



# CHULA VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

84 EAST J STREET • CHULA VISTA, CALIFORNIA 91910 • 619 425-9600

EACH CHILD IS AN INDIVIDUAL OF GREAT WORTH

July 29, 2019

RECEIVED  
AUG 06 2019

The Honorable Peter C. Deddeh  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
P.O. Box 122724  
San Diego, California 92112


Re: Response to the Grand Jury Report: "School Safety in San Diego County"

Honorable Judge Deddeh:

In accordance with the requirements of the Penal Code of California, Section 933(c), the Chula Vista Elementary School District has reviewed the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations and prepared the enclosed responses.

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at (619) 425-9600, Ext. 1310.

Sincerely,

  
Francisco Escobedo, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

Enclosure

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

LESLIE RAY BUNKER ♦ ARMANDO FARÍAS ♦ LAURIE K. HUMPHREY ♦ EDUARDO REYES, Ed.D. ♦ FRANCISCO TAMAYO

## SUPERINTENDENT

FRANCISCO ESCOBEDO, Ed.D.



## Chula Vista Elementary School District

### **GRAND JURY ADVISORY**

***"School Safety in San Diego County"***

***Following is the Chula Vista Elementary School District's Response to the Findings (01-12) and Recommendations (19-01 - 19-11) to the Published Grand Jury Report of May 21, 2019.***

## **District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 01**

*Overall, the San Diego County schools studied are prepared to handle many kinds of emergencies, including active shooter situations, due largely to mandates from the State.*



### **District Response:**

The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) **agrees** with Finding 01.

California Education Code 32280 - 33389 requires schools to review school safety needs and develop new goals and strategies on an annual basis through the Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CSSP) process. All schools in the CVESD conduct risk (hazard & vulnerability) assessments, write goals and objectives for school safety, and engage in training and drills/exercises in order to improve the ability to respond to different emergencies.

Portions of each school's CSSP are standardized across the CVESD, in order to facilitate a coordinated response among schools and employees.

To support school sites, CVESD Education Service and Support staff engage in training and drills/exercises, including but not limited to, Emergency Operations Center exercises, Parent/Student Reunification training, Search and Rescue training, and First Aid/CPR training.

CVESD and school site staff review lessons learned from incidents in order to improve response in future events.

## **District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 02**

*Overall, law enforcement, first responders, parents and other stakeholders have shown interest to work cooperatively with the San Diego County school studied in the prevention of a possible active school shooter incident.*



### **District Response:**

The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) **agrees** with Finding 02.

CVESD works with the Chula Vista Police Department, San Diego Sherriff's Department, and San Diego Police Department on active shooter prevention strategies including training, lockdown and secure campus drills, and awareness.

All county Law Enforcement agencies and school districts participated in the development of standardized language for emergency responses, such as lockdown, secure campus and shelter-in-place. This standardized language assists school personnel in understanding the gravity of the situation, and how to properly respond when law enforcement only has time to provide quick instruction. CVESD has adopted this standardized language.

CVESD parents engage in the school safety planning process, including developing goals and objectives to improve school safety.

### **District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 03**

*At the school site level, there appears to be some lack of interactive collaboration with community stakeholders on the actual development of the plans.*



#### **District Response:**

Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) **agrees** with Finding 03.

Each CVESD site is required to engage community stakeholders on the development of the CSSP and is asked to invite stakeholders to engage in drills/exercises. Most of our law enforcement, fire, and City Office of Emergency Services partners have been accommodating and want to be involved, to the extent possible.

CVESD contracts with Chula Vista Police Department to engage the services of three (3) School Resource Officers.

Starting in the 2017-18 school year, CVESD's Emergency Preparedness and Security Manager started holding quarterly meetings with the following entities in attendance:

- 1) District Administration from CVESD, Sweetwater Union High School District, San Ysidro School District, and South Bay Union School District.
- 2) School administration from CVESD, Sweetwater Union High School District, San Ysidro School District, and South Bay Union School District.
- 3) Representatives from San Diego Police Department Juvenile Services Division and San Diego County Sheriff's Department.

These meetings provide for a strong collaboration and networking opportunity for our schools in the jurisdiction of San Diego County Sheriff's Department and San Diego County Police Department.

CVESD has a strong relationship with Chula Vista Fire Department and our City Office of Emergency Services manager.

The standardized portions of the CSSPs are sent to our law enforcement and fire partners, so these sections only need to be reviewed once as they apply to all our school sites. When our 46 school sites request for our stakeholders to be part of their school safety teams and review the school specific portions of their plans, it presents a challenge. They don't have the resources to commit nor time to participate; due to significant priorities elsewhere, it is understandable.

