



**LARKSPUR-
CORTE MADERA
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Board of Trustees: Monica Cañas, Amir Movafaghi,
Sarah Mueller, Eric Schmautz, Annie Sherman
Superintendent: Brett Geithman, Ed.D.

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June 17, 2022

The Honorable Judge James Chou
Marin County Superior Court
P.O. Box 4988
San Rafael, CA 94913-4988

Deborah Haase, Foreperson
Marin County Civil Grand Jury
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

Dear Judge Chou and Foreperson Haase:

Attached please find the response requested by the 2021-2022 Marin County Civil Grand Jury from the **Larkspur-Corte Madera School District Board** to recommendations (R1-R2) and findings (F1-F8) from the **Marin Schools: A Prescription for COVID Recovery** 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,

Annie Sherman
LCMSD Board President

Dr. Brett Geithman
LCMSD Superintendent

Attachment

Larkspur-Corte Madera School District
Responses to the 2021-2022 Marin County Civil Grand Jury Report Marin
Schools: A Prescription for COVID Recovery

Recommendations:

R1:	By August 1, 2022 the Marin County Superintendent of Schools and all Marin public school districts should convene a countywide Lost Learning Task Force to rapidly develop lost learning recovery models that are available for implementation by all of Marin's public school districts.
Response:	This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. Currently, there are a number of groups and structures to examine key issues, share practices, and serve as resources to districts. These groups were in place prior to the pandemic. During the pandemic, these groups were leveraged to develop and share plans. One example is that the Marin County Superintendent of Schools convenes a monthly meeting of Marin County School District Superintendents to coordinate efforts and share best practices for supporting student learning and success. The frequency of these meetings was increased to weekly through a majority of the pandemic, including regular participation of the Marin County Public Health Office and/or Deputy Public Health Officer. A central priority of the Superintendents group through the past two years is to share best practices to address learning loss, and to implement student and staff mental health and wellness supports. In addition to monthly Superintendents meetings, other countywide groups that meet on a regular basis with representatives from all school districts who have been addressing learning loss mitigation through the pandemic include the Innovative Learning Team (ILT), District Business Officials (DBOs), Elementary and Middle School Principals Networks, and the Marin County Schools Wellness Collaborative. For the purposes of this recommendation the ILT, under the leadership of the Marin County Office of Education, will serve as the <i>Lost Learning Task Force</i>, and will agendaize learning loss mitigation to rapidly develop lost learning recovery models that are available for implementation by all of Marin's public school districts, and provide updates on best practices to the Superintendents. Additionally, all Marin County school districts applied for and were recipients of Learning Loss Mitigation Funding (LLMF) to support pupil academic achievement and mitigate learning loss related to COVID-19 school closures. As such all school districts were required to create learning continuity and attendance plans, which have been adopted and submitted to the California Department of Education.
R2:	By August 1, 2022 the Marin County Superintendent of Schools and all Marin public school districts should also call on the Lost Learning Task Force, as a second but vital priority, to develop and recommend protocols and policies for minimizing the length of emergency school closures during future disruptions.

Response:

This recommendation has been implemented.

This recommendation has been implemented, although not in the name of a *Lost Learning Task Force*. There is recognition that this work is ongoing.

Prior to COVID there was strong consensus among all Marin County Public School leaders that continuity of school operations and in person learning is a critical priority. Tools to support this priority through recent experiences with wildfire, air quality and winter storms have been developed in collaboration with Marin County Public Health and the Office of Emergency Services. Tools include an air quality chart that identifies appropriate indoor and outdoor activities at school to support health and safety depending on changing air quality indicators, systems of communication and planning for potential closures, and many districts taking the step of adding additional potential instructional days (similar to snow days in the mountainous areas) in the event of a closure.

When the first shelter in place and suspension of classroom activity was ordered in the Spring of 2020, immediate steps were taken in conjunction with Public Health to develop protocols and procedures for a safe return to site-based classroom instruction, resulting in the development of the Marin County School Guidelines (30 Point Plan) first issued June 18, 2020. With the fundamental goal of keeping students in site-based classroom instruction these guidelines have been revised and updated eleven times through May 3, 2022, including an update to a 32 Point Plan on August 18, 2021, and more recently an update to the Marin County SMARTER Schools Plan on March 24, 2022.

Public Health is currently working with all Marin County public, private, independent and parochial schools in planning for the 2022-23 school year including the development of a COVID mitigation strategies chart, similar to the air quality chart, to help schools continue implement best practices and procedures aligned with changing COVID-19 transmission levels and risks due to future variants and uncertainties, with the central and agreed upon priority of keeping students in site based classroom instructions. This work is ongoing.

