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Aug 29, 2023

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.
Director

**SUBJECT: ENHANCING SCHOOL DISTRICT CAPACITY TO PROTECT
STUDENT SAFETY (ITEM 13, BOARD AGENDA OF JULY 12, 2022)**

On July 12, 2022, your Board approved the motion “Enhancing School District Capacity to Protect Student Safety”, instructing the Director of the Office of Violence Prevention (OVP), in collaboration with the Superintendent of the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), Acting Director of the Department of Youth Development (DYD), Acting Director of the Department of Mental Health (DMH), Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission (HRC), Director of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Chief Probation Officer, Executive Director of the Los Angeles Mayor’s Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD), impacted school districts, community service providers, community organizations and other relevant stakeholders, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), to report back in 180 days with:

- 1a: A list of school districts in communities experiencing the highest rates of violence in the County, both on campus and in nearby areas; and working with stakeholders to identify metrics and analyze the impact of multiple forms of violence on school districts in communities with the highest rates of violence;
- 1b: A description of feedback and data from school districts including input from students and parents in areas with the highest rates of violence on what supports and services the County of Los Angeles should provide to improve school climate and safety;
- 1c: Identification of 2-3 school districts with schools in areas most impacted by violence, and with existing safety initiatives, including, but not limited to, the Trauma Prevention Initiative, Department of Public Health (DPH) Wellbeing Centers, the Community

Schools Initiative, HRC's Dream Centers, DMH's Prevention Division programs and School Threat Assessment Response Teams, to participate in a pilot;

- 1d: Identification and assessment of models and strategies, conducted in partnership with impacted school districts, which are designed to comprehensively and collaboratively improve school safety and climate, building on the strategies identified in the report;
- 1e: Identification of any key implementation needs and challenges, building on findings of sub-directives 1a-1d, including but not limited to: i) any trainings necessary to implement safety models and strategies; ii) funding needed, with cost estimates, to implement models and strategies, with the goal of sustainability in achieving improved school climate and safety over the long-term; and iii) potential federal, state, and local public and private funding sources;
- 1f: Recommendations on how the County can best support schools, including trauma and healing informed supports for school personnel, students, and families, in areas most impacted by violence with the goal of enhancing and expanding each school district's long-term capacity to address a wide range of threats to students' safety.

Public Health submitted its first report pursuant to this motion on (April 13, 2023). See Appendix C for the previous report.

Summary of Stakeholder Input and Proposed School Safety Innovation Pilot

Since November 2022, OVP has solicited input on school climate and safety using a variety of venues to engage key stakeholders including youth, school personnel, and parents. These engagements include:¹

- Community listening sessions in all five Supervisorial Districts.
- Discussions with Loyola Marymount University's Dr. Cheryl Grills, and Crenshaw High School student leaders to learn from their project focused on violence exposure and safety needs of students at Crenshaw High.
- Participation in the School Resource Deputy 40-hour Training Program to solicit input from deputy trainees on needs and recommendations to enhance school safety.
- Discussions with staff at the DPH Wellbeing Centers and HRC's Dream Centers (including two Dream Center site visits) and attending meetings to learn more about their student safety and wellness efforts.
- Discussion with the DPH Youth Advisory Committee.
- A joint briefing for the Health and Mental Health Services, Family and Social Services, and Public Safety Board Deputies

¹ A full list of stakeholders engaged can be found in Appendix A.

Our work was informed by the following collectively developed definition of school safety:

School safety reflects a climate where students, families and staff feel safe from violence, bullying and harassment including the influence of substance use, and violence perpetrated by individuals and systems. Enhancing school safety requires addressing the root causes of violence and trauma that occur in schools, in school-related activities, and in the surrounding communities, through policies and practices that strengthen the network of prevention and response services using an equity and healing-centered lens.

Across both youth-specific and wider stakeholder listening sessions, participants elevated the need for additional full-time mental health specialists, school counselors, and other student support professionals on campus, and more student-centered safe spaces, such as existing Human Relations Commission (HRC) Dream Centers and DPH Wellbeing Centers. Some youth participants highlighted a lack of trust between students, school personnel, and counselors due to negative experiences and recommended staff trainings on how to work with youth in more confidential and supportive ways. Another common recommendation was for school districts to provide more opportunities for students to participate in decision making on school safety and climate issues, through peer mentoring, youth leadership groups, and regular meetings with school leadership to share their ideas and concerns.

