



# Memorandum

**TO:** ALL CHILDREN ACHIEVE  
COMMITTEE

**FROM:** James R. Helmer  
Robert L. Davis  
Sara L. Hensley

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** 11-03-05

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Approved

Date

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**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON SCHOOL SAFETY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMS AND GAPS**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Accept this report on school-related safety enhancement programs.

## **BACKGROUND**

Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS); the Library; San José Police (SJPD); San José Fire (SJFD), and Transportation (DOT) departments, along with the Office of Emergency Services (OES); and the Office of the Independent Police Auditor (IPA) provide comprehensive school safety enhancement programs to San José youth (infant – 18 years old) through three City Service Areas (CSAs): Neighborhood Services; Public Safety; and Transportation and Aviation. Together, these CSAs offer a wide variety of programs that work together with schools, neighborhoods, community organizations, and residents to promote school safety.

## **ANALYSIS**

These CSAs continue to provide the school safety enhancement programs outlined for this committee a year ago, and below are changes that have occurred since then.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES CSA (Formerly Recreation & Cultural Services CSA)**

PRNS staff, in coordination with San José Police Department, San José Public Library, and representatives from over 35 community based organizations, parents, faith communities and county and state partners worked together and developed "Reclaiming our Youth," The Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force Strategic Work Plan 2005-2007. The Plan was approved by City Council on April 5, 2005. This new plan includes new core values, vision and mission

statements that focus on promoting safety and health among youths, and reconnecting them to their families, schools, communities and futures. The plan also provides an organizational infrastructure that facilitates inter-CSA and cross-departmental coordination of youth safety programs.

In addition, the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF), in partnership with San José-area schools and other public organizations, is participating in the November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005 Safety Summit and Emergency Management Training at the new City Hall. The training will provide an outline for the crisis response protocol that the MGPTF is designing for incidents of gang or youth violence in schools and community centers, and will strengthen the network of partners with whom the MGPTF will coordinate when responding to emergency situations.

The Safe School Campus Initiative is a partnership between the Police Department, PRNS, San José BEST agencies, and all schools in San José. It establishes protocols for preparing, preventing, responding, and resolving school violence. The types of incidents covered by this initiative include gang issues, hate crimes, delinquency and domestic violence. All schools in San José are offered Code Red training each year and most implement it at least every other year. During FY04, the School Liaison Unit and the Safe School Campus Initiative staff resolved 624 safety threats. Since there are about 180 school days, this means that approximately 3.5 events were resolved each day. This program continues to be the cornerstone of school safety enhancement, and supports the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force strategy triad: prevention, intervention, and suppression. Starting with FY05, staffing was reduced by two police officer positions. Currently there are two supervisors and eight officers to monitor 200 schools in San José.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY CSA**

### **San José Police Department**

#### SJPD School Safety and Education Unit

The School Safety and Education Unit promotes student/school safety through the following programs:

- Adult Crossing Guards
- Student Safety Patrols
- School presentations on pedestrian/bicycle safety, and stranger awareness
- Departmental liaisons with school districts and administrators, the Department of Transportation (DOT), the School Pedestrian Safety Committee (SPSC), the Santa Clara County Traffic Safe Communities Network (TSCN), and other community groups and organizations
- Adult Volunteer Crossing Guard program

### Adult Crossing Guards

Currently, the San José Police Department deploys 177 adult crossing guards at 109 intersections. Many locations require multiple guards. SJPD and DOT collaborate on this program. SJPD is responsible for the day-to-day management, operations, and staffing of the program. DOT provides the data analysis and intersection studies to determine recommended locations to deploy crossing guards.

Starting in June 2005, staff began implementation of the City Auditor's recommended formula for determining crossing guard deployment, within the overall positions and resources allocated in the adopted budget. The new formula called for additional intersections to be staffed. As a result, staff has been working with the School Pedestrian Safety Committee to redeploy guards from intersections that have multiple guards or currently have a lesser need for crossing guards based upon lower pedestrian or vehicle activity. It is expected that the redeployments necessitated by the City Auditor's recommended formula will be complete by December 2005.

### Child Safety Seat Inspections

The San José Police Department continues to support the SAFE KIDS Coalition Child Safety Seat Program. Since June 2004, SJPD participated in 22 Safety Seat Inspection events and inspected 391 child safety seats. Currently, there are two certified child safety seat technicians on staff.

### Truancy Reduction

Truancy is an early indicator of delinquency problems for youth and truancy abatement efforts can prevent school safety issues before they develop. The Police Department works with City, County, schools, and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to reduce truancy before it leads to further problems. Truancy reduction programs include Truancy Abatement/Burglary Suppression (TABS), School Habitual Attendance Review Program (SHARP), and Student Attendance Review Boards (SARB). SHARP referrals are almost non-existent this year because the school attendance staff has been severely reduced. TABS has been very productive this year, processing 744 truants during the first quarter of FY05. The budget allocation for truancy counseling services was eliminated this fiscal year. PRNS BEST provided funds for truancy counseling for this fiscal year on a one-time basis. The Department will attempt to identify funding for next year.

