



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: June 5, 2008 REPORT NO: 08-089

ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee Agenda of June 11, 2008

SUBJECT: INFORMATIONAL REPORT REGARDING THE CALIFORNIA STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S SAFE PASSAGE PROJECT IN SAN DIEGO

SUMMARY

The Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention has been working with Deputy City Attorney Makini Hammond and Chief Aisha Martin from the State Attorney General's office on the Safe Passage project since February 2007 (see Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee Meeting report #07-131). Initially the project included Gompers Middle School and Montgomery Middle School.

In the past 10 months, the project has expanded and has become a template for communities around the city to embark on some form of Safe Passage. Montgomery Middle School in Linda Vista continues to work the Safe Passage process. Gompers Middle School has moved on to become part of another safe project within the community.

Bell Middle School and Morse High School are now Safe Passage school projects. Jacobs Foundation has initiated and funded Project Safe Way in the Encanto community covering 10 corners and involving five schools (Gompers, Kennedy, Horton, and Lincoln High School). The Mid-city Anti Gang Task Force has initiated a Parent Patrol around Hoover.

DISCUSSION

Current Issues and Accomplishments

Montgomery Middle School reported the following Hotspots as of May 2008: (Pedro's Produce and Taco Shop are no longer hot spots):

- Jack In the Box at Linda Vista
- 2282 West Dunlop, Unit 5
- 2269-2284 Dunlop
- 7000 Levant (Pink Apartments)
- Recreation Center at Linda Vista

There is ongoing crime intelligence sharing and monitoring of identified hotspots by partner agencies. The School has purchased cameras for administrators and is working on getting additional cameras through a grant.

Nuisance Issues included the Rite Aide and the Liquor Store near the school. The City Attorney's office is investigating. Street vendors have left the area. Fewer incidents have been reported at all hot spots. The City Attorney's office abated several problem properties around the school.

Montgomery has been conducting outreach to parents regarding Safe Passage via newsletter and Website. School staff has recruited four parents for Montgomery Parent Patrol to work with partners and staff during Safe Passage hours.

Partner Involvement

The following partners continue to work with the State Attorney General's Chief Aisha Martin Walton, the Commission and the City Attorney on Safe Passage:

City Attorney's Office Drug Abatement Response Team (DART): *to address gang problem properties/locations that may contribute to the unsafe passage for children.*

School Staff: *to be adult presence, take pictures; provide information to law enforcement and school police.*

Metropolitan Transit: *to address safety issues on buses and trolleys.*

Park and Recreation: *to be an adult presence in the park as well as provide information about after school incidents and link with school efforts to identify youth who are problems.*

Traffic and Engineering: *to address safe traffic issues around the school.*

Fire Department: *to offer visible presence during time children are going to and from school.*

City School Police: *to monitor the perimeter of the school 1 hour after school and at hot spots and to provide monthly citation reports at the meetings.*

San Diego Police Department: *to monitor the perimeter of the school and to provide crime reports at each meeting.*

Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention: *to link resources to schools.*

Probation: *to provide presence or support when appropriate*

San Diego County Office of Education: *to provide support/link with appropriate organizations as well information*

There are several specific examples that demonstrate the value of the active participation of City Attorney's Drug Abatement Response Team (DART) prosecutors in the Safe Passage Program. In one, a dilapidated multi-unit apartment complex was identified as a problem to students on their way to and from school because they felt threatened by the congregation of juveniles, gang members, and others who would loiter at the property engaging in fights, consuming alcohol and smoking marijuana. DART prosecutors intervened by meeting with the owners of the complex requiring them to evict problem tenants and to correct the code violations. Since the DART intervention, there has been a significant reduction in the loitering as evidenced in part by the over 73 percent reduction in the number of calls for police service (from 53 calls to 14 calls) to the complex and 60 percent reduction in arrests (from 10 arrests to 4 arrests). In another example, DART prosecutors intervened at a gang house location where gang members intimidated students on their way to and from school. Working with gang detectives, DART prosecutors were able to secure the eviction of the gang member tenants enabling students to freely walk by that location on their way to and from school without fear or intimidation.

Furthermore, DART prosecutors have assisted in developing strategies to prevent older gang members from recruiting students around the school as well as to address trespass and vandalism issues involving school property. For example, at the suggestion of DART prosecutors, school administrators equipped themselves with walkie-talkies and digital cameras to document these violations and to assist in identifying the perpetrators. DART prosecutors have also followed up with formal cease-and-desist letters which have been successful in preventing future violations.

New Schools

Bell Middle School has a student population of 1453. The demographics are:

- 36% Hispanic
- 34% Filipino
- 20% African American
- 6% White
- 2% Pacific Islander
- 1% Asian

There are four active gangs in the vicinity of the school.

The School surveyed all students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades and garnered the following results:

75% Response Rate

Most students are transported to school

Students feel safe on campus but have issues traveling to and from school

40% reported gangs are on campus

Morse High School has a student population of 2609. Its demographics are:

35% Filipino

34% Hispanic

21% African American

4% White

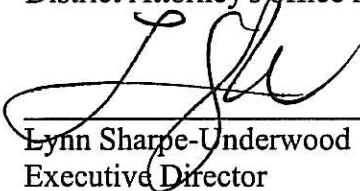
4% Asian

2% Pacific Islander

There are three active gangs on campus.

FOLLOW UP

The City Attorney, Jacobs Foundation and the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention currently have applied to the U.S. Attorney's Anti-Gang project for funds to expand the Safe Passage project to more schools and have a city-wide coordinator. The District Attorney's office has written a letter of support for this effort.



Lynn Sharpe-Underwood
Executive Director
Commission on Gang Prevention
& Intervention



Jill Olen
Deputy Chief Operating Office
Public Safety/Homeland Security