

This document is an extract of a larger publication.

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The 2016-17 Santa Cruz County Grand Jury issued a report entitled “Assessing the Threat of Violence in our Public Schools: Is enough being done?” The report analyzed the capacity of local law enforcement and school districts to respond effectively to threats of targeted school violence and recommended that the County Office of Education and the County Sheriff’s Office work together to develop a comprehensive threat assessment plan. The 2017-18 Grand Jury has now followed up on the status of the plan and its implementation.	
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Seeking An Integrated Response	
The Behavioral Health Division of the County Health Services Agency has field-based personnel who respond on an emergency basis, but who are not accessible through 9-1-1. While our local law enforcement agencies have done some collaboration with Behavioral Health in improving the intervention process for people in crisis, more can be done.	
San Lorenzo Water District	35
Encouraging the Flow of Information to the Public	
District changes to meeting practices reduced public access to the debate and decision-making process and compromised the community’s understanding of the issues. Better communication on difficult matters, an informed and effective Assessment District oversight committee, and an unwavering commitment to public access, will enable greater transparency and may restore trust and foster better relationships within the SLVWD community.	

Data-Driven Budgeting 59

New Ways to Get Better Results

The incremental process the County is currently using communicates minimal program information and limits public insight into the budgeting process. Moving to a data-driven, performance-based budgeting process will enable the County to better communicate, and the public to better understand, how and why spending decisions are made.

These Are Our Children 73

Responding to Youth Homelessness in Santa Cruz County

More than 75 percent of the 165 unaccompanied minor children and 423 young adults identified as homeless in the Santa Cruz County 2017 Homeless Census and Survey were residing in the County when they became homeless. The services available to help them find shelter and to provide support in developing the skills and resources for a productive adulthood are scant.

Our Public Defender System 91

Anticipating Structural Change

Santa Cruz County proposes to transition the public defender function to a new model, beginning in the 2021-22 fiscal year. The new model will likely include an in-house public defender's office. The County has never collected data to measure the quality of public defender performance. The proposal would give the County three fiscal years before the transition in which to begin to collect data on the contract public defender system's performance.

Honoring Commitments to the Public 109

Review of the 2015-16 Grand Jury Report Responses

The 2017-18 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury investigated whether respondents to seven 2015-16 Grand Jury reports honored their commitments either to analyze report recommendations within six months or to implement those recommendations within a specified time in the future.

June 29, 2018
Honorable John M. Gallagher
701 Ocean St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Judge Gallagher,

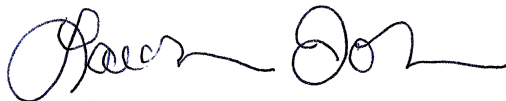
It is my honor to present the Consolidated Final Report of the 2017-18 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury. The seven individual reports contained herein represent the culmination of thousands of hours of effort and dedication by 19 members of our community. This year's Grand Jurors have demonstrated commitment, curiosity, and integrity of the highest order in carrying out their duty to oversee the workings of our local government. It has been an honor and a pleasure to be a part of this hard working group of people.

We could not have succeeded this year without the many individuals who supported and guided us. We are thankful to Sharon Carey-Stronck and Jason Heath of the County Counsel's Office for their thorough and careful review of every one of our reports. Sharon also served as a trusted sounding board on a variety of issues, for which I am personally very grateful. Dave Brown in the CAO's Office, Dante Searcy in General Services, and Tim Newman, Marianne Roberts, and Joanna Parrot in the Superior Court all provided support and assistance at various points in our process. Our clerk, John Rible, was invaluable in providing historical perspective and technical support throughout the year. And finally, I am consistently moved by your deep appreciation of and support for the Grand Jury and your availability and willingness to help us in every way you can.

Due to the timing of publication, most of the responses to our reports will be submitted to the Grand Jury that succeeds us. Where responses have already been received, they are included in this consolidated report. We look forward to reading the rest of the responses as they are published in the months to come.

This year's investigations covered a wide and diverse range of issues. They allowed us to delve into the inner workings of our civic institutions, to observe the tremendous talent and commitment of our public employees, and to suggest ways to continue to evaluate and improve local governmental operations. We value the opportunity to have played this unique and important role in the civic life of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lauren Tobin', with a stylized, flowing script.

Lauren Tobin, Foreperson
2017-18 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury

2017-18 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury



Sine Praejudicio

Back Row: Julie Knight, Maureen Moncrieff, Tara Neier, Julia Armstrong, Anne Walsh Kelly,
Third Row: Mary McMillan, Kitty Hawker, Christine Kelsey, Bob Johnson, Jeanne Viglienzoni
Second Row: Jeff Maxwell, Judy Patterson, Lauren Tobin, Shirley Tessler
Front Row: Rita Wadsworth, Stella Sexmith, Nelson Crandall, Greg Joseph, John Mizell