Youth participants expressed some differing perspectives from the wider listening session audience in defining school safety. They emphasized that a safe school has respect for the struggles and concerns of students, allows for ongoing and open dialogue, listens to students and addresses issues that they may be facing. A recommendation specific to the wider listening sessions conducted with adults was for more partnerships between school districts and local community-based organizations (CBOs), to provide programming and services to address what they view as urgent safety issues including: substance use, bullying/cyberbullying - especially as it relates to race and sexuality, community and gang violence, mental health, and social emotional learning.

Based on stakeholder input and ongoing coordination with LACOE, LAUSD, and DPH's Education Sector Unit, OVP is proposing a School Safety Innovation Pilot that includes a set of promising strategies, leverages components of existing safety initiatives and outlines elements critical for effective implementation of a school safety pilot. The proposed one-year pilot will allow a subset of school districts to implement innovative programming that creates environments where children and teens can learn, grow, and overcome challenges, while providing a broader group of districts countywide to benefit from shared learning and standardized tools and protocols without committing to specific programs and services. The proposed School Safety Innovation Pilot includes two components:

1. Award Transformation Grants, funded by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, to support transformative school safety efforts (5 school districts grants at up to \$1M per district).

2. Establish a School Safety Learning Community in partnership with LACOE for up to 20 school districts.

At this time, OVP has secured confirmation that LAUSD is interested in participating in the pilot, and we are changing our approach to engaging other school districts in the pilot as described below. This new approach is meant to address concerns raised by several districts that were previously approached to participate, as noted in the April 13th Memo to your Board. Specifically, that being chosen to participate in the pilot will label their schools as “violent,” unintentionally stigmatizing them and undermining work they have done to address safety. To facilitate trust building with school districts to do deep systems change work with OVP and county partners, school districts will be given the opportunity to apply to participate in the pilot, in partnership with CBOs, based on their commitment and demonstrated needs.

1. Award Transformation Grants, funded by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, to support transformative school safety efforts. Grants of up to \$1M per district will go to each of 5 school districts to support a significant innovation related to school safety, positive school climates and student wellbeing. While need will be an important criterion in the selection of schools for this cohort, experience has shown us that for County Government to single out, and thus label, certain schools as “high risk,” is a disincentive to school participation. An alternative approach, one that selects schools based on their demonstrated commitment to the safety and wellbeing of students and staff and demonstrated safety needs, offers more promise as a recruitment strategy. School districts will be asked to discuss their unmet needs in their applications for funding, enabling the County to target funds to school districts with high needs without adversely labeling pilot participants.

Since the portion of LA County’s ARPA funding designated for OVP must be used to support investment in violence prevention work by CBOs, our mechanism for supporting school transformation efforts will rely on CBO-school district partnerships. OVP’s Third Party Administrator for ARPA funding will release an opportunity for funding. CBO applicants will apply in partnership with a school district, and must provide a letter of commitment from their partner school district that indicates their agreement to work together, and with OVP, to implement selected measures from a menu of school safety strategies. Taking this approach will support two complementary goals by creating a climate of safety within a given school and creating a safety net of support for youth based on stronger relationships between CBOs and school districts. OVP will continue to coordinate with LACOE and other county and community partners to widely publicize and promote this opportunity to CBOs and to school districts.

CBO applicants will be asked to identify their partner school or a small number of schools within a given district, identify at least 3 transformative practices they plan to implement, and briefly explain the rationale for their choice of practices. The menu of strategies offered will be based on the Futures Without Violence’s Whole School Approach. This approach seeks to improve school culture by employing strategies that foster community and family engagement, student

leadership development, staff development, and rethink discipline and attendance policies.² This menu of strategies is outlined below:

Transformation Grant Investment Options

- **School Infrastructure**
 - Increasing the number of student support counselors.
 - Training all school staff in positive youth development, trauma informed practices, mental health first aid, de-escalation strategies, cooperative discipline, and conflict mediation.
 - Revising discipline and attendance policies, reviewing data and practices to integrate restorative justice practices in school protocols, staff development, and family engagement.
 - Establishing in-school safety collaboratives that engage and promote youth and parent leadership in collaboration with school personnel

- **Healing and Wellbeing**
 - Creating on campus safe spaces and programs for youth dialogue, leadership training, and peer mentorship.
 - Training youth and families in mental health first aid conflict resolution, and restorative justice practices to strengthen school-family partnership.
 - Implementing creative wellbeing programming that builds student skills in managing emotions and relationships.
 - Implementing an evidence-based (or evidence-informed) social and emotional learning curriculum to support healthy relationships.