While we know our stakeholders, specifically law enforcement and fire departments want and need to be engaged at each site, the number of available personnel from these agencies does not always allow for the necessary commitment needed by our school

safety committees. It is mandated in the Education Code we have law enforcement and fire personnel included in our planning process; however, it is difficult to demand this commitment when we know there are equally or more important life-saving priorities elsewhere.

CVESD requests for school sites to engage parents or other family members who are members of law enforcement, fire, mental health, emergency services, and/or public health agencies on their school safety team, in order to meet the requirement of involvement. There are several challenges presented with this strategy:

- 1) These individuals are serving as "parent/family" volunteers on the team and are not acting under the auspices of their organization (not on paid time).
- 2) They are not required to follow the standardized guidance provided by their organizations and county agreements.
- 3) They are unfamiliar with standardized guidelines and county agreements with schools.
- 4) They oftentimes provide strategies that conflict with best practices for school sites.

#### **District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 04**

*The Grand Jury found that some of the schools reviewed had conducted a vulnerability study of their premises.*



#### **District Response:**

The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) **agrees** with Finding 04.

CVESD requires each school to annually conduct a hazard and vulnerability assessment, in addition to the requirement listed in the Education Code to conduct analysis of school crime data. Schools use the data gathered in the hazard and vulnerability assessment, along with crime data to write goals and objectives to improve school safety.

## **District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 05**

*Valuable learning from the recent Florida and Texas shootings is not fully reflected yet in the existing CSSPs.*



### **District Response:**

The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) **partially disagrees** with Finding 05.

CVESD **disagrees** that CSSPs do not reflect valuable learning from Stoneman Douglas High School: "a pedestrian gate left unattended."

All CVESD school sites are required to include ingress and egress procedures in their CSSP. This includes times gates are locked after the school bell rings. Our school gates are not to be left open during the school day, except at arrival and dismissal times.

CVESD **disagrees** that CSSPs do not reflect valuable learning from Stoneman Douglas High School: "Code Red alerts not followed."

Per requirements of California's Standardized Emergency Management System and the National Incident Management System, CVESD does not use codes, but clear language during an emergency, which is stated in the CSSP and emphasized in training. Lockdowns or Secure Campus situations are to be called over the intercom using clear language with as much information as can be provided given the situation. This approach assists any substitutes, parents, or visitors in understanding what actions need to be taken. When using codes, it is difficult for visitors to know what to do.

CVESD **disagrees** that the CSSPs do not reflect valuable learning from Stoneman Douglas High School: "staff unsure about lockdown protocol."

CVESD's CSSPs all include standardized procedures for emergencies, including general response procedures for Lockdowns and Secure Campus operations (as determined by the County law enforcement and educational partners). All CSSPs also include disaster specific procedures for an active shooter event. We recognize that our schools may be placed on lockdown for non-active shooter events and take this into consideration.

CVESD **partially disagrees** that the CSSPs do not reflect valuable learning from Stoneman Douglas High School: "unheeded warnings of the suspect's behavior."

While CVESD's CSSPs include standardized procedures for schools to conduct assessments on individuals that either make or potentially pose a threat, the full extent of ways to address threats extend beyond the site's purview and are located in other district and county documents, such as the San Diego County School Threat Protocol.



CVESD **agrees** that the CSSPs do not reflect valuable learning from Santa Fe High School:  
"Substitutes were at a loss as to what to do."

CVESD agrees that substitute response is not addressed in the CSSP. It has been expected that substitutes follow the same procedures as other employees, however, this is not delineated specifically.

**District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 06**

*Overall, school districts in San Diego County indicated a more focused approach to active shooter response through their efforts to improve communication, add site safety precautions and adopt guidelines for Options-Based Responses in this year's or next year's Comprehensive School Safety Plans/Emergency Operations Plans.*



The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) **agrees** with Finding 06.

All schools operated by CVESD have implemented Options-Based Response procedures for the last two years.

**District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 07**

*All San Diego County schools in the Grand Jury study claimed to have conducted or have scheduled drills within the current school year on emergency procedures directed towards intruders on campus, but not specifically armed assailants.*



**District Response:**

The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) **agrees** with Finding 07.

CVESD schools are required to conduct twenty-one (21) emergency drills and exercises, including lockdown, secure campus and shelter-in-place response actions.

### **District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 08**

*Drills (conducted or planned) center mainly on the presentation of procedures but are progressing toward becoming more realistic and dynamic, which helps create a "mental model" for preconditioning staff and students to act with immediacy.*



### **District Response:**

The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) **agrees** with Finding 08.

