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Los Altos, California 94022-3087

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** November 11, 2020

**TO:** Citizens' Police Task Force

**FROM:** City Staff

**SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS ON  
SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM**

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One of the objectives of the Citizens' Police Task Force is to develop recommendations to the City Council regarding the School Resource Officer (SRO) Program at Los Altos High School (LAHS). At the October 28, 2020 Task Force meeting, members were charged with sending their preliminary recommendations to City staff. Staff has compiled those preliminary recommendations and attempted to organize them by categories. All recommendations provided have been included below.

It should be noted that these recommendations are not in any prioritized order and are only numbered for ease of reference during discussion. The Task Force may reorganize and reorder these recommendations in any manner that the group sees fit.

### **SRO PROGRAM AT LAHS**

#### **Metric-based Assessments**

1. *Recommendation: Develop metrics for measuring goals of SRO program at LAHS*
  - a. The police department and MVLA write down goals for SRO@LAHS, including what measurements to make (data to collect)
  - b. The department meet with school staff to review the program annually (mid-year?) - to reinforce positive or suggest improvements. Perhaps review data collected and statistics, goals of both sides, major interactions.
  - c. Feedback yearly from community/students, not just admin
  - d. Metrics on if the SROs are meeting their goals of "improving relationships with students" or other SRO goals
  - e. Maintain data on how contacts with the SRO are initiated (self-initiated/call for service).
  - f. Additional data gathering and analysis that LAPD must implement to evaluate success of the SRO program.
  - g. The school should have annual evaluations of their SRO program, and determine whether key objectives were met. The results should be proactively sent out to students and parents. If objectives are not met, steps should be proposed to address the gap.

## **MVLA Involvement in SRO Recruitment/Evals**

2. *Recommendation: Include representatives from Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District (MVLA) and LAHS in the recruitment and evaluation process for SRO*
  - a. Recommend that the department and MVLA include students as part of SRO Program review
  - b. Recommend that the SRO candidates be interviewed by LAHS staff and two LAHS Junior/Seniors for feedback before selection by the department.
  - c. Recommend that the school administration select a student, who has expressed an interest in possibly pursuing a career in law enforcement, to serve as a member of the panel that interviews candidates for the School Resource Officer position.
  - d. More community involvement in hiring/selection of SRO
  - e. Include comments from students, faculty, and staff at Los Altos High School in the annual SRO evaluations.
  - f. Include a Los Altos High School representative (staff or faculty or student) on the oral board that assesses candidates for the SRO position.
  - g. Commit to gathering feedback about the SRO program and policing on campus from students, faculty and staff and making that feedback publicly available.

## **NON-SRO involvement with Students**

3. *Recommendation: Explore alternatives to having an officer respond to certain incidents at LAHS*
  - a. Medical/mental health calls should be redirected to trained medical professionals
  - b. Someone else should be mediating verbal fights between students (teachers)?
  - c. In general, teachers should be trained more to alleviate some of the roles that SROs are currently responsible for
  - d. Consider an alternative to the SRO, such as a School Resource Team (SRT) that would include a mental health person, a social worker, and a person trained in CPR and other medical skills who are on call to respond to student concerns on the high school campus.
  - e. Establishing a clear hierarchy of actions so that police/SRO's are only called as a last resort when other methods have failed or in case of immediate harm.
  - f. Recommend diverting of mental health crisis calls from LAHS to the Mobile Crisis Response teams

## **Firearms on campus**

4. *Recommendation: Prohibit officers from carrying firearms on campus except in certain situations*
  - a. No guns on campus (especially when casually interacting with students) (for all officers, not just SROs)
  - b. Patrol checks during and after school hours shouldn't have guns
  - c. SROs & police must be unarmed on campus unless they are responding to a violent crime in progress

## **SRO Interactions with students**

5. *Recommendation: Define expectation of SRO interactions with students*
  - a. Redefining "going around at lunch to say hi to students"
  - b. When SROs are teaching classes, no guns, no uniforms
  - c. Clear definition of expected officer behavior when on campus and interacting with students
  - d. Track for all interactions with students
  - e. For interrogations, students must be informed prior to the interrogation starting that they have the right to walk out if they are not legally mandated to be there/the school does not require it of them.
  - f. If they are required to be in the room with an SRO, they should have an adult of their choosing also present in the room with them (parent, teacher, etc.)

## **Educating the Community**

6. *Recommendation: Educate the community, including students, parents and faculty, on the SRO Program and the rights of students related to interactions with SRO*
  - a. Educate students and parents on their rights when interacting with police
  - b. Ensure that the goals and operations of the SRO program are clearly communicated to faculty, staff, students and parents of LAHS.
  - c. Ensure that the rights of students regarding SRO and police operations are clearly communicated to students and parents of LAHS.
  - d. Recommend a clear process to informing faculty, staff, students and parents when a serious crime has occurred on campus
  - e. Deliver information/education about the School Resource Officer program -- along with an introduction to our past and current SROs -- to LAHS students, parents, staff and faculty in 3 separate sessions allowing for Q&A
  - f. All students must be made to sign a form with their parents at the start of the school year that informs them about the SRO program, how to file a complaint should they have one, and how to contact them for help, should they need it.

## **Elimination of SRO Program**

7. *Recommendation: Eliminate the SRO program*
  - a. Recommend elimination of the SRO program
  - b. Recommend creation of an MOU between MVLA and LAPD so all parties understand the responsibilities of each.
  - c. Recommend that MVLA invest in alternatives to SROs - more mental health counselors/crisis response, restorative justice practitioners, PBIS.

## **Training**

8. *Recommendation: Provide additional trainings for officers related to interactions with teens/children*
  - a. Additional psychiatric screening
  - b. Shorter, more frequent trainings with proven tangible results
  - c. Utilize outside trainers/professionals for bias and implicit bias trainings
  - d. Recommend additional training for all police officers such as Mental health training, Crisis response, and dealing with teens/children
  - e. Recommend additional training for all MVLA faculty and staff. Including but not limited to Implicit Bias (i.e. in disciplining), Crisis Response and Mediation & De-escalation