- **Community Support Service**
 - Developing Bridge Programs to support students' transition between elementary, middle, and high schools.
 - Providing home visitation for disconnected students and families to avert truancy and address family needs associated with absenteeism.
 - Providing trauma informed parenting classes to support families.
 - Improving accessibility and utilization of substance use treatment.
 - Providing mentoring programs for at-risk youth.
 - Partnering with community-based violence intervention agencies to provide safe passages for youth to attend school.

2. Establish a school safety learning community in partnership with LACOE

OVP will partner with LACOE to convene a Learning Community for up to 20 school districts, including those that applied for the Transformation Grant funding. The Learning Community will share best practices and address challenges school districts face around school climate and school safety. OVP will leverage existing LACOE meetings to recruit school districts for the

² [Futures Without Violence's Whole School Approach](#)

Learning Community in early August and will start convening this group beginning in September 2023. Based on input from LACOE and stakeholder sessions, initial priorities for the Learning Community will include:

- Trainings on topics such as trauma informed practices, restorative approaches, youth development and leadership, and effective parent engagement.
- Technical assistance for the development of mandated Comprehensive School Safety Plans³ and meeting other federal and state mandates such as SB906⁴ to address gun safety.
- Assistance with developing basic threat assessment, conflict mediation, youth suicide prevention, mental health literacy, and crisis response.
- Peer learning exchange across school districts to share best practices.

This collaborative space will provide a forum for the professional development of participants and facilitate peer learning across school teams to better improve school climate and safety practices. Through the Learning Community, OVP will offer up to 20 participating school districts an opportunity to apply for mini grants to improve school safety. Mini-grants will range from \$5,000-\$10,000 each, with the total grant amount not to exceed \$150,000 per year of the pilot.

Stakeholders consulted by OVP in developing plans for this pilot consistently raised three issues that will inform the work of OVP and our partners in implementation. These are:

- *County efforts to promote school safety must align with and build on current programming:* School districts are working on many different safety initiatives supported by different funders and requiring different strategies and outcomes. While the County has many resources to assist schools, the County has no authority to require collaboration. Therefore, the key to this pilot will be demonstrating respect for the complex tasks assigned to school districts and school leadership and building trust by taking a supportive approach in addressing the safety concerns of the community.
- *Lack of safety in schools is closely tied to lack of safety in communities:* both problems have root causes in multiple forms of oppression that have left communities of color disproportionately impoverished and disproportionately impacted by violence and other health risks. Additionally, schools and CBOs in communities that are most impacted by violence tend to be under-resourced and rely on sparse dollars to spread support across multiple areas of need. It is important that the proposed pilot has adequate resources to support the 5 pilot school districts, fund local CBOs called upon to support school efforts, and support districts and schools that opt to participate in the Learning Community. The

³ <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/vp/safeschlplanning.asp>

⁴ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB906

continued engagement of OVP community and county partners in implementation and monitoring of the pilot initiative is also important for its success.

- *Youth and families should be central to transformative efforts:* Achieving change in schools and in communities requires an engaged local constituency. It is important that for all school leadership and CBO-school partnerships engaged in the pilot invest time and resources in the development and support of parent and student leadership.

Through this pilot, the County can provide added value to school districts' efforts to achieve a holistic approach to safety and wellbeing. This approach includes shifting from a law enforcement, criminal justice-oriented approach, to a community-driven approach that engages youth-serving community-based organizations that have the trust of the community. The April 2023 report from the Office of Inspector General on Improving School Climate and Safety, analyzed School Resource Deputies' contacts with students across the county and highlighted concerns about disproportionate contacts for Black and Latino youth.

To address these concerns, OVP is coordinating with the Department of Youth Development (DYD) to align their collective efforts to improve School Climate and Safety. In response to a June 2022 motion from Your Board ("Improving School Climate and Safety) DYD began partnered with two school districts that have a high number of School Resource Deputies on campus to train staff on restorative justice practices, build youth development networks, and fund a CBO to provide school-based diversion. OVP will provide guidance to DYD on safety issues that arise, and incorporate lessons learned from DYD's programs in the School Safety Innovation Pilot.