CVESD site drills/exercises have evolved over the last three years, to include more realistic and dynamic actions, such as varying times of day the drill is held, incorporating unexpected "hazards" or barricading and other options-based responses.

### **District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 09**

*As a note of recognition, Sweetwater Union High School District has gone above and beyond state requirements for safety training by demonstrating excellent and thorough levels of preparation.*



### **District Response:**

The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) **agrees** with Finding 09.

CVESD and Sweetwater Union High School District collaborate significantly on safety, security, and emergency preparedness issues. Sweetwater Union High School District has demonstrated excellence in these areas.

## **District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 10**

*Funding for active shooter response and preparedness is given high priority in some districts.*



### **District Response:**

The Chula Vista Elementary School District **agrees** with Finding 10.

CVESD has:

- Purchased and installed classroom door locks which can be locked from the inside.
- Purchased new emergency radios for each school and for each after-school program.
- Installed improved perimeter security at specified sites.
- Publicized the use of Students Speaking Out (P3) Tip App.
- Conducted numerous trainings for school site and district office staff on Active Shooter and Other Active Assailant response procedures.
- Held and sent employees to Threat Assessment and Management trainings.
- Employed a full-time District Emergency Preparedness & Security manager who has more than 12 years' experience of teaching options-based response for active shooter incidents.

### **District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 11**

*Before and after school programs need to be better addressed in safety plans.*



#### **District Response:**

The Chula Vista Elementary School District **agrees** with Finding 11.

After-School Programs are a critical part of our students' educational experience. Our sites' after-school programs are issued an emergency radio, participate in bi-monthly emergency radio drills, and are trained in emergency procedures by our District Emergency Preparedness and Security Manager, yet we acknowledge we can better address after-school programs in our CSSPs and other district guidance.

### **District Guidance: Grand Jury Finding 12**

*Many districts expressed a need to train all adults on campus in safety procedures.*



### **District Response:**

The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) **agrees** with Finding 12.

The CVESD's Emergency Preparedness and Security Manager is requested to provide training at our schools regularly, however, it is not always possible at the training time to have all staff present, based on employee schedules. Often time cafeteria staff, noon-duty aides, and other part-time staff are unable to attend trainings. This does not minimize the importance of these positions receiving emergency training.



## **District Guidance: Grand Jury Recommendation 19-01**

*Increase the priority of funding in school budgets for training, equipment and infrastructure improvements to handle an active shooter crisis as a matter of security for staff and student safety.*



### **District Response:**

#### **The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) has implemented Recommendation 19-01.**

CVESD has prioritized funding for active shooter training and equipment from general funds and Local Control and Accountability Plan funds. The district has included security related infrastructure projects in the recently passed Bond Measure VV funds.

Annually, CVESD invests in a contract with Chula Vista Police Department for three (3) school resource officers. The SROs are a critical part of our active shooter crisis preparedness by providing training, serving as evaluators on drills and exercises, providing threat assessment services, and conducting hazard and vulnerability assessments.

In 2016, CVESD hired a full time Emergency Preparedness and Security Manager with over a decade of experience in training on Active Shooter Options-Based response. The Manager has worked to improve CVESD's training, equipment, and infrastructure to handle active shooter situations and other emergencies. Such strategies have included, but are not limited to:

- Purchasing a new emergency radio system,
  - We are currently working with Sweetwater Union High School District, to set up our radio systems to be interoperable for better coordination during incidents.
  - Each School Site, District Cabinet members and major departments at the district office have a radio.
  - Each after school program has been issued a radio.
  - District Office Staff, School Sites and After School Programs participate in bi-monthly emergency radio drill.
- Based on vulnerability assessments, the district and school sites have purchased and installed preparedness, target hardening, and alert devices such as:
  - Lockdown & Secure Campus Kits.
  - Classroom door locks (which lock from the inside).
  - Improved fencing/perimeter control.
  - Lock-bloks (which allow classroom doors to be locked, yet open for easy lockdown).
  - Door alarms.

- Enhanced training and drills including:
  - Active Shooter and other Active Assailant Training, which includes deterring, detecting, delaying, and defeating an active shooter. (Options-based response).
  - Threat Assessment and Management training.
  - Developed Drill/Exercise guidelines document for holding Active Shooter, Secure Campus & Shelter-in-place while working with students of various ages, and also includes guidance on the types of drills to hold with and without students (barricading, simulated events, etc.).
  - Incident Command System, National Incident Management System & Standardized Emergency Management System.
  - Emergency Response at school sites.

