



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**  
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**Agenda Item Number:** 2

**Agenda Date:** January 22, 2024

**In Control:** Governance Committee Meeting

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**DEPARTMENT:** Police Department

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** William McManus, Chief of Police

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

**SUBJECT:**

Council Consideration Request for a School Mass Shooting Prevention and Response Program

**SUMMARY:**

Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Manny Pelaez on CoSA / ISD School Mass Shooting Prevention and Response Program.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

On April 11, 2023, Councilmember Manny Pelaez (District 8) submitted a Council Consideration Request (CCR) regarding adopting and meaningfully funding an evidence-based and expert-guided mass shooting prevention and response plan for local schools.

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.

## **ISSUE:**

In April 2022, Metro Health launched its SA Forward plan that provides the strategic direction for the department to protect and improve the health of the San Antonio community. This plan focuses on six priority areas including, among others, violence prevention.

Using a public health approach to prevent violence and work collaboratively with stakeholders including the San Antonio Police Department, St. John Baptist Church, and the University of San Antonio Metro Health participated in a national public health leadership training program which involved coordinating the development of a Violence Prevention Strategic Plan which will be released later this month.

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.

Briefings to the Public Safety Committee were provided by Metro Health in February and November of 2023 to describe the process of developing the strategic plan and the result. A “B” Session is scheduled for January 24th to brief the City Council on the strategies and projected outcomes of the Violence Prevention Strategic Plan.

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 ISD 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. The Department also works closely with schools through the Handle with Care Program which is specifically designed to alert school officials when a student is the victim of, or witness to, a traumatic event to ensure the student receives resources, services, and support to promote the immediate and long-term wellbeing of the impacted student.

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 app 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 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 (TCOLE) now mandates all licensed peace officers in the State attend 16 hours of Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) 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.

These existing resources and initiatives are intended to support the mass shooting prevention and response focus within the City's comprehensive Violence Prevention Strategic 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. The Violence Prevention Strategic Plan will be presented at the January 24th City Council B Session.