



Modesto City Schools
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Every Student Matters, Every Moment Counts

Dr. Vanessa Buitrago
Superintendent

September 29, 2026

RECEIVED
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Honorable Sonny Sandhu, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, County of Stanislaus
P.O. Box 3488
Modesto, CA 95353

BY:

Re: Response of Modesto City Schools to 2025-2026 Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury Report, Case #26-27GJ, *"Obligations, Obstacles, and Opportunities in School Bond Oversight"*

Dear Judge Sandhu:

Pursuant to California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the Governing Board of Modesto City Schools (the "District") submits the following response to the Findings and Recommendations directed to the District in the above-referenced report. The District appreciates the Grand Jury's work in promoting transparency and accountability in the oversight of school bond funds, and welcomes the opportunity to describe the steps it is taking to strengthen its compliance with the California Education Code.

FINDING 1: Many school districts in Stanislaus County lack required transparency regarding school bonds because they fail to fully comply with Ed Code mandates.

Response to Finding 1: The District partially agrees with the finding. The District agrees that, as of the Grand Jury's point-in-time study, it had not posted Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee ("CBOC") meeting minutes or annual CBOC reports on its website, and that two fiscal years of audits (FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22) were not readily accessible. To that extent, the District acknowledges it was not in full compliance with Education Code section 15280(b). The District respectfully disagrees with the finding to the extent it suggests a wholesale lack of transparency. The District has posted CBOC meeting agendas for each meeting, maintains a searchable bond page accessible through DISTRICT > SCHOOL BOND MEASURES, provides "quick facts" charts depicting bond sales and project expenditures for Measures D and E, and has a CBOC that meets the membership requirements of Education Code section 15282. The District's annual financial and performance audits were otherwise found compliant.

RECOMMENDATION 1: The governing board of the district should instruct its Superintendent to comply with Ed Code pertaining to CBOCs by December 31, 2026, including posting minutes, posting annual performance and financial audits, and posting annual CBOC reports on the district's website as cited by Ed Code section 15280(b).

Response to Recommendation 1: The recommendation has not yet been fully implemented but will be implemented by December 31, 2026. The Governing Board has directed the Superintendent to ensure full compliance with Education Code section 15280(b). Specifically, the District will: (1) post approved CBOC meeting minutes for all bond measures, alongside the agendas already posted; (2) post the annual CBOC reports; and (3) ensure that all annual financial and performance audits, including the previously missing FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22 audits, are posted to the District's website. The District anticipates completing these actions on or before December 31, 2026.

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FINDING 2: Stanislaus County CBOCs frequently do not have appropriate membership as required by Ed Code. Some CBOCs lack members representing each qualifying group, and/or members are regularly serving terms longer than specified in the bylaws.

Response to Finding 2: The District disagrees with the finding as it applies to Modesto City Schools. While the District does not dispute the Grand Jury's countywide observations, the finding does not apply to the District's CBOC. As the report itself notes, the District's CBOC has eight members, including all seven members required by Education Code section 15282, and is therefore compliant with respect to membership in qualifying groups. The District's bylaws provide for two-year terms with a maximum of three consecutive terms, consistent with Education Code section 15282.

RECOMMENDATION 2a: The governing board of any district lacking full membership should appoint additional members to their CBOC committees to comply with both Ed Code section 15282 and their respective CBOC bylaws by December 31, 2026.

Response to Recommendation 2a: The recommendation has been implemented. The District's CBOC already includes the seven required members (and an eighth member) representing the qualifying groups under Education Code section 15282. The District will continue to monitor membership and promptly fill any vacancy that may arise to maintain full and compliant membership.

RECOMMENDATION 2b: The governing board of the district should review CBOC membership to determine if long-serving members have exceeded their term limit stated in both Ed Code section 15282 and their respective CBOC bylaws; remediation may include reappointment or replacement of the member; this should be completed by December 31, 2026.

Response to Recommendation 2b: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented by December 31, 2026. The Governing Board will conduct a review of current CBOC membership to confirm that no member has exceeded the term limits set forth in Education Code section 15282 and the District's CBOC bylaws (two-year terms, maximum of three consecutive terms). Where any member is found to have exceeded the applicable term limit, the Board will remediate through reappointment or replacement as appropriate. This review and any necessary remediation will be completed on or before December 31, 2026.

The District thanks the Grand Jury for its report and for the opportunity to respond.

Respectfully submitted,



Tim Zearley
Associate Superintendent
Business Services
Modesto City Schools

cc: Larry Sanders, Foreperson, Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury