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*Santa Lucia Elementary School
Chalone Peaks Middle School*

*King City Arts Magnet School
King City Early Education Center*

*Del Rey Elementary School
Phoenix Academy*

June 3, 2022

The Honorable Stephanie E. Hulsey
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Office of the County Counsel
Attn: Sandra Ontiveros
168 W. Alisal Street, 3rd Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

RE: Response to the 2021-2022 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final
Report - "EXCELLENCE IN ACTION: MONTEREY COUNTY'S
EDUCATIONAL RESPONSE TO COVID-19"

Dear Honorable Judge Hulsey:

The King City Union School District has carefully reviewed and considered the Findings and Recommendations set forth in the 2021-2022 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report entitled, "Excellence in Action: Monterey County's Educational Response to COVID-19". This letter shall serve as the official response of the King City Union School District to the Findings and Recommendations of the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury.

We thank you for the opportunity to review and respond to the findings and recommendations of the 2021-2022 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final Report – "Excellence in Action: Monterey County's Educational Response to COVID-19".

We are also thankful to the Grand Jury for their thorough review and recognition of the efforts of the educational community during the most challenging times. The King City Union School District remains committed to providing the highest quality education for Monterey County students.

Sincerely,

Vina Paramo, President

Findings

F1. Educators and classified staff in Monterey County are to be commended for their initiative and flexibility in meeting the challenges of COVID-19. From the MCOE Superintendent to the newest part-time classroom aide, county educational employees went beyond their job descriptions in meeting the needs of students and their families during the pandemic.

☒ **AGREE**
☐ **PARTIALLY AGREE**
☐ **DISAGREE**

Response:

The King City Union School District agrees with this finding. King City Union School District staff made extraordinary efforts to meet the needs of our students and families during the most difficult and challenging times. The global pandemic brought many unexpected challenges that required school personnel to be flexible and nimble. We are proud of and thankful for their professionalism and willingness to step up and do what needed to be done to continue educating our students even when school facilities were required to remain closed. Most of the District Classified and all management staff reported to work daily and did not work from home. Thus, creating a physical presence for the families of our community.

F5. Administrators, teachers, and information technology staff in Monterey County are to be commended for making great strides in providing remote learning devices and solving internet access problems during the COVID-19 pandemic.

☒ **AGREE**
☐ **PARTIALLY AGREE**
☐ **DISAGREE**

Response:

The King City Union School District agrees. The District's administrators, teachers, and information technology staff are to be commended for making great strides in providing remote learning devices and solving internet access problems during the COVID-19 pandemic. The District staff utilized innovative solutions to solve the digital divide problems and are continuing to work toward long term solutions. District tech staff worked tirelessly and was available 24 hours a day resolve matters and take pre-emptive actions.

F8. Despite a lack of preparedness at many levels of government, MCOE, school districts, and staff responded to the impact of the pandemic in a timely manner.

☒ **AGREE**
☐ **PARTIALLY AGREE**
☐ **DISAGREE**

Response:

The King City Union School District agrees with this finding. The global pandemic surfaced gaps in communications and needed resources at all levels of government. The King City Union

School District administration and staff worked diligently to respond appropriately and timely to each challenge the pandemic surfaced.

F9. Monterey County successfully expanded internet connectivity due to the efforts of MCOE, industry partners, grant institutions, the Digital Task Force, and school district investment in technology.

☒ **AGREE**
☐ **PARTIALLY AGREE**
☐ **DISAGREE**

Response:

The King City Union School District agrees with this finding. Being geographically remote in South Monterey County, the District with some assistance from MCOE worked to expand the internet connectivity for students in need.

F10. There is increased collaboration and coordination among agencies that provide services and support, including the MCOE, Monterey County Behavioral Health, the Monterey County Health Department, internet partners, school districts, support providers, and community groups.

☐ **AGREE**
☒ **PARTIALLY AGREE**
☐ **DISAGREE**

Response:

The King City Union School District partially agrees with this finding. The increased collaboration and coordination among agencies tends to be north county focused which allows for more efficient response and better coordination of services and support in that area. South Monterey County continues to be underserved and was largely left to fill it's needs.

F11. Administrators, teachers, parents, and students are all extremely concerned about students' social-emotional issues arising from COVID-19.

☒ **AGREE**
☐ **PARTIALLY AGREE**
☐ **DISAGREE**

Response:

The King City Union School District agrees with this finding. According to the American Psychological Association, 71 percent of parents across the nation are reporting that the pandemic has taken a toll on their child's mental health. King City Union School District staff has seen more behavioral challenges, as well as social and emotional health concerns this year than in years past. While there is available funding, there are insufficient number of available trained personnel to hire, which is an obstacle to meeting the needs of students and staff. It is even more challenging to acquire competent personnel in South Monterey County.

F12. Administrators, teachers, parents, and students are concerned about the learning loss that took place during the 2020-2021 school year. There is an urgent need for mitigation of such a loss.

☒ **AGREE**
☐ **PARTIALLY AGREE**
☐ **DISAGREE**

Response:

The King City Union School District agrees with this finding, to this end the District has focused upon mitigating the loss with appropriate measures directed at the students most in need.

F13. There is the potential for significant fiscal disruption with the continuing loss of ADA and the end of additional federal funding occurring at the same time.

☐ **AGREE**
☒ **PARTIALLY AGREE**
☐ **DISAGREE**

Response:

The King City Union School District partially agrees with this finding. While California and Monterey County are experiencing declining enrollment and increased absenteeism in many districts due to the pandemic, KCUSD enrollment is remaining static with some decline, the rate of absenteeism though low, is actually improving. Since 2010, the District has always taken the strategic long view for its financial planning, ongoing income is used for ongoing expenses, one-time funding is used for one-time or short term expenditures.

Recommendations

R1. School districts maintain a minimum level of one behavioral support staff member at each school site until the end of the 2025-2026 school year.

☒ **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED**
☐ **HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE**
☐ **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS**
☐ **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED**

Response:

The King City Union School District agrees with the need to have a minimum of one behavioral support staff member at each site. The District will continue to analyze the needs of their students and behavioral support, but the ability to meet those needs will depend on resources, personnel and the available workforce.

R2. School districts maintain learning loss mitigation programs and extended learning opportunities until the end of the 2025-2026 school year.

☒ **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED**
☐ **HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE FUTURE**
☐ **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS**
☐ **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED**

Response:

Learning loss mitigation is occurring through the implementation of comprehensive MTSS models and a focus on universal supports for all students. This support will include diagnostic and formative assessments to address disparities in performance outcomes and allow schools to create a plan for learning. The district will continue to prioritize high-priority academic standards and provide strategic interventions to support learning and vertical alignment. These supports will be integrated as part of Tier 1 and Tier 2 MTSS efforts and reinforced through continued professional development for educators.

Additionally, tutoring, afterschool programs, and other academic support, including offering expanded learning opportunities during out-of-school sessions, are and will be enhanced. The district is currently assessing and planning for increased resources and implementation of the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program. The California Department of Education (CDE) defines expanded learning as, "learning programs that occur before school, after school, summer, or intersession that focus on developing the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs and interests of pupils through hands-on, engaging learning experiences and activities