



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 3

Agenda Date: May 21, 2024

In Control: Public Safety Committee

DEPARTMENT: Police Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: William McManus, Chief of Police

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

COSA/Independent School District Mass Shooting Prevention and Response Program

SUMMARY:

Briefing on the City of San Antonio's efforts to support mass shooting prevention efforts in local schools and coordinated response support and training program.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A City Council Consideration Request (CCR) authored by Councilmember Pelaez regarding adopting and meaningfully funding an evidence-based and expert-guided mass shooting prevention and response plan for local schools was submitted in April 2023.

The CCR specifically stated: This initiative must address the root causes of school shootings. Our SA Forward Plan should inform the proposed prevention, crisis response, and damage reduction

plans. Using SA Forward as a guide, ISD staff, students, parents, community members and workers, as well as COSA should coordinate efforts to improve mental health resources available for families and for tracking of individuals known to engage in red-flag behaviors, trauma-informed care services, and early-education aimed at violence prevention.

The CCR was heard by Governance Committee on January 22, 2024, and referred to the Public Safety Committee.

The San Antonio Police Department supports mass shooting prevention efforts in schools through coordination within the Fusion Center and the Mental Health Unit. The Metro Health Department's Violence Prevention Plan prioritizes gun violence with goals of: preventing gun violence involving adults and youth, improving access to services and support for victims/survivors and reducing repeated violence by perpetrators.

ISSUE:

The San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) supports mass shooting prevention efforts in schools through coordination within the Fusion Center and Mental Health Unit. The primary responsibility for assessing potential threats to schools lies with SAPD's Behavioral Threat Assessment Group (BTAG) program that involves multidisciplinary participation to develop a coordinated response. Any imminent threats are immediately followed up on by SAPD in coordination with Independent School District Police Departments to identify, investigate and apprehend any suspected actors. The SAPD maintains a robust partnership with area school districts and individual campuses to share real-time information on critical incidents to include initiation and lifting of campus lockdown procedures.

SAPD engages in mass shooting response efforts through coordinated response support and training with area schools including participation in the Lifespot notification application that several schools have purchased. Lifespot is a safety and security application designed to reduce emergency response times during an active shooter or active threat event. At the initiation of an alert, all participating users — including emergency responders — are immediately notified of the threat via a push notification. SAPD also participates in tabletop exercises with area school law enforcement agencies, area training related to Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) which includes Avoid, Deny, Defend concepts. Additionally, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement now mandates all licensed peace officers in the State attend 16 hours of Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERT) training within each two-year training cycle. SAPD is currently engaged in this training and anticipates completing it by the end of 2024. The Department maintains a full-time, appropriately equipped Special Operations Unit that is available to support area schools.

The Metro Health Department participated in collaboration with stakeholders including the San Antonio Police Department, St. John Baptist Church, and the University of San Antonio in a national public health leadership training program which involved coordinating the development of the Violence Prevention Strategic Plan.

This Violence Prevention Strategic Plan builds on SA Forward to incorporate prevention strategies

for community violence issues such as shootings, child abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, and acts of mass violence. The plan specifically prioritizes Gun Violence with the goals of preventing gun violence involving adults and youth, improve access to services and support for victims/survivors, and reducing repeated violence by perpetrators.

These existing resources and initiatives are intended to support mass shooting prevention and response focus within the City's comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan recently completed by Metro Health in collaboration with various community stakeholders.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only.