

January 27, 2014

Santa Barbara County Grand Jury
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Members of the Grand Jury:

Please initiate an investigation into the operations of Trivium Charter School, sponsored by the Blochman Union School District. Numerous violations have occurred since the charter school's inception including violation of personnel policies, financial mismanagement, lack of Special Education services and disregard for the Brown Act, Public Records Act, and the California Education Code.

Trivium Charter School has violated personnel policies in the selection, employment and promotion of employees including the Director. Some examples are: the director's initial salary was never approved by the board; there is no process in place for salary increases; the director hired her mother as the Special Education administrator; and, several employees do not have contracts or job descriptions.

Overall, Trivium financial records are sloppy and inadequate and indicate financial mismanagement of public funds. After requesting documentation based on the Public Records Act, there are numerous transactions in the check register detail without supporting documentation. Several checks (thousands of dollars) are written to the director, by the director, without documentation. The Trivium board consists of five members, not including the Director. Several of the board members are also on the payroll. One of the board members is an employee who reports to the Director and two (including the President) are paid contractors. According to California Section 5227 of California Corporations Code, employees and paid contractors cannot exceed 49% of the board. Additionally, documents submitted to the IRS (Form 990) stated that the three board members in

question did not receive compensation from the school. The Director's salary was also underrepresented to the IRS, based on obtained documents. When public records are requested, compliance is inconsistent and delay tactics are often used.

Special Education services are crucial for the implementation of high quality education for all students. At the creation of the charter school, the Trivium director offered Special Education funds as a financial incentive (bribe) to members of the Blochman Board of Trustees to approve the petition. The director had no intention of providing adequate services to special education students. Therefore, the director employed her mother as the special education administrator and the school did not have a special education teacher on staff for two years. Instead, she fabricated stories to parents about what the school was responsible for providing, and bullied others into leaving the school. When questioned about how special education funds were spent, the Director refuses to provide any information.

The Blochman Union School District is responsible for overseeing the operations of the charter school per California Education Code as the sponsoring district. Their oversight procedure is inadequate; it consists of a checklist that the Trivium director was asked to complete. The completed document contained several blank pages, and some answers provided by Trivium do not reflect practices or policies. When questioned by a concerned parent, Blochman responded that they have complied with the law and are not required to share any additional information about the process. Of further concern, the Blochman board member who is responsible for overseeing the Trivium board operations is also a Trivium employee.

As a taxpayer, I am deeply concerned regarding the numerous violations from Trivium Charter School and their sponsor. I am requesting a formal investigation and immediate corrective actions and I will provide you with any documentation needed of the claims stated above. If any of your

findings indicate illegal actions, please refer the case to the District Attorney for prosecution. Please contact me at [805-310-1213](tel:805-310-1213) for additional information. Thank you for your prompt attention to these issues.

Sincerely,

Robert Jones