

This document is an extract of a larger publication.

civilgrandjury.org is a project of UnGovr.org, a US-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to government transparency and public accountability.



REVIEW OF 2013/2014 IMPLEMENTATION

The Tulare County Grand Jury annually issues a final report addressing one or more issues requiring responses from various agencies in the county. All required responders must reply in writing to each finding and recommendation in the specific report. The 2013-2014 Grand Jury Report included 11 reports, 7 had 61 findings and 51 recommendations. The grand jury is obligated to verify implementation of recommendations made in past reports.

METHOD OF FOLLOWUP:

- Clarification letters were sent to the designated responders.
- Reviewed websites and confirmed updates were completed.
- Reviewed updated documents and responses.

SUMMARY OF 2013/2014 RECOMMENDATION IMPLEMENTATION:

Charter Schools:

This report recommended that three Charter schools have Student Handbooks available in English and Spanish. Two of the schools have handbooks available online. One school does not meet the minimum standard required for multiple language handbooks. The report also included a recommendation for one school to pursue Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation so students qualify for CSU or UC campuses. As of October 2016, an application for WASC accreditation was submitted.

Classroom Beneath the Stars:

This report recommended improvements to campus safety and security systems at the Tulare County Office of Education's (TCOE) outdoor education site SCICON. The follow-up revealed that SCICON implemented improved safety and security for students and staff.

Domestic Violence:

This report recommended that the Office of the District Attorney (ODA) apply for any grants available for providing services to the victims of domestic violence. The ODA confirmed their continuous pursuit of this project with a competitive grant through the California Office of Emergency Services. The ODA will continue to apply for any and all grants available.

Public Defender:

This report recommended that staff be hired to accommodate the additional case load of the Office of the Public Defender and that the current pay scale be increased. This recommendation was implemented.

Senior Services:

This report recommended the Tulare/Kings Area Agency on Aging increase hours of service and senior activities by the end of fiscal year 2013/2014 as a contract condition with Community Services Employment Training. The follow-up revealed that the hours of service and senior activities have increased at all Senior Centers in Tulare and Kings Counties.

Small School Districts:

This report made 33 recommendations to 13 small school districts. These school districts provided updates to their implementation efforts.

Buena Vista (2 recommendations):

- The school grounds should be locked during the day to increase safety and security. *2013/2014 Response:* Not to implement the recommendation due to logistical concerns. *Follow-up Response:* The plan for expansion has been approved and the school district is waiting for project funding, which will secure and close the campus. The goal of the school district is to begin construction within the next twelve months.

- The school district secure funding under Prop 84 (Safe Drinking Water Bond Act) to construct a new well.

2013/2014 Response: An application has been processed and the goal was to have the well completed by 2015.

Follow-up Response: The well was completed; however, levels of arsenic exceeded State standards.

This was resolved by combining water from an existing well. The water is routinely tested for arsenic levels and the blending process has worked. Final approval is pending from the State.

Citrus South Tule School District (2 recommendations):

- The District look for community volunteers to assist in the after school program.

- Request grant writing services from TCOE to seek funding for improvements in technology.

*Citrus South Tule School District responded only to the findings, not the recommendations in the report. They have since closed and merged with the Porterville Unified School District.

Columbine School District (3 recommendations):

- The district work with TCOE for funding of textbooks.
2013/2014 Response: The recommendation is still being implemented by working with TCOE.
Follow-up Response: In their update, the Columbine District indicated that the plan with TCOE is continuing to be implemented based upon LCAP funding.
- An office sign be installed so that visitors could readily identify the office.
2013/2014 Response/Follow up: This recommendation has been implemented.
- The district have student handbooks in both English and Spanish.
2013/2014 Response /Follow up: This recommendation has been implemented.

Liberty School District (2 recommendations):

- The district contract with Tulare City School District for lunch services when the contract with Visalia Unified School District ends.
2013/2014 Response: The Tulare City School District was contacted; they were not interested in providing Liberty School District with lunch services.
Follow-up Response: Liberty School District re-contacted Tulare City School District and is waiting for a response.
- The district explore linking their water supply with the City Of Tulare and discontinue the use of well water.
2013/2014 Response: The district stated that the recommendation was not warranted as the City of Tulare was not able to provide the water.
Follow-up Response: Since the relocation of the school, the district continues to pursue linking their water supply to the City of Tulare.

Palo Verde School District (1 recommendation):

- The district seek modernization funds to improve school buildings and infrastructure including asbestos abatement.
2013/2014 Response: The district will be implementing this recommendation as funds become available for modernization.
Follow-up Response: The district has implemented this recommendation and continues its efforts to upgrade and update. In 2016, several classrooms underwent asbestos abatement; plans to continue the process is ongoing.

Rockford School District (1 recommendation):

- The district change their board meetings from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M.
2013/2014 Response: The district maintained that the change of time was not conducive to their needs.