### Chief's Youth Advisory Group

Chief Davis is going to work with the City's Youth Commission and Youth Advisory Group this year to strengthen youth relations. Since each youth commissioner has a focus group, he hopes to exchange information with a larger group of students including middle school-aged youth.

### Challenges and Choices (C2)

Four SJPD Crime Prevention Specialists present on-going, ten-week school curriculums to 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students about how to recognize challenges and use good decision making skills to make appropriate choices. Some of the challenges discussed are gangs, drugs, violence, bullying, anger management, and sexual harassment. Two specialists left the program this year. Requests to backfill the positions have been denied.

### Safe Alternatives Violence Education (SAVE)

SAVE is a youth violence intervention program that diverts youth that commit minor weapons offenses out of the juvenile justice system. This one-day Saturday school for the youth and a parent/guardian educates the participants about decision-making processes and consequences. It also re-builds the relationship between the youth and the caregiver. Youth who complete this program are allowed to stay in school. The Crime Prevention Specialist who used to coordinate this program has left the Police Department. The program is now being administered by a collateral police officer and a specialist. Because it is a collateral duty, the program is not expanding or changing.

### Police Activities League

Four police officers and one sergeant coordinate youth activities that serve approximately 10,000 youths each year. This is accomplished by working with existing youth sports programs. Types of activities include football, baseball, soccer, judo, boxing, and the law enforcement cadets. The activities promote good citizenship and sportsmanship, as well as athletic ability. In an effort to promote good sportsmanship, SJPD is working with the Positive Coaching Alliance.

### Ride-Along Program

Students interested in public safety can ride with a police officer in an unmarked car. They monitor the radio and observe actual police events as they occur. The officers do not participate in the event response, but explain what is occurring and why, so the students can learn about police work.

### **San José Fire Department Public Education Unit**

The goal of this Unit is to reduce the number of injuries and deaths due to fire and other related accidents through education and informational services for the community. These fire and life safety presentations are offered to children/students and include topics such as:

- 9-1-1 (when to call, use only in case of an emergency, do not hang up until the dispatcher tells you to hang up, etc.)
- Smoke Detectors (what are they, why they are important, what noise do they make when they detect smoke, etc.)

- Crawl Low Under Smoke
- Exit Drills In The Home (know two ways out, have a meeting place outside, never go back inside the home, etc.)
- Stop, Drop, Cover (your face with your hands) and Roll (if your clothing catches on fire.)

Presentations also include a firefighter donning his/her turnouts to give the students the experience of seeing a firefighter in full gear. This helps alleviate fear in the event of an emergency. Presentations are completed on-site at the schools, as well as during Fire Station tours. A confirmation letter and educational materials are forwarded to each teacher coordinating a program for his/her class or school. Teachers are asked to begin covering the basic fire safety tips prior to the presentation to help the students remember what to do in an emergency. Each presentation is tailored toward the age group, grade level, and size of audience. A total of 13,892 students were reached in FY04-05 through 259 presentations.

### **Office of Emergency Services (OES)**

OES assists San José schools with emergency planning and response. Here are examples of school-related activities involving OES:

- Provided safety briefings and San José *Prepared!* introductions for faculty and PTA groups upon request.
- A school resource letter was sent to principals of all public and private schools in San José
- Copies of the City's Emergency Plan were distributed to each school district office.
- OES assists school districts and the County Office of Education with applications for federal grants related to various aspects of emergency preparedness.
- OES has developed a partnership with San José State University to create pre-service teacher education materials on school site safety.
- San José *Prepared!* has held classes for students of San José City College, Bryman College, and for San José State University staff.
- San José *Prepared!* Coordinator reviewed emergency plans for Notre Dame High School and is working with parents of Saint Timothy Elementary School
- San José *Prepared!* Coordinator gave emergency training to faculty of Majestic Way Elementary School.

### **Office of the Independent Police Auditor (IPA)**

The Independent Police Auditor continues to foster a strong partnership with schools, nonprofit organizations, and agencies that serve youth and parents by conducting educational presentations for youth and parents. Each youth presentation addresses the following information:

- Educates youth about police practices, procedures, and their civil rights;
- Creates awareness of the various ways to file a complaint; and
- Provides youth with suggested behavior when interacting with police officers to prevent conflict between them and the police officers.

