



TWAIN HARTE SCHOOL

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August 9, 2023

Presiding Judge Kevin Seibert
c/o Joyce Barnes
Tuolumne County Superior Court
12855 Justice Center Drive
Sonora, CA 95370

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report - **Tuolumne County School Safety dated June 30, 2023**

The following is submitted in response to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Report on Tuolumne County School Safety.

Findings

F12.1: While ALICE training is part of the yearly plan for Twain Harte School, it isn't clear if this occurred during the COVID years amidst school closures and times of uncertainty. The most recent drill was in January 2022 and an interviewee stated that the school was actively trying to schedule another drill for this calendar school year but was waiting on Sheriff availability. The ALICE training is listed in the school's safety plan.

Response: AGREE.

F12.2: The school is directly in town, making it appealing for members of the public to enter the grounds during school hours. In the field nearest the Twain Harte Market shopping center, a locked gate was recently installed, in an attempt to discourage foot traffic through the school grounds. When non-staff or non-students enter the premises there are staff who attempt to greet them and provide education on the availability of campus access.

Response: AGREE.

F12.3: While some of the buildings are older in nature, staff are working to update security measures to ensure that students are safe in the present day. Notably, there was a new locked gate installed along a back pathway into the primary school at the request and suggestion of teachers. Doors have devices to allow teachers to lock from the inside swiftly, and there has been fencing installed, where possible, but much of the school is open.

Response: AGREE

Recommendations:

R12.1: The district should ensure that the safety plan is updated routinely, and that all teachers, staff, students and parents are provided copies and pertinent training to develop current understanding. ALICE training should be yearly, and the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office should prioritize and promote engagement with students and education around lockdowns and potential threats to the school. (F12.1)

Response: IMPLEMENTED The Comprehensive School Safety Plan is reviewed annually by the School Site Council and adopted by the Board of Trustees before March 1 each year as required by Ed Code. Copies of the safety plan are available for public review in the school office. In discussions with staff it was recommended that ALICE drills be held with the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office in the fall prior to the onset of winter weather, which could potentially interrupt the drills. In addition both administrators in the district will be completing certification to become ALICE trainers prior to the start of the 2023-24 school year.

R12.2: Staff must continue to address fencing opportunities and find solutions to highly trafficked areas, during school hours. Dedicated personnel for greeting on-campus visitors, or community members passing through would be ideal. (F12.2)

Response: IMPLEMENTED The district has consulted with our architect to begin planning for improved perimeter fencing around the campus. We expect this project to be completed sometime during the 2023-24 school year.

R12.3: Door locking devices work, but technology around this should be updated, making the locks stronger and more efficient. It is commendable that changes have been made at the request of the teachers, and this participation is critical to staff and students feeling heard, safe, and supported at school. (F12.3)

Response: NOT IMPLEMENTED The district believes that this recommendation is not warranted. The locking mechanisms on classroom doors are adequate and align with best practices. The locks are activated from inside the classroom by a push button and do not require the teacher to exit the room to lock the door. The door can only be unlocked with a key from the outside or by deactivating the push button lock from within the classroom.

The Twain Harte School District Board of Trustees would like to thank the Grand Jury members for their service to our community in conducting their inquiries and preparing the final Grand Jury Report.

Sincerely,



Gabe Wingo
Superintendent/Principal
Twain Harte School District



Noel Rathmel
President
Twain Harte School District
Board of Trustees