



**Lago Vista ISD  
Investigative Report  
April 2024**

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## Investigative Efforts & Process

In February of 2024, concerns arose regarding one of the Lago Vista ISD High School athletics programs.<sup>1</sup> In brief, it was reported that a non-employee was interacting with students and was not properly vetted as a district-approved volunteer for the LVISD athletics program. The matter quickly became a topic of public concern and the community voiced a desire for third-party review to the Board of Trustees in the February 26, 2024 called meeting. The Lago Vista ISD Board of Trustees, in direct response to this community-based request, engaged The Docentus Group to conduct a third-party investigation.

### Initial District Investigative Efforts

On March 2, 2024, the Board acted to engage The Docentus Group to conduct an external investigation. At that time, district leadership had taken numerous steps, and district administrators had previously begun an administrative investigation. The designated District Contact gathered and organized investigative efforts completed by district administration and provided access to the results of these district efforts to the third-party investigator. The District Contact worked in a professional and cooperative manner with the third-party investigator and offered scheduling support throughout the remainder of the investigation as needed.

### Report Terms and Definitions.

Listed below are several specific terms that are used within this report. To ensure clarity, these terms have been defined in such a way as to reduce ambiguity of meaning while also maintaining student, staff, and safety protections.

**Board Contact.** The term Board Contact refers to the Board member assigned as the contact person to the investigator to assist the investigator with scheduling, contact information, and other support needed throughout the investigation.

**Board Member.** The term Board Member refers specifically to a member of the Lago Vista ISD Board of Trustees.

**District Administration.** The term District Administration collectively refers to the LVISD district administrators. Reference to district administration may encompass one or several district administrators acting on behalf of district administration, or, it may encompass the actions or decisions of district administration or administrators as a whole.

**District Administrator.** The term District Administrator refers to a person in position of supervisory and/or academic leadership, employed either at district or campus level. This term includes the Superintendent of Schools, the Deputy Superintendent, the Assistant

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<sup>1</sup> To remain in compliance with the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA), the specific program is not named. Such identification may provide personally identifiable information (PII) of students. PII extends to “information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty.” (See [Board Policy FL \(LEGAL\)](#)).

Superintendent, the Chief Financial Officer, the Athletic Director, Principals, Directors, Coordinators, and Assistant Principals.

**NOTE:** *This report term differs slightly from the list of district administrators on the LVISD website, and does not include campus staff such as counselors, nurses, registrars, or secretarial/administrative staff.*

**District Contact.** The term District Contact refers to the district administrator assigned as the administrative contact to the investigator to assist the investigator with scheduling, contact information, and other support needed throughout the investigation.

**District Leadership.** The term District Leadership collectively refers to persons of authority within the district, including district administrators and Board members. References to district leadership may encompass one or several district administrators or board members acting on behalf of the district, or it may encompass the actions or decisions of district leaders as a whole.

**District Official.** The term District Official refers to a person affiliated with the district who is able to give or accept information on the public's behalf including staff, administrators, or Board members.

**District Staff.** The term District Staff refers to all paid employees of the district, regardless of position title or employment type.

**Check-Ins.** The term Check-Ins refers to individual phone, email, or in-person conversations with students, parents, witnesses, potential witnesses, or law enforcement:

- *Witness check-ins* refer to requests for interviews or initial inquiries as to whether the witness or potential witness has information relevant to the investigation and desires to interview with the third-party investigator. Witness check-ins occurred under the oversight of the investigator and were orchestrated by the District Contact, the investigator, or both.
- *Law enforcement check-ins* refer to collaborative conversations between the investigator and law enforcement officials to ensure the district investigation was not interfering with any related ongoing or past investigations.
- *Student check-ins* occurred under the oversight of district administration or counselors and refer to conversations with students, or phone conversations with parents inquiring as to the wellbeing of the students.

**Interview.** The term Interview refers to a one-on-one, question-and-answer conference conducted between the third-party investigator with each witness. Interviews were conducted either by phone conference or in person at the district's central offices.

**Third-Party Investigator (or "the Investigator").** The term Third-Party Investigator (or the Investigator) refers to The Docentus Group's assigned consultant conducting the investigation.

