public schools and the health and wellness of our county's young people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rachel Litwack", written over a horizontal line.

Rachel Litwack, President
Ross Valley School District Board

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marci Trahan", written over a horizontal line.

Marci Trahan
Ross Valley School District Superintendent

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Findings:

F1	Some Marin public schools do not comply with the “free public education” law because they ask students or their families to bring supplies to school.
Response	We agree with the finding.
F2	Schools may not circumvent the “free public education” law by offering families any kind of waiver or exemption option.
Response	We agree with the finding.
F3	Some Marin public schools distribute supply lists to families that indicate the family can seek a waiver or become exempt from bringing supplies in some specified way.
Response	We agree with the finding.
F4	Some Marin public schools distribute supply lists to families that are labeled “optional.”
Response	We agree with the finding.
F5	Teachers often spend their personal funds to provide supplies, materials, or equipment for students.
Response	We agree with the finding.

Recommendations:

R1	All Marin public schools should follow California’s “free public education” law.
Response	All Ross Valley School District (RVSD) schools will follow California Education Code 49011 and 56040(a) regarding the provision of a free and appropriate public education.
R2	Marin public schools should provide, at no cost to the student or their families, all the supplies, materials, and equipment necessary for students to fully participate at school.
Response	RVSD schools will provide all required supplies, materials, and equipment at no cost to students or their families to fully participate at school.
R3	Marin public schools should not distribute school supply lists to students or their families.
Response	RVSD schools will not provide school supply lists to students or their families.

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R4	Marin public schools should not distribute school supply lists that indicate the supplies are optional.
Response	RVSD schools will not distribute school supply lists indicating that the supplies are optional.
R5	The superintendent of each school district should ensure that the schools in their district are in compliance with California law with respect to school supplies.
Response	The RVSD Superintendent has directed and ensured that all supplies, materials, and equipment needed to participate in educational activities in RVSD schools are provided free of charge.
R6	If a Marin public school chooses to solicit donations of any kind from anyone, whether the solicitation is on paper, verbal, or electronic, such as a website or email, the school should make it clear that donations are not required but rather are entirely voluntary.
Response	RVSD does not require donations of any kind and ensures that any donations are solicited as voluntary contributions.
R7	Marin public schools should not put teachers in a position where they need to use their personal funds to provide supplies, materials, or equipment for students to fully participate at school.
Response	RVSD is committed to providing all the supplies, materials, or equipment needed by our teachers and staff.