OVP will continue to work with the DPH Education Partnerships and Programs Office to facilitate the School Safety County Partners Workgroup, a cross-sector group of county partners committed to school safety, to act on systems change priorities that address key issues identified by stakeholders. These systems change efforts will provide support and alignment to the school districts participating in the pilot. The pilot will, in turn, help the County and our partners identify and understand where current system practices get in the way of school safety, and define an agenda for ongoing reform.

Funding Request

Find below a funding request breakdown of the elements for the proposed School Safety Innovation Pilot. Transformation Grants, of up to \$1M per school district will go to 5 school districts to support a significant innovation related to school safety, positive school climates and student wellbeing at each school district. These grants will be funded through ARPA dollars. Funding for the other components of this proposed pilot effort have not yet been identified. OVP, in concert with partners, has developed cost estimates for implementing an 18-month pilot. These costs have been detailed below.

Please note that as part of this proposal, were funding to be identified, LACOE will also plan to hire a temporary analyst position to manage technical assistance and coordination with OVP and

school district partners. OVP would set up a Memorandum of Understanding to provide funding to LACOE.

Transformation Grants <i>(To be funded through confirmed ARPA dollars: January – December 2024)</i>	
Description	Amount
ARPA-funded Transformation Grants: 5 School Safety Partnerships at up to \$1M each	\$5,000,000
TOTAL	\$5,000,000

School Safety Innovation Pilot Coordination <i>(Funding needs to be identified: Date of Board Approval – June 30, 2025)</i>	
Description	Amount
1 Health Program Analyst II at OVP to manage pilot activities with districts (As Needed Temporary Personnel hire)	\$200,000
1 Analyst (LACOE staff) to manage technical assistance and MOU (As Needed Temporary Personnel hire).	\$200,000
Consultant MOU – Learning Community	\$150,000
Mini grants for 20 school districts participating in Learning Community, ranging from \$5,000 - \$10,000 each	\$150,000
Stipends and funds for students and families	\$50,000
Supplies/materials for meetings	\$10,000
Travel, training, and mileage	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$765,000

Summary

The proposed 18-month School Safety Innovation Pilot provides an opportunity for the County to engage school districts to build capacity, strengthen their networks, and implement a menu of innovative strategies that will provide critical support to children, youth, and families. OVP will continue to work with County and community partners pending action from your Board on next steps. This includes continuing to convene the Workgroup, continuing to engage LACOE, LAUSD and other potential partner school districts, coordinating with DPH’s Education Partnerships and Programs, and developing implementation plans for the grant funding and proposed Learning Community.

Each Supervisor
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If the components of the pilot are funded, OVP will move forward with full implementation. At the close of the 18-month pilot, we will assess outcomes, and integrate any lessons learned to propose a second set of recommendations to the Board to institutionalize long term strategies for positive school climate and safety.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me.

BF:da:aw

Cc: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Chief Executive Office
Acting County Counsel
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Los Angeles Unified School District
Department of Youth Development
Department of Mental Health
Human Relations Commission
Department of Child and Family Services
Probation Department
Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development

Appendix A – Stakeholders Engaged

- Parents, Educators/Teachers & Students in Action (PESA)
- United Parents and Students (UPAS)
- Antelope Valley Cancel the Contract
- DPH Maternal, Child, & Adolescent Health Section Chief
- LAUSD Government Relations, Student Health Services, School Mental Health, and Culture and Healing teams
- LACOE Student Support Services and Child Welfare and Attendance teams
- The LA Trust for Children's Health
- DPH Wellbeing Center Program Manager
- DPH SPA Education Liaisons
- DPH Youth Advisory Council
- DPH Cardiovascular and School Health team
- Western Justice Center
- LASD School Resource Deputy Trainees

Appendix B - Feedback from Engaged School Districts

Appendix C – Enhancing School District Capacity to Protect Student Safety DPH Memo 4-13-23

Appendix B: Feedback from Engaged School Districts (anonymous/aggregate)