## Investigation Timeline

March 2, 2024	Board votes unanimously to engage The Docentus Group and district investigative efforts cease based upon third-party investigator engagement
March 2, 2024	Board Contact notifies third-party investigator of official engagement
March 3, 2024	District Contact conducts initial phone conference with investigator to review, finalize, and execute the Investigative Services Agreement
March 4, 2024	Review of Board meetings from February 26, 2024, and March 2, 2024 Initial meeting with Board Contact, District Contact, and investigator Collaboration meeting between law enforcement and investigator
March 5, 2024	District documentary evidence review
March 6, 2024	Staff/student/parent interviews
March 7, 2024	Law enforcement collaboration; Interview preparation
March 8, 2024	Staff/Student/Parent interviews
March 9-14, 2024	SPRING BREAK
March 15, 2024	Review/finalize interview list; Update timelines; Preliminary drafting
March 16, 2024	Organize evidentiary information gathered to date
March 18, 2024	Staff/Student/Parent interviews
March 19, 2024	Board Contact investigation progress update; Law enforcement check-in
March 20, 2024	Staff interview by phone; Schedule Friday interviews; Document review
March 21, 2024	Interview preparation; Email correspondence; Initial report outline drafting
March 22, 2024	Staff/Student/Parent interviews
March 25, 2024	Staff/Student/Parent interviews
March 27, 2024	Staff/Student/Parent interviews Interview preparations; Email correspondence; Continued report drafting
Mar. 29-Apr. 2, 2024	HOLIDAY/SCHOOL CLOSURE
April 3, 2024	Staff/Student/Parent interviews; Drafting; Board Contact update meeting
April 5, 2024	Evidentiary review; Board policy review; Volunteer protocol review
April 8, 2024	Evidentiary review; Narrative drafting
April 9, 2024	Evidentiary review; Narrative and Findings drafting
April 10, 2024	Evidentiary review; Narrative and Findings drafting
April 11, 2024	Evidentiary review; Findings and Recommendations drafting
April 12, 2024	Draft review with Board and District Contacts limited to scope, clarifications, and FERPA (federal student information privacy) compliance
April 15, 2024	Executive session draft review with Board of Trustees limited to personnel, FERPA (federal student information privacy) compliance, & security <sup>2</sup>
April 16, 2024	Final review of written statements; draft report updates
April 18, 2024	Final review of written statements and interview notes
April 19, 2024	Final review of interview notes; peer consultant proofing review
April 20, 2024	Final review of written statements and interview notes; draft report updates
April 21, 2024	Finalize report; Submit investigative report to District and Board Contacts
April 23, 2024	Investigative Report Presentation to the LVISD Board of Trustees

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<sup>2</sup> See [Board Policy BEC \(LEGAL\)](#) & [Tex. Gov't. Codes §§ 551.074, 551.0821, 551.089](#).

### **Third-Party Investigative Process**

To the greatest extent possible, the investigation was conducted in a manner preserving the privacy of the complainants, persons against whom the reports of concern involve, and witnesses.

It is important to note here that this report is written in the same manner to maintain the confidentiality of witnesses by refraining from the use of specific names regarding involved students, parents, staff, or community members. In addition to maintaining witness confidentiality, the report is also written in a manner to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA - a federal regulation invoking the privacy of student information), to protect district safety-sensitive information, and to ensure that student wellbeing was or is not compromised as a result of this report.

This investigation was conducted in the following phases:

#### **(1) District Contact Initial Meeting & Data Collection**

The investigator confirmed the scope and agreement, collected the data available, and learned details of the initial investigative steps taken through:

- Finalizing/executing investigative services agreement
- Organizing the initial interview schedule for March 6 & 8
- Reviewing the district investigative file

#### **(2) Investigator Collaboration with Law Enforcement**

So as not to impede any side-by-side investigation, the investigator collaborated with law enforcement regarding:

- Allowable investigative efforts
- List and preferred order of witness interviews
- Scope and purpose of the district investigation
- Relevant information law enforcement could provide/confirm
- Agreement to report any evidence or allegation of criminal behavior that may surface during the course of the district investigation directly to law enforcement

Occasional check-ins with law enforcement via the assigned detective occurred, as needed, throughout the course of the investigation to avoid conflicting interview schedules and verify timing and order of interviews as additional potential witnesses were identified.

#### **(3) Witness Check-Ins and Interviews**

The investigator, with assistance and support of the District Contact, engaged in thorough and meaningful fact-gathering efforts via potential witness check-ins and interviews as detailed by the following actions:

- Forming a Parent/Student/Staff Contact List upon initial case review and discussions with the District Contact
- Iterating and expanding the contact list as interviews progressed and additional potential witnesses emerged
- Conducting a total of 46 check-ins with a mixture of students, parents, staff, community members, and Board members (offering an opportunity for interview(s) with the investigator); check-ins were conducted via phone and/or email
- Scheduling and conducting a total of 31 interviews between March 6 - April 3, 2024 (length of interviews ranged from approximately 30 minutes to 2 hours per person)

During the course of interviews, the investigator maintained confidentiality and integrity of the investigative process by:

- Not providing or verifying the names of others involved in the investigation (e.g., complainants, persons the reports of concern involved, or other witnesses interviewed).
- Not sharing specific events to witnesses, as disclosed by other witnesses, during interviews.
- Following the same basic set of questions for all student/parent interviews and the same basic set of questions for all staff/administrator interviews.
- Limiting follow-up interviews and conducting, as necessary, in late March and early April to verify or clarify data gathered.

#### **(4) Collection and Review of All Relevant Documentation**

The investigator collected documentation in a variety of ways. Some documentation was provided by the investigating district administrators. The remaining documentation gathered, and reviewed, was provided by those interviewed or at the request of the investigator when verbal accounts indicated corresponding data. The documentation list below, while not all inclusive, illustrates the types of documents reviewed as part of the investigation:

- Witness statements
  - District interview lists/notes/timelines
  - Applicable student athlete rosters
  - District-wide communications
  - Email exchanges
  - Text exchanges
  - Screenshots and images
  - Stack Team App exchanges
  - Article links
  - Staff training presentations
  - District procedures and forms
  - Board policy
  - University Interscholastic League(UIL) rules
  - Board meetings/public comment
  - Related Public Information Act (PIA) requests & responsive documents
  - Investigator interview notes
  - LVISD 2023-2024 Employee Handbook
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## Narrative Summary of Facts

The above-listed documents in the previous section compose the investigative record and support the factual narrative summary below, as well as the report findings and recommendations, which are located in the final sections of this report. While this narrative summary is not exhaustive, it is detailed and provides an evidence-based, factual summary which includes timelines of the events giving rise to the concern currently under review and the district's related responses, actions, and communications.

On **Saturday, February 17, 2024**, the district received a report alleging that an individual who was regularly interacting with Lago Vista ISD students in a non-employee/volunteer coaching capacity had a concerning criminal background. The allegation was voiced to a district official who, on the same day and within a matter of minutes, promptly informed a district administrator of the concern.

Upon receiving this report of concern, district officials researched and worked through the long weekend (Saturday, February 17, 2024, through Monday, February 19, 2024) to verify the identity of, and criminal history reports regarding, the non-employee alleged to be interacting (in a coaching capacity) with students. District administration began an initial review over the weekend immediately following the report. Multiple district administrators were contacted to determine the nature and frequency of interactions with the person of concern and inquiries began as to whether a formal background check had been conducted.

In early stages of the district investigation, it appeared and was presented to investigating district administrators that the alleged individual was interacting with students in the summer of 2023 and during the 2023-2024 school year, outside of school hours. At that time, it was not immediately clear whether this person was serving as a district volunteer or just interacting as a community member using the same outdoor district facilities as the student athletes. Further, it was not immediately clear as to whether this individual had been formally vetted through the district's volunteer process.<sup>3</sup>

**Monday, February 19, 2024**, was a school holiday, but district administration took immediate action on **Tuesday, February 20, 2024**, which was the first business day after receiving the reports of concern. Once the report of concern came to light and it was determined the alleged individual was interacting, at least to some degree, with student athletes and that the individual was not properly vetted, a written notice was issued by a district administrator on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, to the individual.

The written notice provided the following to the improperly vetted volunteer:

- (1) the district's policy requiring background checks prior to working with students;
- (2) that the individual was not cleared to be working with students during normal school hours or at before- or after-school practice times;

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<sup>3</sup> Later stages of the district investigation verified that this individual's volunteer coaching interactions with student athletes was endorsed by district staff and that this volunteer coach was not properly vetted through volunteer protocols. In addition, investigative documentation later confirmed that the volunteer coach was present on district facilities during school hours on at least two different occasions.



- (3) that the individual is to refrain from interactions with Lago Vista ISD students; and
- (4) that the individual is to remain off campus until further notice.

The individual replied back, verifying receipt, and agreed to these terms without argument.

Also on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, this individual's ban from district property was shared with campus principals, coaches, and LVHS front office staff members. In addition to the above steps on this date, the district administration began drafting an initial district-wide communication update regarding the safety concern under review.

It is important to note that prior to official district communication being issued, this concern became a topic of heavy discussion among students, parents, and the community as early as Tuesday, February 20, 2024, including numerous posts on local social media platforms. As the week progressed, additional reports of concern(s) began to emerge. Those came from a variety of communication channels including anonymous emails, social media postings, and parent calls or emails to various campus administrators.

**On Wednesday, February 21, 2024**, district administration continued to take investigative steps regarding the matter, despite investigating district administrators being off-site due to conferences or illness. Law enforcement was contacted Wednesday, February 21, 2024, and informed of the district's issued notice to the unvetted individual who had been interacting with student athletes in a volunteer coaching capacity. On this same date, district administration confirmed with law enforcement that the written notice to this individual, issued on February 20, 2024, would suffice as a formal Criminal Trespass Warning. District administration requested that law enforcement provide any additional background information they could regarding the criminal history of this individual. Consequently, law enforcement provided information confirming the individual's criminal background. Informal inquiries to coaches regarding the individual's interaction with LVHS athletics programs and coaching staff were also made by district administrators on this date.

**By Thursday, February 22, 2024**, formal staff interviews began regarding the matter. After school on Thursday, an anonymous report via email alleged that the non-vetted individual who had been interacting with students had slapped the buttocks of students while they were exercising and claimed that district staff were aware of this behavior. Almost all accounts in the investigative record indicate that district administrators were first made aware of these physical interactions with students on the afternoon of Thursday, February 22, 2024, via this anonymous email. One witness account verifies reporting this concern sometime during the week of February 19-23, 2024, but is uncertain as to which actual day the verbal report was provided. Later Thursday evening, district administrators finalized and issued an initial district-wide communication titled "Safety Update." Multiple investigating administrators were off campus on this day, so the district-wide communication regarding this issue was not finalized or sent until almost 10:00 p.m.

**On Friday, February 23, 2024**, investigating district administrators met via Google Meet at 8:30 a.m. to discuss these anonymous email allegations and formulate a plan for making sure that students involved were able to provide their thoughts and experiences. High school administrators then conducted student interviews and collected both staff and student statements regarding the concerns and allegations that had emerged. Student interviews confirmed the allegations of the individual slapping multiple student athletes on the buttocks during the summer of 2023,

presumably for motivational purposes. Student statements also confirmed that the individual participated in and coached practices during the summer and at before- and after-school practices. At 5:00 p.m. this same evening, the district issued a more detailed district-wide communication to parents and staff titled "Safety Update #2."

On **Saturday, February 24, 2024**, District administrators worked to finalize contact with parents whose students were interviewed, and a district administrator contacted CPS, informing them of these confirmed reports. The CPS reporting occurred within the required 48-hour period after interviewing students.

On **Monday, February 26, 2024**, district administration issued the non-vetted individual an additional written notice that his directive to remain off district property from the prior week stands and that law enforcement had been notified of this warning. A Board meeting was held that evening, and a number of citizens addressed the Board of Trustees in public comment, presenting their concerns with the district's communication of, and response to, this matter. It became clear by the Board President's closing statement that a third-party investigator was likely to be needed and engaged.

From **Tuesday, February 27, 2024**, through **Friday, March 1, 2024**, district administration conducted a few additional investigative steps (including a follow-up staff interview, parent calls, additional research, coordination with law enforcement, etc.), but the district administrators' efforts mostly shifted to organizing the investigative data gathered in preparation for the engagement and entrance of a third-party investigator and working with legal counsel to vet and provide third-party investigator options for the Board of Trustees to consider. On **Saturday, March 2, 2024**, The Docentus Group was engaged to review and continue investigative efforts.

While this timeline is limited to the recent concerns under investigation and within the past school year, witness interviews and statements verify that this non-vetted individual had been part of the community in Lago Vista for several years. Further, he has interacted with student athletes and parents in community running events, private competitive running events, exercise sessions as well as on the Lago Vista ISD track and running trails for the past 2-3 summers. All student accounts in the investigative record (total of 17) indicate that the individual met student athletes when exercising at the same time and place on district facilities and/or in community events (e.g., the Firecracker 5K). However, it was in summer of 2023 when the individual's involvement shifted to more regular presence and interaction with student athletes in a volunteer coaching capacity.

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## Investigative Findings

Upon the conclusion of this investigation, the independent investigator has made the following specific findings.

### Student Safety and Wellbeing

- (1) A non-employee, community member was interacting with students, parents, and coaching staff. Students, parents, and staff viewed this individual as a volunteer coach for the LVISD athletics program in question during the summer and fall of 2023.
- (2) This individual was not vetted via proper background check procedures, yet was provided access by district staff to the Stack Team App and was regarded as a volunteer coach with extensive program knowledge and experience by LVISD staff, student athletes, and parents.
- (3) In addition, the volunteer coach posted workouts for the students on multiple occasions within Stack Team App, regularly attended independent summer practices with student athletes, attended school-sanctioned practices (both before and after school), and attended competition events wherein the volunteer coach assisted with student athlete warm-ups.
- (4) Student statements confirmed that the individual exercised with and coached practices during the summer as well as before- and after-school practices.
- (5) Other evidence indicates that this individual was present on school grounds using outdoor district facilities at least two times during school hours.
- (6) Student statements and/or interviews confirmed the allegations of this same individual slapping multiple student athletes on the buttocks during the summer of 2023.
- (7) Parent, student, and staff feedback during interviews suggest that the athletic program under review lacks coaching expertise within this particular program and has historically lacked the attention it needs considering it is a formally offered district program.
- (8) As a result of the finding above, other community members, parents, and LVISD employees have helped or supported this particular athletics program in former years, and the acceptance of these informal coaching supports is an established pattern for this program.
- (9) Upon learning of the criminal history concerns with the individual, the district administration put immediate interim protective actions in place on the first business day following the February 17, 2024, report of concern. This was a timely initial response and effectively removed the immediate threat of concern as investigative efforts ensued.
- (10) District administrators took multiple daily investigative steps from the report of the allegation until the engagement and arrival of the third-party investigator, despite absences, other pressing district matters, and regular school administration duties and deadlines.

### Policies, Protocols, and Procedures

- (11) District protocols regarding volunteer background checks and non-employee access to students were not followed and were publicly recognized as a shortcoming in this matter by the district on Friday, February 23, 2024, via district-wide email and again on February 26, 2024, at the public Board meeting.
- (12) One district employee did see, stop, engage, and question the non-employee in the Fall of 2023 as the non-employee was leaving school property after the non-employee's morning

exercise on district facilities. Because he was found to be on district property during school hours, the district employee inquired about the non-employee's presence and informed the non-employee that either the visitor badge protocols or the volunteer protocols are required and must be followed. The employee did not see this individual back on district property during school hours again.

- (13) Clear district protocols regarding district volunteers are needed, although recent efforts to update these procedures have resulted from this matter.
- (14) A clear district definition of volunteer access, parent and visitor access, and community access to school buildings and grounds is needed and directly relates, at least in part, to the issues under investigation.
- (15) Immediately following the report of allegation on Saturday, February 17, 2024, appropriate initial steps were taken on February 20, 2024 (the first business day staff returned from the long weekend) to ensure the non-employee who was not properly vetted remained off property pending a full review of the reported concern.
- (16) Formal district protocols and procedures regarding investigative efforts, steps, and documentation are needed.

### **Personnel - Training / Actions / District Response**

- (17) Interviews illustrate that coaching staff knowledge regarding the volunteer process for Lago Vista ISD (e.g., appropriate procedures, points of contact, and approval lists) is minimal.
- (18) Evidence illustrates that all staff were trained this school year regarding important safety and security protocols on August 9, 2024, which included the absolute requirement that all visitors must be checked in through Raptor and have a badge, with no exceptions.
- (19) At least one district employee had knowledge of and addressed (via text exchange) the volunteer coach's actions during 2023 summer practices wherein he slapped the students' buttocks for presumed motivational purposes; however, this was not reported to any district administrator, nor was additional action taken beyond the above written warning.
- (20) Interviews verify that at least one parent spoke with a district administrator in September of 2023, specifically regarding this individual's involvement with the students in this athletic program and asked the district administrator whether this individual had been background checked. The district administrator to whom this inquiry was made does not recall the conversation, but the parent followed up on this previous inquiry again when the reports of concern arose in February of 2024 centered on the same individual.
- (21) The district investigation lacked organization resulting in multiple district administrators believing it was within another administrator's purview, consequently causing some delays regarding investigative steps. (Some mitigating circumstances relating to the investigative delays do exist; for example, during the week this issue came to light, at least three of the five district administrators actively investigating this concern were absent due to illness, off-site training, and family obligations for 1-2 days each.)
- (22) Students, parents, and other coaching staff observed the volunteer coach interacting with the LVISD student athletes and coach in the particular athletics program at practices on the track; however, all who observed or interacted with this non-vetted community member assumed he was a properly vetted volunteer through the particular athletics program.
- (23) No district officials or district staff were made aware of this individual's criminal history until February 17, 2024.

- (24) Rather, the investigative record indicates that only one community member knew of this individual's criminal history prior to February 17, 2024, and there is no evidence to suggest this community member informed anyone else at the district or in the community of the individual's known criminal history.
- (25) If a background check had been completed appropriately via 2023 district volunteer protocols, it is unlikely (but cannot be verified with certainty) that the background information of concern would have surfaced due to the individual's multiple aliases.
- (26) Individual personnel corrective actions have not occurred pending the outcome of the full investigation but are under consideration and discussion by district leadership.
- (27) District administrators have taken positive corrective action and updated several protocols and procedures as a result of this matter, including:
  - disconnected the "chat" feature on Stack Team App (making this a one-way communication from coaches to players and parents);
  - updated the volunteer form, the data gathered for background check, and the final approval list sharing methodology;
  - prohibited volunteer coaching in athletics;
  - adjusted practices so that the middle school students be bused to and from the high school facilities for workouts and prohibited any off-campus workouts for middle school students;
  - issued a notice regarding the Strava fitness tracking application, how it shares users' GPS location data during workouts, provides regular location routines publicly, and creates a potential safety vulnerability for students;
  - continued or began wellness check-ins and counseling services for students whose parents indicated this need, etc.

### **District Communication**

- (28) Parent communication regarding this matter was untimely during the week of February 20-23, 2024 (some evidence indicates that at least a partial community perception exists that untimely or lack of expected district communication is a pattern of concern).
- (29) District-wide communications from February 22-23, 2024, contained inaccurate information due to the omission of information during initial interviewing and premature determinations of fact made prior to full investigative steps being performed.
- (30) Clear and timely communication among all investigating administrators did not occur (some mitigating circumstances relating to the untimely communications issued by the district do exist; for example, during the week this issue came to light, at least three of the five district administrators actively investigating this concern were absent due to illness, off-site training, and family obligations for 1-2 days each).
- (31) The investigation confirmed an extensive private group chat that included students, staff members, and the non-vetted individual, making it clear that Board Policy DH (LOCAL) and the Lago Vista ISD Employee Handbook rules regarding electronic communications with students were not followed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See [Lago Vista ISD 2023-2024 Employee Handbook](#), p. 46 & [Board Policy DH \(LOCAL\)](#).

## Recommendations

The investigator recommends the following actions or considerations as a result of the facts and findings this investigation yielded.

### Student Safety and Wellbeing

- (1) The investigator recommends creation/use of a safety advisory committee of stakeholders to advise on the development or improvement of written protocols regarding: (1) volunteer procedures; (2) campus visitation procedures; and (3) community use of district property.
- (2) It is recommended that all athletics programs receiving assistance from adults not assigned as head or assistant coach be vetted through the volunteer process and approved in writing by the Athletics Director in advance of providing assistance in the programs.
- (3) It is recommended that student training be developed so that students know and understand what is appropriate regarding interactions, both in person and via electronic communication, with all adults in the school setting, including staff, volunteers, and visitors.
- (4) It is recommended that school counselors facilitate any needed student wellness check-ins or counseling services, with the knowledge and approval of the parents or guardians.

### Policies, Protocols, and Procedures

- (5) It is recommended that the district develop or improve written protocols regarding: (1) volunteer procedures; (2) campus visitation procedures; and (3) community use of district property.
- (6) It is recommended that the district develop or improve written protocols regarding how LVISD will approach investigative efforts (including but not limited to assignment of investigative responsibility by program, department, or position; adoption of investigative documentation templates; training requirements; parent notifications; etc.).
- (7) It is recommended that all investigating district administrators be identified by position and undergo training to properly and uniformly conduct and document district investigations.
- (8) It is recommended that the district consider development of a Board Policy GKG (LOCAL) to memorialize the expectation that all district volunteers will be background checked, regardless of legal permissive exceptions based on familial status.<sup>5</sup>

### Personnel - Training / Actions / District Response

- (9) It is recommended that all staff undergo training upon completion of the development/updates to protocols and procedures regarding school volunteers.
- (10) All district staff identified to be directly involved with authorization of an unvetted, non-employee volunteer interacting with student athletes should be considered for formal corrective personnel action, including but not limited to issue of written directives, written warnings, written reprimands, or nonrenewal/termination of contract, at the discretion of district leadership.
- (11) It is further recommended that the following factors also be considered when these personnel decisions and corrective actions are taken: (1) level of involvement in the allowance or oversight; (2) local personnel corrective practices and precedents; (3) prior

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<sup>5</sup> See [Board Policy GKG \(LEGAL\)](#).

- similar personnel concerns (if any); (4) and any mitigating factors such as lack of procedure, policy, or training as identified in this report.
- (12) It is recommended that district administration issue clear written directives regarding program oversight expectations to all program leaders in the district.
  - (13) It is recommended that the district issue a memorandum, training, or meeting (as district leadership deems most appropriate and effective) for all athletics coaches regarding volunteer coach allowances in LVISD, volunteer coaching expectations and oversight, and UIL rules applicable to the matter of volunteer coaching.
  - (14) It is recommended that the district consider creating a stand-alone district administrator position to oversee Human Resources responsibilities as well as support or advise on personnel matters.
  - (15) If any related criminal investigations later yield new data relevant to this matter, then it is recommended that the district consider the new information and implement any additional remedial or student-wellbeing steps that may be needed accordingly.

### **District Communication**

- (16) It is recommended that the district develop and implement an effective district communication plan for all stakeholders regarding the above policies, protocols, and procedures recommendations once they are complete or updated.
  - (17) It is recommended that the district communicate brief reports to affected families when any safety situations occur within 12-24 hours of the reported safety concern.
  - (18) It is recommended that the district communicate brief reports to all district parents and staff when broad-based safety situations or public concerns arise within 24-48 hours of the reported safety concern.
  - (19) It is recommended that sensitive information such as personally identifiable student and personnel data, compromising school security details, or mid-investigation summaries never be divulged as a general rule in district-wide communication, except in limited circumstances deemed necessary and vetted thoroughly by proper legal review.
  - (20) It is recommended that the district consider creating a stand-alone district administrator position to oversee Public Relations and/or Communications responsibilities.
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## Concluding Remarks

These recommendations are based on the limited scope of the current investigation, which includes only district actions, responses, and practices. While evidence indicates that community members outside the purview of the district's review may have involvement in this matter and additional community-based steps may be appropriate, those findings and recommendations fall outside the purview of this investigation. For this, and other reasons detailed below, the district may choose to develop its own plan to more fully address these matters.

The investigator recognizes that a self-developed plan of action may be preferable in addressing the concerns, rather than mere compliance with the list of recommendations herein. The investigator also recognizes that the perspective of institutional knowledge that the Board of Trustees or other district leadership may possess is likely a necessary component to create a truly effective remedial approach to the issues that surfaced during this investigation.

The completion and delivery of this report and its contents as desired by the district will conclude The Docentus Group engagement for this matter. Should the district wish to engage The Docentus Group in any recommended training, protocol drafting, or coaching in relation to this investigation, a new engagement must be developed.

The investigator would like to conclude this report with the following statement:

*This investigation revealed how deeply the community of Lago Vista cares for their students. I found this to be a close-knit, student-centered community with high expectations for the school district. While difficult times such as these past few months can cause friction between the district and its stakeholders, I commend the voice given to and used by the community during this difficult situation. I appreciate the district leadership's willingness to listen and use community feedback and recommendations. Such feedback, as well as this third-party investigation, have been welcomed as opportunities to improve. I firmly believe that the students, parents, staff, and community will move forward and work together to use these recent concerns to build a better, safer educational and extracurricular experience for all students. I wish all the very best to the students, families, and district staff in Lago Vista ISD.*