The IPA has published a youth guidebook titled, “A Student’s Guide to Police Practices.” The goal of the youth guide is to provide information about interacting with police officers and to help them make smart decisions. It contains fundamental information every youth and parent needs to know about police practices. The booklet is available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The information is also available in an interactive CD format.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND AVIATION CSA**

According to a recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Technical Report, “*Pedestrian Roadway Fatalities*,” San José continues to have the second lowest pedestrian fatality rate of U.S. cities with populations of 750,000 and above. Additionally, the San José/San Francisco/Oakland metropolitan area was recently rated the 4<sup>th</sup> safest for child pedestrians in the U.S., among the top 47 metropolitan areas, in a report titled, “*Child Pedestrians at Risk – a Ranking of U.S. Metropolitan Areas*,” distributed by Safe Kids Worldwide.

### **Education/Street Smarts**

#### Street Smarts School Safety Education Program

DOT received a two-year grant totaling \$230,000 from the California Office of Traffic Safety to teach traffic safety education to elementary and middle school students. The grant was awarded on October 1, 2004, and this new element of Street Smarts was developed between October 1 and December 31, 2004, and launched in January 2005. This included the addition of a full-time position (School Safety Education Coordinator), to schedule, administer, and deliver the program. To date, 236 presentations have been made at 43 schools throughout the city, bringing traffic safety education to an estimated 21,508 elementary and middle school students. To reduce injuries on San José streets and to promote bike safety, 447 helmets have been properly fitted on children and 434 helmets have been given away at schools and various community events, since the program launched.

Another program element is Bike Roadeos, an interactive and fun way for children to learn the value of riding safely, wearing helmets, and maintaining their bicycles. In partnership with the National Latino Peace Officers’ Association, this program will be conducting Bike Roadeo events throughout the city. The first program was held October 15, at Washington Elementary School, and had 163 participants. At this event alone, 139 helmets were given away and fitted to participating children.

#### Street Smarts Neighborhood Program

Seven additional neighborhoods have adopted this traffic safety education program in the past year, bringing the total to 19 neighborhoods committed to addressing driver, pedestrian and bicyclist behavior, on an ongoing basis, through presentations, educational materials and videos, and various family activities. Six Parent Education Seminars were presented at schools to address driver behavior in school zones. Presentations were customized to address traffic safety issues at each school. Additionally, 15 Street Smarts presentations were made to various

community organizations, including service clubs, senior groups, unions, retirees' associations, etc.

### Street Smarts Regional Program

Three more cities – Santa Rosa, Davis and El Monte – adopted the City of San José Street Smarts traffic safety education program for use in their communities, bringing the total number of regional partners to eight. The City of Salinas received in October 2005 an \$80,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety to adopt San José's Street Smarts Program, following incorporation of Street Smarts as a pedestrian safety element into the City of Salinas General Plan. Several other communities are actively exploring the program, including all nine of the cities in Marin County, along with the cities of Elk Grove and Benicia.

### Street Smarts Awards

- Award of Distinction - in the category of Public Safety, presented by the California Association of Public Information Officials (CAPIO). This statewide awards competition recognizes excellence in public sector programs and services from throughout California. (April 2005)
- WesternITE Editorial Award - presented by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (District 6) for the paper titled, "San José Gets Street Smarts," published on the cover of the April 2005 issue of the professional journal, WesternITE Magazine. (July 2005)
- In October 2005, DOT was informed that the Street Smarts program was one of two finalists, nationwide, for America's Crown Communities Award in the area of Public Safety, sponsored by American City and County Magazine. Awards are presented at NLC and recipients will be selected and notified in the next few weeks.

### **Engineering/School Area Traffic Management**

Negative traffic impacts often occur when school districts close schools or open new ones. In these instances, DOT works closely with the district to help mitigate impacts such as increased vehicle traffic on surrounding neighborhoods. Examples of mitigation can include modification of existing signs and markings to handle different traffic patterns at schools, and identification and mitigation of potential hazards for students traveling to and from school. DOT worked closely this past year with San José Unified School District, as they closed several schools and redeployed students to other schools. Additionally, DOT worked with the Franklin-McKinley and Evergreen school districts, providing input and assistance in identifying safety issues in and around newly opened schools.

DOT also works with schools and districts throughout the year to improve traffic flow for all roadway users in and around San José schools, on a case-by-case basis. DOT coordinates with SJPD and, when appropriate, modifies or installs roadway signage, striping and markings that may enhance pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle safety.

DOT Parking Compliance Officers participated with SJPD, CHP and other enforcement agencies in the county during Operation Safe Passage events held county-wide, three times last year, providing additional parking enforcement at school locations throughout the city.

DOT has implemented the City Auditor's recommended changes to the crossing guard formula that analyzes the need for placement of a crossing guard. The formula was modified to provide increased consideration (weight) for the numbers of pedestrians crossing at a location, age of school children using the crosswalk, and vehicle turning movements. The new formula also provides consideration to unusual conditions that may be present at the intersection, such as roadway geometry challenges, red light running activity and crash activity.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Not applicable.

### **COORDINATION**

This report has been coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

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