- Current Initiatives
 - Many districts are designated Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems (PBIS) model school sites and shared how this has transformed school climate by increasing investment in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and mental health counseling programs that provide alternatives to suspension and expulsion practices. Many districts also have wellness centers that provide counseling for students and parent centers to offer resources to families. Some districts indicated needing more resources to adequately staff these services.
 - The existence of school safety collaboratives varies across school districts, with some districts having model practices that bring a diverse group of service providers to the table and provide decision-making roles for student and family representatives.
 - Districts shared creative uses of technology to support safety, including a ring doorbell type of system for family members and others to request entry into the school, monitoring social media, or using Apps for students and families to anonymously report safety concerns.
 - Districts shared innovative approaches to training, including incorporating Narcan into standard first aid and CPR training, and establishing a Parent Academy to help youth resolve conflicts.
- Needs
 - Several districts expressed a need for bridge programs to support transition from elementary school (ES) to middle school (MS) to high school (HS), and the need to improve coordination where high schools are in a separate district. Often, feeder schools lack the same resources as high schools and investment earlier on to support youth and families can prevent issues that grow more serious over time and once youth get to high school.
 - Home visitation support to address root causes of truancy, chronic absenteeism, and social disconnection, and to provide support for families (addressing trauma, childcare needs, basic survival needs); and the potential to partner with CBOs or other County services. Some school districts have identified grant funding to support these types of services, but not enough to meet the need.
 - Centralizing County coordination of services both on campus, and referrals for families to access services in the community, such as mental health and drug counseling.
 - Addressing traffic safety and parking enforcement in addition to safe passages.
 - Assistance with applying for funding, navigating mandates and requirements.
 - Balancing the roles and responsibilities of school law enforcement – some districts have strong CBO partnerships and restorative justice practices, but request law enforcement for more serious issues or threats to staff and students. Some districts shared the role that some deputies play in mentoring youth.



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April 13, 2023

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.
Director

SUBJECT: ENHANCING SCHOOL DISTRICT CAPACITY TO PROTECT STUDENT SAFETY (ITEM 13, BOARD AGENDA OF JULY 12, 2022)

On July 12, 2022, your Board approved the motion “Enhancing School District Capacity to Protect Student Safety”, instructing the Director of the Office of Violence Prevention (OVP), in collaboration with the Superintendent of the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), Acting Director of the Department of Youth Development (DYD), Acting Director of the Department of Mental Health (DMH), Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission, Director of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Chief Probation Officer, Executive Director of the Los Angeles Mayor’s Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development, impacted school districts, community service providers, community organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, to report back in 180 days with:

- 1a: A list of school districts in communities experiencing the highest rates of violence in the County, both on campus and in nearby areas; and working with stakeholders to identify metrics and analyze the impact of multiple forms of violence on school districts in communities with the highest rates of violence;
- 1b: A description of feedback and data from school districts including input from students and parents in areas with the highest rates of violence on what supports and services the County of Los Angeles should provide to improve school climate and safety;
- 1c: Identification of two to three school districts with schools in areas most impacted by violence, and with existing safety initiatives, including, but not limited to, the Trauma Prevention Initiative (TPI), Department of Public Health (Public Health) Wellbeing Centers, Community Schools Initiative, Dream Centers, DMH’s Prevention Division programs and School Threat Assessment Response Teams to participate in a pilot;

- 1d: Identification and assessment of models and strategies, conducted in partnership with impacted school districts, that are designed to comprehensively and collaboratively improve school safety and climate, building on the strategies identified in the Report;
- 1e: Identification of any key implementation needs and challenges, building on findings of sub-directives 1a-1d, including but not limited to: i) any trainings necessary to implement safety models and strategies; ii) funding needed, with cost estimates, to implement models and strategies, with the goal of sustainability achieving improved school climate and safety over the long-term; and iii) potential federal, state, and local public and private funding sources;
- 1f: Recommendations on how the County can best support schools, including trauma and healing informed supports for school personnel, students, and families, in areas most impacted by violence with the goal of enhancing and expanding each school district's long-term capacity to address a wide range of threats to students' safety.

This report provides a summary of OVP's activities and progress to date, working with community and county partners to develop a plan for the school safety pilot as called for in directives 1a-1e. As additional time is needed to achieve directive 1f—the completion of recommendations for a comprehensive school safety model—a final report presenting a recommended model (based on synthesis of extensive input from stakeholders) will be submitted by June 30, 2023. That report will focus on a proposed pilot model reflecting feedback from listening sessions, focus groups with youth and parents, and a broadly disseminated online survey. The current report concludes by specifying next steps towards completion of directive 1f. A timeline for completion of these steps is included as well.

Progress To Date

In September 2022, OVP convened a School Safety Workgroup (Workgroup) comprised of the county departments and community partners named in the motion. Since then, the Workgroup has met monthly to inform the design and implementation of a School Safety Innovation Pilot as outlined in Directives 1a – 1f. These activities were informed by the following collectively developed definition of school safety:

School safety reflects a climate where students and staff feel safe from violence, bullying and harassment including the influence of substance use, and violence perpetrated by individuals and systems. Enhancing school safety requires addressing the root causes of violence and trauma that occur in schools, in school-related activities, and in the surrounding communities, through policies and practices that strengthen the network of response services using an equity and healing-centered lens.

Identification of Priority School Districts: Data Analysis (Directive 1a)

For children and youth to learn and thrive, it is critical that they be provided with a safe and welcoming school environment. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a loss of social and school connectedness particularly for children in families that already struggled with economic and social hardship. The increased level of violence nationally and in Los Angeles has exacerbated the stress felt by children and families. The increased burden on children and

families has, in turn, created an added burden for schools across the County. OVP and our Workgroup partners identified 10 factors, reflecting both exposure to violence and risk of violence, that were used to prioritize school districts as potential sites for school safety innovation pilot programs. The Workgroup also reviewed information about existing school safety initiatives that could be leveraged to support pilot programs. Through this process, six school districts were identified as potential candidates for a pilot program, from which we hope to identify three districts interested in becoming start-up sites for the project. The remaining three districts may be phased in as buy-in is secured and dependent on the level of funding secured for the proposed pilot.

Stakeholder Input (Directive 1b)

Since January 2023, OVP has met with a number of key school safety and climate program leaders, including leadership of the Public Health school-based Wellbeing Center program and the Public Health education sector COVID-19 liaison team, as well as leadership of the new County Department of Youth Development (DYD), the LA County Sheriff School Resource Deputies program, Antelope Valley Cancel the Contract, the L.A. Trust for Children's Health, and United Parents and Students.

OVP is now in the process of hosting community listening sessions in all five Supervisorial Districts to further inform recommendations for the pilot. The Second District listening session was held on March 1, 2023, and the Fourth District listening session was held on March 23, 2023. The Third District listening session is scheduled for April 27, 2023, and the First and Fifth District sessions are being scheduled.

To secure youth input, OVP staff presented an overview of the motion and got input from the Public Health Youth Advisory Council at their February monthly meeting. Youth Advisors discussed their ideas about what it means to have a safe school, their views on the most urgent needs facing children and youth in the County, and their suggestions to improve support for students, staff, and families (see Appendix A). OVP also met with youth peer leaders at a Wellbeing Center to obtain their input; similar meetings will be held at other Wellbeing Centers in proposed pilot districts.

To solicit additional stakeholder input, OVP will post and publicize an anonymous online countywide survey. OVP has also developed district-level focus group guides and surveys to obtain input from families, students, and school staff. These tools are currently being reviewed by Public Health's Institutional Review Board (IRB), to ensure surveys comply with requirements for protection of human subjects,

Identification of priority school districts (Directive 1c)

OVP has coordinated with LACOE and LAUSD to conduct outreach to priority districts and host informational sessions at which we can provide an overview of the motion and determine interest of district leadership in partnering on the school safety pilot. Separate meetings have been scheduled with five of the six identified school districts so far. The objectives of these meetings are to hear from each district about its resources and needs, determine interest of district

leadership in the pilot, and schedule gatherings for students, parents, and families in interested districts.

Identification of models and strategies to improve school safety (Directive 1d)

In its recent meetings, the Workgroup has defined an initial set of features that members perceive as critical to an effective school safety pilot model and that will inform eventual countywide recommendations at the close of the pilot. Each feature included some strategies that could be implemented more immediately with little or no additional resources, and some strategies that would take a longer amount of time and additional resources. Note that strategies will be adapted to address unique needs and circumstances of each participating school district although they will also have implications for implementation at the county level. Plans at both levels will be refined as OVP obtains additional district-level stakeholder input. Find below a list of the models and strategies identified for the pilot:

- (1) **Coordinated Systems and supportive policies:** This includes establishing a School Safety Collaborative that will include all pilot sites to guide implementation of safety recommendations, improve coordination of school safety initiatives currently implemented, identify and share best practices and tools, provide a mechanism to assist districts with developing their Comprehensive School Safety Plans, developing a joint fundraising plan, and identify priorities for policy advocacy.
- (2) **School Security Reimagined / A Culture of Healing:** This includes promoting a culture shift to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline, investing in healing and trauma informed trainings for students, families, and all school personnel; and increasing use of social and emotional learning and restorative justice best practices, to address multiple forms of violence.
- (3) **Community Hubs and Safe Passages:** This includes implementing policies and programs in jurisdictions countywide that support the role of school sites as community hubs and invest in community-based programs and service linkages. For example, streamlining a process for pilot districts to develop MOUs with community-based organizations to provide safe passage programs, mentoring, healing programs, family resources and other services.
- (4) **Family Engagement and Support:** This includes supporting schools to connect with struggling and disconnected families through home visitation and connection to resources to address basic needs, training programs that build family capacity for conflict resolution and positive relationships, and opportunities for families to play a leadership role in school safety decisions. These efforts should maximize engagement of trained family peers, as supports to other families and to their communities.
- (5) **Centering Student Leadership and Peer Approaches:** This includes building infrastructure at school sites for meaningful youth engagement through Student Advisory Boards, youth mentorship and leadership programs, youth involvement in safety planning, and peer programs that ensure a safe climate for all youth.
- (6) **Coordinated Care and Crisis Response:** This includes developing a multidisciplinary crisis response system that triages school-linked incidents to determine the best response, which may include de-escalation or diversion to community-based approaches,

engagement of mental health or other services, or law enforcement, and incorporates restorative justice and culturally appropriate practices.

Summary of Challenges

The motion, “Enhancing School District Capacity for Safety” has garnered considerable support from key partners, including county departments, LAUSD, and LACOE, in addition to interest from community leaders, advocates, and community members. The complexity of school safety, in addition to the challenges of understanding existing school safety infrastructure, initiatives, best practices, and gaps, requires careful consideration as we design recommendations to advance this critical work. Since passage of the motion, OVP has sought to build strong relationships with priority school districts who may choose to participate in the School Safety Innovation Pilot. An important part of that conversation has focused on concerns raised by several districts that being chosen to participate in the Pilot will label their schools as “violent,” stigmatizing them and undermining work they have done to address safety. In response to this input, and to build trust with districts, OVP has emphasized that this program strives to support school districts around advancing student wellbeing, aligning county resources, identifying needs the county can help address, and enhancing and celebrating effective and innovative safety practices that districts are already implementing.

Timeline and Next Steps

OVP is moving forward with the following next steps to complete planning for the final School Safety Innovation Pilot report. As OVP builds relationships with priority districts to partner on the pilot, additional outreach will be conducted to refine program features, at both school and county levels. (Directive 1e).

Timeline	Implementation Activities
April 2023	Hold remaining Community Listening Sessions in partnership with Board Offices; summarize listening session findings.
	Post and publicize the countywide community survey.
	Secure buy-in from up to three school districts to partner and begin stakeholder outreach.
	Compile, analyze and summarize input from all stakeholder groups.
	Partner with LAUSD and LACOE to hold a virtual training series for pilot school district leadership and staff on priority topics identified by pilot sites
May 2023	Hold meetings with participating school districts, including representatives from existing safety initiatives and other county partners who can address needs, to develop a plan for technical assistance, coordination, and connection.
	Finalize a funding action plan for a 1-year pilot.
	Summarize results of countywide community survey.

Each Supervisor
April 13, 2023
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Timeline	Implementation Activities
	Schedule a presentation to Board Deputies highlighting feedback from community listening sessions and district outreach.
June 2023	Partner with LAUSD and LACOE to hold a training series for pilot school district leadership and staff on topics shaped by stakeholder input and input from pilot sites.
	Schedule follow-up Community Listening Sessions in each Supervisorial District to share plan for pilot.
	Share draft of final report with Workgroup members and key district stakeholders.
June 30, 2023	Submit final report to the Board.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

BF:da:aw

Cc: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Los Angeles Unified School District
Department of Youth Development
Department of Mental Health
Human Relations Commission
Department of Child and Family Services
Probation Department
Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development