



[scgj] Grand Jury Response Submission - Santa Cruz County Superintendent of Schools

Faris Sabbah <fsabbah@santacruzcoe.org>
To: Katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org, grandjury@scgrandjury.org

Thu, Aug 28, 2025 at 2:08 PM

Dear Judge Hansen and Members of the Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury,

On behalf of the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, please find attached the required response to the 2024-2025 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury report *Human Trafficking in Santa Cruz County: Voices Unheard, Signs Unseen*.

This response addresses the findings and recommendations directed to the County Superintendent of Schools under Penal Code §933(c). We remain committed to strengthening our policies and practices in alignment with state law and to ensuring that our staff and students receive the training and resources necessary to address the serious issue of human trafficking in our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this response and for your ongoing efforts to raise awareness of this critical matter. Please do not hesitate to contact my office if additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

Dr. Faris Sabbah
County Superintendent of Schools
Santa Cruz County Office of Education

Santa Cruz County Office of Education

www.santacruzcoe.org



[2025-5cR TraffickingSchoolSuperintendent Response Request.pdf](#)
290K



The 2024-2025 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury

Requires the

County Superintendent of Schools

to Respond by August 29, 2025

**to the Findings and Recommendations listed below
which were assigned to them in the report titled**

Human Trafficking in Santa Cruz County

Voices Unheard, Signs Unseen

Required Responses apply to elected officials, elected agencies or department heads, elected boards, councils, and committees. The respondent is **required** to respond and to make the response available to the public under California Penal Code ([PC §933\(c\)](#)). A required response will be considered **compliant** under [PC §933.05](#) if it contains an appropriate comment on **all** findings and recommendations **which were assigned to you** in this report.

Invited Responses are encouraged but are not required by the California Penal Code.

Please follow the instructions below when preparing your response.

Instructions for Respondents

Your assigned [Findings](#) and [Recommendations](#) are listed on the following pages with check boxes and an expandable space for summaries, timeframes, and explanations. Please follow these instructions, which paraphrase [PC §933.05](#):

- 1. For the Findings, mark one of the following responses with an “X” and provide the required additional information:**
 - a. **AGREE with the Finding**, or
 - b. **PARTIALLY DISAGREE with the Finding** – specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and include an explanation of the reasons why, or
 - c. **DISAGREE with the Finding** – provide an explanation of the reasons why.
- 2. For the Recommendations, mark one of the following actions with an “X” and provide the required additional information:**
 - a. **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – provide a summary of the action taken, or
 - b. **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – provide a timeframe or expected date for completion, or
 - c. **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – provide an explanation, scope, and parameters of an analysis to be completed within six months, or
 - d. **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – provide an explanation of why it is not warranted or not reasonable.
- 3. (Please attach a PDF version of your completed responses to an email sent to:**

The Honorable Judge: Katherine Hansen Katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org and

The Santa Cruz County Grand Jury: grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

If you have questions about this response form, please contact the Grand Jury by calling (831) 454-2099 or by sending an email to grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

Findings

F5 . Staff and administration of the County Office of Education report they are not adequately trained and do not receive regular training regarding human trafficking as required by AB 1227. This is in spite of the fact that free training is available from local providers that could bring COE into compliance if enforced. This deficiency can lead to a failure in the staff's ability to identify cases of trafficking.

AGREE
 PARTIALLY DISAGREE
 DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

While the Santa Cruz County Office of Education (Santa Cruz COE) regularly provides human trafficking-related training to students and staff, we acknowledge there are areas for continued improvement.

All Santa Cruz COE staff complete annual Mandated Reporter training, which includes content on recognizing signs of abuse and neglect, including elements of human trafficking. Additionally, supplemental trainings are offered to all staff, including a 1-hour Human Trafficking Awareness module as well as Rising Worldwide's survivor-led workshops.

For students, our "Choosing Wisely" curriculum addresses human trafficking within a module on Human Trafficking, Bullying, Internet Safety, and Media Literacy, and is taught annually. Our independent studies program also includes instructional material on human trafficking and grooming.

We are working to ensure our training and resources align fully with the highest state standards. Effective in the 2025-26 school year, all staff are required to complete the supplemental Human Trafficking Awareness training annually, co-created by and featuring the voices of survivors.

Recommendations

R5 . The County Office of Education should come into compliance with AB 1227, providing human trafficking-related training, led by survivors, to students and staff as required. This should be completed by February 28, 2026. (F5)

- X** **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The Santa Cruz COE is committed to strengthening current practices to ensure full compliance with AB 1227. Effective in the 2025-26 school year, all staff are required to complete annual Human Trafficking Awareness training that includes survivor perspectives. For students, human trafficking prevention remains part of the provided curriculum, with new procedures in place to confirm that students transferring into our programs, including Independent Studies, have met the requirement or will receive the instruction if they have not. In addition, the Santa Cruz COE will continue to raise awareness about human trafficking by maintaining a family resource guide, increasing the presence and visibility of signage and educational materials, and participating in awareness initiatives such as Human Trafficking Awareness Month.