**District Guidance: Grand Jury Recommendation 19-02**

*Explore alternate or creative sources of funding to supplement the school's needs to enhance safety measures regarding active shooter situations, including possible grants or community fund-raising efforts.*



**District Response:**

**The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) has implemented Recommendation 19-02.**

On May 31, 2019, CVESD, Sweetwater Union High School District, and Chula Vista Police Department submitted a collaborative Community Oriented Police Services School Violence Prevention Program grant application to the Department of Justice. The partners are seeking funds to acquire, install, and implement an outdoor IP video management and campus safety system at 34 school sites which can federate to the Chula Vista Police Department enterprise. If awarded the grant funding, all Partners will strengthen crime deterrent functions, live video surveillance, and recorded video capabilities in and around school sites.

In 2018, CVESD submitted a Bond Measure (Measure VV) which included priority funding for security measures such as access control and a video management system. Bond Measure VV was passed by local voters at the November 6, 2018, General Election.

All CVESD sites promote the use of Crime Stoppers' Students Speaking Out (P3) tip line.

In addition, CVESD's Senior Grant Writer and Emergency Preparedness and Security Manager consistently search for available funding opportunities.

**District Guidance: Grand Jury Recommendation 19-03**

*Conduct vulnerability studies at all school sites and use this data to guide the development of the CSSP and EOP.*



**District Response:**

**The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) finds that Recommendation 19-03 has been implemented.**

Since 2017, each CVESD site has been required to conduct an annual hazard and vulnerability assessment, in order to complete the CSSP. The CVESD completes the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan on the five-year cycle required by the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. This entails a comprehensive hazard and vulnerability assessment, which guides emergency planning and updating of the Emergency Operations Plan.

### **District Guidance: Grand Jury Recommendation 19-04**

*Provide more safety precautions against active shooters, including threat awareness training/reporting, and site physical improvements.*



#### **District Response:**

**The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) finds that Recommendation 19-04 has been implemented.**

The CVESD's Emergency Preparedness and Security Manager has worked to improve our training, equipment, and infrastructure to handle active shooter situations and other emergencies. Such strategies have included, but are not limited to:

- Purchasing and/or installing preparedness, target hardening, and alert devices such as:
  - Lockdown & Secure Campus kits.
  - Classroom door locks (which lock from the inside).
  - Improved fencing/perimeter control.
  - Lock-bloks.
  - Door alarms.
- Purchasing a new emergency radio system.
  - CVESD is currently working with Sweetwater Union High School District (SUHSD), to ensure the purchased radio systems to be interoperable with SUHSD and Chula Vista Police Department for better coordination during incidents.
  - Each School Site, CVESD Cabinet members and major departments at the Education Service and Support Center (ESSC) office have a radio.
  - Each after-school program has been issued a radio.
  - ESSC Office Staff, School Sites, and After-School Programs participate in bi-monthly emergency radio drills.
- Enhanced training and drills including:
  - Active Shooter and other Active Assailant Training, which includes deterring, detecting, delaying, and defeating an active shooter. (Options-based response).
  - Twenty-one (21) required emergency drills per school site.
  - Threat Assessment and Management training.
  - Developed Drill/Exercise guidelines document for holding Active Shooter, Secure Campus & Shelter-in-place while working with students of various ages, and also includes guidance on the types of drills to hold with and without students (barricading, simulated events, etc.).

- Incident Command System, National Incident Management System & Standardized Emergency Management System.
- Emergency Response at school sites.

### **District Guidance: Grand Jury Recommendation 19-05**

*Monitor individual school's planning meetings to develop the CSSP and EOP to ensure collaboration of multi-disciplinary partners (staff, parents, students, first responders, fire department and law enforcement, community agencies) at the local school level.*



### **District Response:**

**The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) finds that Recommendation 19-05 has been implemented.**

The standardized portions of the CSSPs are sent to our law enforcement and fire partners annually, therefore, these standardized sections only need to be reviewed once as they apply to all CVESD school sites. The 46 school sites request for our stakeholders to be part of their school safety teams and review the school specific portions of their plans.

There are challenges to gaining collaboration from all stakeholders. While we know our stakeholders, specifically law enforcement and fire departments, want and need to be engaged at each site, the number of available personnel from these agencies does not always allow for the necessary commitment needed by our school safety committees. It is mandated in the Education Code we have law enforcement and fire personnel included in our planning process; however, it is difficult to demand this commitment when we know there are equally or more important life-saving priorities elsewhere.

CVESD requests for school sites to engage parents or other family members who are members of law enforcement, fire, mental health, emergency services, and/or public health agencies on their school safety team, in order to meet the requirement of involvement. A challenge presented with this strategy: these individuals are serving as "parent/family" volunteers on the team, and are not acting under the auspices of their organization (not on paid time), so they are not required to follow the standardized guidance provided by their organizations and county agreements or they are unfamiliar with these guidelines, and often times provide strategies that are in conflict with best practices for school sites.

As part of the CSSP submission, each school site is required to list the individuals who participate in the development of the plan, and are required to list a member of each of the following subgroups: Certificated Staff, Classified Staff, Administration, Parent, Law Enforcement Personnel, and Fire Personnel. Each plan is reviewed by CVESD's Emergency Preparedness & Security Manager for compliance before being submitted to the Board of Education.

**District Guidance Grand Jury Recommendation 19-06**

*Include "Active Shooter" response language in the school's Comprehensive School Site Plan and dedicated sections in the Emergency Operations Plans.*



**District Response:**

**The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) finds that Recommendation 19-06 has been partially implemented.**

Active Shooter response language is delineated in all CSSPs and will be implemented in the updated Emergency Operations Plan slated for approval date of November 2019.



### **District Guidance Grand Jury Recommendation 19-07**

*Promote the use of tip hotlines and tip apps by students and parents.*



#### **District Response:**

**The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) finds that Recommendation 19-07 has been implemented and will continue to be implemented.**

The CVESD started promoting the tip line used, *Crime Stoppers' Students Speaking Out (P3)*, at the March 2018 Safety Forum held in conjunction with Chula Vista Police Department. The information has been posted on our district website and sent with parent communications, as necessary.

Chula Vista Police Department states that the tip line has been effective in intervening in harmful acts to self or others.

CVESD will continue to promote the use of this tip line.

### **District Guidance Grand Jury Recommendation 19-08**

*Include substitute teachers and all other adult workers in the training and practice provided to regular staff on active shooter awareness and responses specific to each school.*



#### **District Response:**

**The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) finds that Recommendation 19-08 has not been implemented but will be implemented.**

The CVESD, in partnership with San Diego County Office of Education, will create a training video to provide for substitute teachers and all other adult workers that review general emergency response procedures. This will be completed by August 12, 2020.

### **District Guidance Grand Jury Recommendation 19-09**

*Conduct active shooter drills with staff that are dynamic and produce "immediacy" of response consistent with the school's approved safety plan.*



#### **District Response:**

**The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) finds that Recommendation 19-09 has been implemented.**

In July 2018, the CVESD distributed guidance for schools to engage staff in dynamic active shooter or lock-down drills that provide for an "immediacy" of response. Although many schools have already implemented exercises that include barricading and defensive tactics, some schools are still working to evolve their drills to this level. The CVESD Emergency Preparedness and Security Manager will continue to work with school sites in implementing dynamic drills.

### **District Guidance Grand Jury Recommendation 19-10**

*Use age-appropriate training methods in conducting lockdown and active shooter drills with students.*



#### **District Response:**

**The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) finds that Recommendation 19-10 has not been implemented but will be implemented.**

Recommendation 19-10 has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future. In partnership with the San Diego County Office of Education, the CVESD will form a workgroup to consider age appropriate training methods using the "Best Practice Considerations for Schools in Active Shooter and Other Armed Assailant Drills" that was published jointly by the National Association of School Psychologists and the National Association of School Resource Officers. Workgroup members will include teachers, classified staff, school psychologists, school counselors, school nurses, parent representatives, district and site administrators, and law enforcement representatives. The workgroup recommendations will be available for implementation as soon as possible, but not later than Aug. 12, 2020.

### **District Guidance Grand Jury Recommendation 19-11**

*Coordinate detailed emergency plans for school programs held on campus outside of normal school hours, inform all participants and involve the community's support.*



#### **District Response:**

**The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) finds that Recommendation 19-11 has been implemented.**

The CVESD works with our partnering agencies, specifically our YMCA after-school program staff to coordinate emergency plans, engage in training, and emergency drills. Each site after-school program has an emergency radio for use during critical incidents. The programs participate in bi-monthly emergency radio drills and have used the radios for contact with CVESD staff after hours when necessary.

Our school sites also work with outside agencies that have programs on our campuses during school hours, such as, Child Development Agency, SDCOE, etc.

CVESD understands that more work can be done to coordinate with YMCA after-school programs, and other agencies that have programs during school hours and will continue to improve coordination with these agencies.

CHINAILED MAIL™



7012 1010 0003 0108 0273

Chula Vista Elementary School District  
84 East J Street  
Chula Vista, CA 91910

**BUSINESS SERVICES AND SUPPORT**

The Honorable Peter C. Deddeh  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
P.O. Box 122724  
San Diego, California 92112

P

05 AUG 2019

2500051

10/01/2019

RECEIVED \$008 2019

2019/08/05