



REPORT TO COUNCIL 25

City of Sacramento

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www.CityofSacramento.org

STAFF
May 16, 2006

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Subject: Informational Report: Police Programs in the Southeast Asian Community

Location/Council District: Citywide

Recommendation:

At the Council meeting on February 28, 2006, Councilmember McCarty requested a report back regarding the Police Department's methods being employed to address the needs of the Southeast Asian Community, particularly regarding gang activity. This report is offered in response to Councilmember McCarty's inquiry and follow-up to Council log item #031-06.

Contact: Albert Nájera, Chief of Police, 433-0800
Daniel Hahn, Captain, 433-0310

Presenters: Daniel Hahn, Captain

Department: Police

Division: Investigations – Special Investigations Division

Organization No: 2142

Summary:

The Police Department is increasing its emphasis on gang prevention/intervention within the Southeast Asian Community, as well as to all communities within the City. This emphasis, in addition to enforcement efforts, is intended to reduce future gang activity and violence.

Committee/Commission Action: None.

Background Information:

The Police Department has recently initiated a Youth Services Section within the Special Investigations Division. This was in preparation for the anticipated increase in juvenile crime and the need for education and prevention services. A lieutenant oversees this section, which consolidates all present and future youth related programs under one lieutenant. This lieutenant is currently responsible for the following programs: Gang Unit, Street Gang Enforcement Team (S.G.E.T.), Gang Resistance and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program, Criminal Justice Magnet School programs, School Resource Officer (S.R.O.) Unit, and the Gang Violence Suppression Grant.

The Police Department is currently working with various community groups, such as the United Hmong, Mien, Lao Community against Gang Violence Community Taskforce and Sacramento Area Congregations Together (A.C.T.), in the Southeast Asian community to address gang activity and violence. Some of the programs currently being discussed are truancy centers and a city truancy ordinance.

The Department facilitates several community academies for the various cultures within our community. The Department has facilitated Cultural Community Academies for the Hmong and Mien communities, in addition to the Slavic community. The academies introduce the participants to the Police Department and the criminal justice system through a 21-hour program. A translator participates in each academy session. Topics covered include gang awareness and crime prevention. There are approximately 120 people from each group that participate in this program annually. The department is planning on adding academies for the Laotian, Hispanic, and Sikh communities.

The Police Department is also sponsoring the Summer of Safety Youth Fairs that will be held on the last Wednesday of May, June, and July at the Public Safety Center (5770 Freeport Blvd.). This program is dedicated to providing families with information on the multitude of youth intervention and prevention services available to them within our community. There will also be presentations regarding various youth related topics such as Gang Prevention, Internet Safety, Water Safety and Parks and Recreation programs. This program involves numerous Community Based Organizations, Faith Based Organizations and other City Departments such as Parks and Recreation and the Fire Department. There will be translation services available in multiple Southeast Asian languages.

The Police Department has taken preventive steps to educate our community and discourage gang participation and violence. The Department has partnered with school districts and community based organizations to develop and present programs that teach our youth about the consequences of gang activity and offer our youth an alternative to the gang lifestyle. These programs are directed at all communities within the City including the Southeast Asian community. The following is a summary of the current programs:

Magnet School Program

The Criminal Justice Magnet Academy is an occupationally focused four-year program, which represents a highly structured educational environment authentically linking education, service, learning and employment in the criminal justice fields.

In 1990, the SPD formed a partnership with the Sacramento City Unified School District and created the Criminal Justice Magnet Academy program at John F. Kennedy High School. In 1996, due to the high success of the program, the Police Department partnered with Hiram Johnson and Grant Union High School to implement a Magnet Academy at each school campus. A full time law enforcement officer is dedicated to the program to work in partnership with a teacher who facilitates the learning environment.

The Department is currently in the process of adding an additional academy at another high school campus. The three academies have a diverse student population of approximately 260 students. The current academy student population consists of the following students: 57 Hmong, 10 Chinese, 8 Mien, 2 Japanese, 6 Laotian, and 1 Vietnamese.

