



GARRY T. EAGLES, Ph.D., Superintendent

901 Myrtle Avenue, Eureka, California 95501-1294

Phone: 707/445-7000

FAX: 707/445-7143

www.humboldt.k12.ca.us

April 4, 2016

APR 06 2016

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Joyce Hinrichs, Superior Court Judge
County of Humboldt
825 Fifth St.
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear Judge Hinrichs:

Enclosed is my response to the 2015-2016 Grand Jury Report findings and recommendations on behalf of the Humboldt County Office of Education.

Should you have questions, I would be happy to talk with you.

Sincerely,

Garry T. Eagles, Ph.D.
Humboldt County Superintendent
of Schools
superintendent@hcoe.net
(707) 445-7030

GTE:gb

Enclosure

OKAY
joe

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY REPORT

Report Title: Be Wise Immunize - Implementation of Senate Bill 277 in Humboldt County

Report date: March 31, 2016

Response by: Garry T. Eagles, Humboldt County Superintendent of Schools

FINDINGS

1. I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F1, F2, F3
2. I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: F4, F5
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recommendations numbered R1 (partially) R3, R4 have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implementation actions.)
2. Recommendation numbered _____ have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. *(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)*
3. Recommendations numbered _____ require further analysis.
(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report.)
4. Recommendations numbered R1 (partially), R2 will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable. *(Attach an explanation.)*

Date: April 1, 2016

Signed: 

Number of pages attached: 1

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS

F4: Please see note below regarding transportation.

F5: Each school district is required to submit data to the California Department of Health and Human Services. The Shots for Schools data base is a state-level responsibility. Neither HCOE nor the Humboldt County Public Health Department have the legal authority to do what the Grand Jury implies by this finding.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

R1: The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends the Humboldt County Office of Education, in collaboration with the Humboldt County Department of Public Health, develop and implement a plan which addresses lack of transportation as a barrier to receiving mandated vaccinations before the 2016-17 school year. (F1, F4)

Response: Previous reviews of immunization patterns in Humboldt County, conversations with parents, and discussions with school staffs knowledgeable about the families they serve, have not indicated that transportation is a significant barrier as to why so many parents in the past have filed personal exemptions to immunization requirements. From what we have learned, parents predominantly file personal exemption requests for two reasons: 1) some parents object to the government telling them how to manage the healthcare of their children; and 2) some parents are still being influenced by the false, medically unsubstantiated yet still widely disseminated, rumor that childhood immunizations are in some way linked to autism.

Nevertheless, given that we have a growing segment of our population that is low income, access to free and/or low cost immunizations might very well be an issue moving forward. It is in this arena where HCOE, local school districts, and the Humboldt County Public Health Department are working in collaboration to provide information and referral to eligible parents about the availability of subsidized services.

R2: The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends that Humboldt County Office of Education, in collaboration with the Humboldt County Department of Public Health, assume vaccination data oversight responsibility, ensuring that each school within Humboldt County accurately collects and reports their vaccination rates to the State database. (F5)

Response: Under state law, vaccination data collection/reporting is a responsibility of each local school district and oversight is the responsibility of the California Department of Health and Human Services. The 58 county offices of education have no legal role and inserting another government agency into that current system would be an unnecessary, and in some ways duplicative, bureaucratic layer.

R3: The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury recommends that the Humboldt County Office of Education, the Humboldt County Department of Public Health and all elementary schools and districts provide the link www.shotsforschool.org prior to the start of the 2016-17 school year (F3)

Response: HCOE appreciates the Grand Jury's recommendation and has already provided the link to shotsforschools.org on its website under "Resources for Parent and Community." We will be recommending that local school districts do the same on their respective websites.

R4: All Humboldt County schools provide vaccination information to parents prior to the 2016-17 school year (F3)

Response: Schools routinely provide information regarding immunization requirements to parents as part of their spring Kindergarten registration drives and when new students register. Because of the significant changes in state law which took effect January 1, 2016, the Humboldt County Office of Education became a member of, and a contributing financial partner to, the Humboldt County Public Health Department's Immunization Coalition. The Coalition will be launching a county-wide multi-media campaign this spring focused on increasing awareness about the new requirements.