



2013-2014

Madera County Grand Jury

Sherman Thomas Charter School

Final Report

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Introduction:

The grand jury chose to investigate the Sherman Thomas Charter School located at 101 West Adell, Madera, CA 93638 on the campus of the West Valley Christian Church. Classes began at the school in 2003. The grand jury examined the Board of Directors policies regarding credit card purchases by the Director and Principal of the school. Expenses to attend various conventions by the Director, Principal and School Staff were also reviewed. Interviews were conducted regarding the examined areas.

Facts:

1. There is one Principal who oversees the Elementary and High School with a Director for both schools.
2. The school's current enrollment is 206 students for the Elementary School and 45 for the High School. There is a waiting list for both schools.
3. The Director and Principal are the only two authorized persons issued credit cards. Each card has a \$5,000 credit limit per month.
4. The Board of Directors consists of seven members who meet monthly.
5. The school has retained a financial consultant who prepares monthly and yearly reports.
6. The Valley West Christian Church leases classroom and office space to the school.
7. The Pastor of the church is also the Director of both Schools.
8. The school uses some of the church facilities that are not in the lease agreement.
9. There is a large outdoor recreation area for the school.
10. Uniforms are worn by all students for identification purposes.
11. Classroom size averages twenty-five students per class.

Findings:

1. Credit cards are used to purchase school equipment, educational materials, pay for business dinners, staff Christmas parties and some expenses for attendance at Conventions.
2. Credit card expenditures are processed and categorized by the office manager for accounting statements.
3. Credit card limits are approved by the Board of Directors who authorizes the Director and Principal to make purchases on those credit cards.
4. Credit cards are used consistent with the policies established by the Board of Directors.
5. The two schools seem to have a dedicated Director, Principal and staff who are striving to improve the education of the students.
6. The classrooms are well maintained and adequate in size for the number of students.
7. The School is ranked the highest in the Madera Unified School District on the Academic Performance Index.

Recommendation:

The Grand Jury recommends that the Director, Principal and staff continue in their pursuit of excellence in education for the students of the Sherman Thomas Charter School.

Respondents:

Director, Sherman Thomas Charter School
101 West Adell
Madera, CA 93638

Principal, Sherman Thomas Charter School
101 West Adell
Madera, CA 93638

Board of Directors
Sherman Thomas Charter School
101 West Adell
Madera, CA 93638

Informational:

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