

EL DORADO COUNTY GRAND JURY 2014-2015

***FOLLOW-UP REPORT:
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT UNWISELY DOES NOT WANT
PROBLEMS ON PONDEROSA'S FOOTBALL FIELD FIXED***

Case GJ-14-01

The Ponderosa High School football field turf was replaced with all-weather artificial materials as part of a ten million dollar project to replace the track and football fields at El Dorado Union High School District (EDUHSD) Schools.

The 2013-2014 Grand Jury reported a problem of two rows of depressions running the length of the field parallel to the hash marks, caused by installed material settling in two drainage ditches under the artificial turf. The Ponderosa field depressions are not uniform, varying up to 7/8 inch deep, 350 percent more than the acceptable ¼ inch deviation. The depressions are not getting any smaller, and could become deeper.

The EDUHSD Superintendent's Office responded to the 2013-2014 Grand Jury Report by asserting, in essence, that they did not feel the problem was significant, and a fix of the depressions was not warranted. The District would only be monitoring any increase in the depressions to see if they are getting deeper.

The District's characterization that a fix is unwarranted is vexing. Depressions 350 percent greater than acceptable inherently means the Ponderosa football field artificial turf installers are obligated to remedy the problem. Warranty clauses and concepts dictate the remedy should bring the surface consistent with the original contract, within acceptable deviation and without glued seams.

The 2013-14 Grand Jury was told by the installers during its investigation that they would bring the depressions within acceptable deviation. Now, another year has gone by and the EDUHSD continues to not require a fix. The 2014-2015 Grand Jury fears the District has squandered the ability to ever get it fixed.

The risk of injuries resulting from large depressions on an otherwise level football field is obvious, and should not have been negatively argued by the Superintendent's office. A coach from Ponderosa told KCRA television last year that students using the field had tripped over the depressions. There is obvious liability for the district if a football player or other student is injured because of large depressions that are a hazard known to the district. The school district should do better to protect its ten million dollar investment and ensure that users of the field are not injured by that investment.

NO RESPONSE IS REQUIRED

This Report has been provided to the El Dorado Union High School District.