Larkspur-Corte Madera School District
Responses for the 2021-2022 Marin County Civil Grand Jury Report
Marin Schools: A Prescription for COVID Recovery

Findings:

F1:	Excellent collaboration between Marin County Public Health officers and Marin's public school administrators during the COVID-19 pandemic produced science-based and demonstrably workable guidelines for reopening Marin County's public schools safely early in the 2020-21 school year.
	• We agree with the finding.
F2:	Since experts agree that in-person classroom instruction is best for students, putting students first by keeping schools open as much as possible should be an imperative for all of Marin's educators
	• We agree with the finding.
F3:	Because labor negotiations over resuming in-person classroom instruction added to the complexity and delays in public school reopenings, Marin's public school districts would benefit by developing standard practices and models for resolving staff concerns.
	• I (we) <i>partially</i> disagree with the finding. It is true that labor negotiations added to the complexity and delays in public school reopenings. We disagree that standard practices and models should be developed for resolving staff concerns. The structure of negotiations and collective bargaining agreements can be nuanced to local district needs. If there was a common practice/model, we do not believe that the Larkspur-Corte Madera School District could have opened in-person learning four business days after being permitted to do so. Marin County public school teachers and school staff should be commended for their efforts to help Marin County public schools to be among the first in the state to return to and sustain in person classroom instruction.
F4:	Marin's Public schools would benefit from studying the private and public schools that demonstrated an ability to fully reopen early in the 2020-21 school year while complying with Marin's Public Health requirements.
	• I (we) <i>partially</i> disagree with the finding. While it is beneficial to review best practices and resources that were developed by schools during the pandemic, we disagree that additional study is needed regarding how private and some public schools were able to reopen early in the 2020-21 school year. Private and public schools worked collaboratively and directly with Public Health to develop the 30-point plan that allowed Marin schools to reopen complying with Marin's Public Health requirements, and to continually adjust to conditions and changing guidance to remain open during the biggest surges of COVID-19 in our community.

F5:	As a consequence of significant differences in the amount of in-person instruction time offered by Marin County's 18 public school districts during the 2020-21 school year, Marin's public school students experienced wide disparities in educational instruction.
	• I (we) agree with the finding.
F6:	A shortage of in-person instruction during the 2020-21 school year slowed measurable learning progress for many Marin public school students, resulting in deficits that should be addressed over the long-term with a concerted recovery program.
	• I (we) partially disagree with the finding. While this is true as measured by CAASPP and other local assessments in a number of Marin public schools, this was not the case in Larkspur-Corte Madera School District. As cited in the Grand Jury's report, the percentage of students who met/exceeded standards on ELA and Mathematics CAASPP in 2019 was maintained in the 2021 test administration, thus suggesting that learning loss was not a factor in LCMSD schools.
F7:	Slow in-person school reopenings undermined confidence in public schools and contributed to an enrollment decline, potentially weakening long-term financial support for Marin's districts that rely on attendance for state funding.
	• I (we) <i>partially</i> disagree with the finding. Based on Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) parent surveys, public comments given in Board meetings and other parent forums, as well as countless conversations and emails, public confidence in LCMSD schools is very favorable. LCMSD also passed a parcel tax on June 7, 2022 with a 76% voting yes, which is another indicator of public confidence in LCMSD schools. In terms of enrollment, LCMSD's decline was 75% due to moves out of the area and 25% due to student enrollment in private, charter, home, or online school options.
F8:	The Marin County Superintendent of Schools and Office of Education are best positioned to take a leadership role in enabling school districts to coordinate and implement a focused pandemic recovery plan that addresses students' academic, social, and emotional needs.
	• I (we) agree with the finding.

**Larkspur-Corte Madera School District
Response to Grand Jury Report**

Report Title:	Marin Schools: A Prescription for COVID Recovery
Respondent/Agency: Name	Larkspur-Corte Madera School District
Name: Title	President, Annie Sherman, Larkspur-Corte Madera School District Board
Name: Title	Superintendent, Dr. Brett Geithman

Findings:

I (we) agree with the findings numbered	F1, F2, F5, F8
I (we) <i>partially</i> disagree partially with the findings numbered:	F3, F4, F6, F7
I (we) <i>wholly</i> disagree partially with the findings numbered:	

Recommendations:

- Recommendations numbered R-2 have been implemented
- Recommendations numbered R1 have not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.

Date:

6.16.2022

Signed:

