

# San Mateo County Association of Grand Jurors

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## Middle School Unit of Study

# The California Grand Jury System



The following comparison may assist students in learning the composition of grand juries and the functions they perform in the state of California.



The responsibility of a civil grand jury is similar to the responsibilities of a student council which consists of student body officers and a representative from each home room.

In California, the Civil Grand Jury consists of 19 members selected from a pool of volunteers who have gone through a screening process, or are appointed by the Grand Jury Presiding Judge. Grand Jurors serve one year and may reside anywhere in the County. For example, in San Mateo County a juror may reside in Brisbane, Daly City, Colma, South San Francisco, San Bruno, Millbrae, Burlingame, Hillsborough, San Mateo, Foster City, Belmont, San Carlos, Redwood City, Woodside, East Palo Alto, Atherton, Menlo Park, Portola Valley, Pacifica, Half Moon Bay, or other unincorporated San Mateo County communities.

The list of characters comparing county civil grand juries to student council members should assist you in becoming familiar with the function and responsibility of each:

Student Body Council	County Civil Grand Jury
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Principal	= Presiding Superior Court Judge
Student Body President	= Foreperson
Student Body Vice President	= Pro Tem Foreperson
Student Body Secretary	= Secretary Juror
Classroom Representatives	= 19 citizens selected by the Presiding Judge
Term of office is one year	= Term of Office is one year
Watch dogs for the students	= Watch dogs for the County citizens

<b>Mission</b>	<b>Mission</b>
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The student council attempts to serve the entire student body by improving school conditions, using student body funds wisely and protecting students from abuse.

Grand Jurors of each County in California (58 counties and Grand Juries) protect citizens from unscrupulous government management, and government employees who are incompetent or are found guilty of obstructing the law.

**Example of similar actions taken by the student council and members of the Grand Jury.**

**STUDENT COUNCIL**

The Representative of Homeroom 204 reports that students are complaining about dirty bathroom facilities. The President of the student body appoints a committee to investigate the problem and report back to the council its findings. The committee returns the following week to report to the council that they have verified the complaint and suggest that the council as a whole recommend to the principal to take appropriate actions to eliminate the problem.



**CIVIL GRAND JURY**



The Foreperson receives a complaint from a citizen of San Mateo County indicating that the school district in his city is not in compliance with the Special Education Act of California. The Grand Jury members agreed this is a valid complaint. The Foreperson requests that the Grand Jury Education Committee investigate the complaint and report back with its findings. Several weeks later the Education Committee validates the complaint and a final report is written and approved by the members of the Grand Jury. In the final report, recommendations are forwarded to the County Superintendent to take appropriate action to direct this particular district to comply with the State Special Education Act.

In both cases cited above, the body (1) investigated the complaint; (2) reported its finding; and (3) recommended corrective action to the responsible person or entity.

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**IN MEMORY OF**  
**\*\*\* JOHN BELFORTE \*\*\***  
**1930-2005**  
**WHOSE DEDICATION AND DEVOTION**  
**TO THE SAN MATEO COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GRAND JURORS**  
**MADE THIS WEBSITE POSSIBLE**

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