The Police Department, in partnership with Parks and Recreation, is also implementing a 2-week summer camp at each of the high schools to expose junior high school students to the criminal justice field and provide them with productive activities during the summer.

Gang Violence Suppression Grant

The SPD is the lead agency on a multi-agency Gang Violence Suppression Grant. The grant partially funds one detective, a probation officer, a deputy district attorney, two Gang Violence Prevention & Intervention (GVPI) Coordinators for the Sacramento City Unified School District, and counseling through two community based organizations (CBO): La Familia and Another Choice, Another Chance. The grant focuses on individuals with gang involvement or the potential of gang involvement, especially juveniles/students in SCUSD schools. The CBO's provide opportunities for kids and their families to receive counseling and the help they need to get out, or stay out, of a gang.

School Resource Officers

The SPD received Council authorization on August 23, 2005 to hire ten (10) additional School Resource Officers (SROs). This allowed the Police Department and the Sacramento City Unified School District to assign five (5) SROs to middle schools. The SROs at these middle schools work in collaboration with community-based organizations and school district initiatives to reduce truancy and develop mentoring programs. Additionally, these officers work to identify potential gang members and notify the school when the officers identify a student who is a gang member. Working with the school, a required meeting is arranged involving the officer, school administration, parent(s), and the student. The purpose of this meeting is to notify, educate and assist the parent in dealing with their child's activities, and to provide referrals to appropriate service programs. The goal with the students is to deter them from further involvement with gangs and gang activities. If necessary, translators are provided by the school district. Currently, twelve (12) SROs are assigned to the Sacramento City Unified School District and two (2) SROs are working for the Natomas Unified School District.

Gang Resistance Education and Training

Additionally, our officers teach gang awareness to 6th and 7th graders. The Gang Resistance and Training (GREAT) program is a school-based, law enforcement officer-instructed classroom curriculum that is taught over 13 weeks. The Program's primary objective is prevention and is intended as an immunization against delinquency, youth violence, and gang membership. GREAT lessons focus on providing life skills to

students to help them avoid delinquent behavior and violence to solve problems. All SRO's will be trained as GREAT instructors, in addition to other officers throughout the Department.

Last year, the GREAT Program was presented to students at six (6) schools (Susan B. Anthony Elementary, John Bidwell Elementary, Cesar E. Chavez Elementary, Elder Creek Elementary, Northwood Elementary, and Leroy F. Greene Middle School) in three (3) different school districts (Sacramento City Unified, North Sacramento, and Natomas Unified) throughout the City. In total, 390 students graduated from the GREAT Program during the 2004-05 school year. Our goal is to add a 4th and 5th grade component, and graduate at least 1,000 students in future years.

Kops-N-Kids

The Kops-N-Kids Program is a summer program that the SPD participates in with other local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as fire departments in the Sacramento area. Kops-N-Kids is a highly successful drug and alcohol abuse prevention and sports camp for youth ages 9 to 12 years old. In a joint effort with the local school districts, 300 Sacramento area youth are selected each year to attend this weeklong day camp. The camp utilizes law enforcement professionals, fire service professionals, educators and professional athletes to serve as instructors and role models for the youth. To date, the camp has provided more than 4,250 Sacramento youngsters with an opportunity to interact with positive role models from law enforcement and fire service agencies. The camp focuses on educating youths about the realities of drug use and gang involvement and the consequences of choices they make in life. The camp offers the youth an opportunity to learn about and participate in various team sports as a way of furthering their social skills while learning the importance of maintaining a drug and gang-free lifestyle.

Project SAVE

Project SAVE (Safe Alternatives and Violence Education) is a program for adolescent first-time offenders, ages 10 to 17, who have been involved in violence or weapons possession on or near a school campus (i.e. fighting). Project SAVE offers alternatives for the less sophisticated offender who acts without thinking or in response to peer pressure, and who is not yet intimately involved in the juvenile justice system. Project SAVE requires parent participation. Youths and their parents or guardians attend a six-hour Saturday class that addresses issues of weapons and violence and provides information and skills related to effective anger management, refusal skills, choices and consequences and parenting skills.

