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Camptonville Union School District

Summary:

The 2014-2015 Grand Jury decided to investigate the practices, policies and management of Camptonville Union School District.

Introduction and Background:

Located in northeastern Yuba County, Camptonville Union School District is in the historical town of Camptonville. A small town with a share of California gold rush history, Camptonville still holds its sense of community that began in the 1850s. The original school building was built in 1871 and now serves as gymnasium and auditorium. Blended grade levels fill three classrooms; Kindergarten – 2nd, 3rd – 5th, and 6th – 8th grades. Student population averages slightly more than 60. The preschool is run by the Camptonville Community Partnership. There is a strong parent group who raises money for student activities.

The Grand Jury chose to investigate Camptonville Union School District because of its small size, remote location, and because it had not been investigated since 1990.



Camptonville Union School District (March, 2015)

Methodology and Approach:

Members of the 2014-2015 Grand Jury toured the school, its grounds and facilities, attended one Board meeting and held interviews and conversations with the Superintendent, Board members, staff members, and parents. Also referenced were the following websites:

- <http://www.cville.k12.ca.us>
- <http://www.coretca.org>
- http://camptonville.com/the_courier.html

Discussion and Narrative:

Members of the 2014-2015 Grand Jury attended a Board meeting and were enthusiastically welcomed. The meeting agenda was clearly posted on the front door and copies were also made available. The Board President followed Robert's Rules of Order yet allowed questions to be as asked. Board members were willing to answer questions and provide background information for agenda items. All Board members were involved in discussions and opinions were expressed freely. In addition, the Superintendent, who also serves as principal and special education coordinator, provided concise reports. It was clear to the Grand Jury members that the Camptonville Board and the Superintendent share mutual respect for each other.

On a site visit to the school, the Superintendent gave a tour of the classrooms, library, preschool, the outdoor theater and school vegetable garden. It is the Grand Jury's opinion that detailed attention is given to the campus and grounds as the buildings were in good condition and the outdoor areas were neat and well-maintained. Although Camptonville School is in a close-knit community, security cameras are placed in strategic locations.

The Superintendent informed the Grand Jury members that some staff, including teachers, wears "more than one hat" due to budget and population limits. Certificated staff has gone above and beyond to serve students by becoming "librarians" so students can access library materials. In their blended classrooms, teachers often spend extra time to work with students and also write a weekly newsletter for students and their families. All classes enjoy outdoor learning. The school vegetable garden, in which students utilize and help maintain, provides many learning opportunities as well as fresh vegetables for the lunch program. Breakfast and lunch are freshly prepared every school day.

In 1998, Camptonville Union School District established Camptonville Academy, a CORE (Community Options for Resources in Education) charter school. Camptonville Academy has been accredited by WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) and serves more than 420 students. Although the charter school has since moved to Marysville, Camptonville Union School District still holds the authorization wherein the Academy reports to the District.

At the time of the Grand Jury's visit to Camptonville School, there was not an Information Technology (IT) person. The Superintendent acknowledged that this has hindered the upkeep of the District's website and maintenance of other technologies. The Jury members were advised that the District is looking for a new IT person. It was reported that budget and population limits make this a difficult position to fill. This has not stopped the District from utilizing up-to-date technologies; iPads are available to students and teachers use current presentation devices. The Superintendent assured Jury members that when funds are available, more will be purchased.

The District also utilizes an automatic call system to notify parents of school closures, events, and weekly Superintendent messages. This system provides the opportunity to stay connected with the community. The Superintendent ensures the Camptonville Courier; a local monthly community newsletter, receives school news, calendar of events and dates of Board meetings.

In a time when schools are forced to make budget and services cuts, Camptonville Union School District appears to be prudent in their spending and management. It also appears that limited resources have not stopped this District from delivering a well-rounded education to students in an atmosphere of caring, attention to individual student needs, as well as safety.

Findings:

- F1. At the time of our visit to Camptonville School, the Grand Jury found there was not an Information Technology (IT) person. The Superintendent acknowledged that this has hindered the upkeep of the District's website <http://www.cville.k12.ca.us> and maintenance of other technologies. The Jury members were advised that the District is looking for a new IT person. It was reported to the Grand Jury that budget and population limits make this a difficult position to fill. This has not stopped the District from utilizing up-to-date technologies.

Recommendations:

- R1. The Grand Jury recommends that the District continues its search for an Information Technology (IT) person to oversee the upkeep of their website as well as maintenance of other technologies in use at the District. (See F1)

Commendations:

- C1. The Grand Jury acknowledges and appreciates the dedication and hard work of Camptonville Union School District’s Superintendent who provides strong, caring leadership and maintains a personal relationship within the District as well as the community.
- C2. The Grand Jury acknowledges the diligence and commitment of the Camptonville Union School District Board of Trustees who have sincere interest and involvement in the District and its well-being.
- C3. The Grand Jury commends the Camptonville Union School District’s teachers and staff for their extra efforts and time spent in providing services and safety to students.

Request for Responses:

Pursuant to Penal Code §933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses as follows:

From the following governing bodies:

- Superintendent of Camptonville Union School District (F1, R1)
- President, Board of Trustees, Camptonville Union School District (F1, R1)

The governing bodies indicated above should be aware that the comment or response of the governing body must be conducted in accordance with Penal Code §933(c) and subject to the notice, agenda, and open meeting requirements of the Brown Act.