The SPD School Resource Officers complete Project SAVE referrals whenever possible. If the SRO takes enforcement action against the juvenile, the referral is included with the crime report. This allows the District Attorney's Office and the Probation Department to make the Project SAVE referral part of the disposition of the charge. We made 133 referrals to Project SAVE last school year, which was higher than any other organization.

Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together

Lastly, we work with various schools to train student leaders to mediate disputes, through Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (SPIRIT). SPIRIT takes natural student leaders, both formal and informal, and provides them with two consecutive half days of training. This program uses the principles of mediation, problem solving, and full engagement of the school community, to help improve the climate of schools. SPIRIT brings students, administrators, teachers, and parents together to identify issues, develop solutions, and take action on conflicts within their schools. Some of the accomplishments of the program have been a Sureno and Norteno truce at Hiram Johnson High School. This was initiated the day after a Sureno leader attended SPIRIT training. Weekly meetings are held with gang members on the Hiram Johnson campus to discuss various issues that could result in violence. Also, the McClatchy High School SPIRIT group has started a community garden where both the academic leaders and streetwise students are participating.

Gang Investigations Unit

The Police Department deploys two enforcement teams that deal directly with gang activity and violence. The Department currently has 8 detectives and 1 sergeant that investigate gang related crimes. This unit identifies and validates individual street gang members and investigates and arrests gang members involved in street gang criminal acts of violence.

Street Gang Enforcement Team (SGET)

The Department currently has 6 uniformed officers and 1 uniformed sergeant assigned to this team. These officers serve as a quick response team that actively engages gang members on the street and addresses gang issues in a proactive manner. The SGET team averages 430 arrests per year and confiscates approximately 30 firearms per year.

Future Plans

The SPD recognizes the juvenile population will significantly increase over the coming years. In preparation for the anticipated increase in juvenile crime and the continuing need for education and prevention, we are looking at expanding our prevention and intervention services in the Youth Services Section.

The Police Department is exploring the implementation of Youth Coordinator positions that would be responsible for training school staff, parents, and community groups in gang awareness and recognition. They would also be responsible for coordinating various prevention programs (i.e. SPIRIT) and collaborating with CBO's and other City departments such as Parks and Recreation. The Youth Coordinators would provide this service to the various cultural groups, including the Southeast Asian community, within the City and would utilize translators as needed.

The Department is also researching the possibility of partnering with the Department of Health and Human Services by housing two social workers within the Youth Services Section. They would provide follow-up on the numerous contacts our officers have with at-risk youth on a daily basis. They would connect families of at-risk youth with needed services in order to achieve long-term results.

Additionally, we are partnering with the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office and the Sacramento Fire Department to present the Gun Violence Information for Teens (GIFT) program in our local junior high schools. This program is utilized to inform Junior High School students the ramifications of being involved in gang activity or violence.

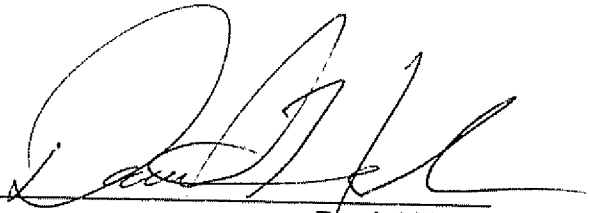
Financial Considerations: Not applicable.

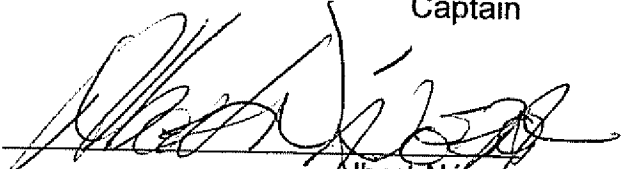
Environmental Considerations: Not applicable.

Policy Considerations:

This report meets one of the objectives identified by the Mayor and City Council in their strategic plan.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): Not applicable.

Respectfully Submitted by: 
Daniel Hahn
Captain

Approved by: 
Albert Nájera
Chief of Police

Recommendation Approved:


RAY KERRIDGE
City Manager

Ref: COP 5-7

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