

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HOLLY J. MITCHELL
and HILDA L. SOLIS**

August 6, 2024

Amending the Agreements for School Law Enforcement Services

Every young Angeleno has a right to an education. A quality education, provided in a safe and supportive environment has the potential to help our youth find a life of dignity and purpose, enabling them to become contributing members of society. Punitive systems, however, have the potential to not only create adverse long-term outcomes, but to effectively deprive youth from historically underserved, marginalized, and oppressed communities of their right to quality education and the life-changing benefits it affords.

Recognition of the injustice and inherent racism of the “school-to-prison pipeline” has grown over many years. Punishing students through suspensions and expulsions used to be rare, with the suspension rate being less than 4% in 1973.¹ While the national suspension rate has decreased from a high of 7% in 2010, not all students were impacted the same. Compared with the 5% overall rate in 2018, 12% of Black students faced suspension that same year, along with 7% of Native American students; 9% of students with disabilities; and 27% of Black students with disabilities in secondary

¹ Losen, Daniel, and Skiba, Russell, “Suspended Education: Urban Middle Schools in Crisis.”
Link: https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/Suspended_Education.pdf

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schools.² Further compounding these disparities, students of color and those with disabilities — especially Black students with disabilities — are much more likely to be arrested.^{3 4}

Researchers have found substantial data and evidence of disparities for additional groups of students. While Latino/a, Pacific Islander, and White students were suspended at similar rates in elementary school years, Pacific Islander and Latino/a students were suspended at higher rates than White students in secondary school years.⁵ In addition, substantial data shows that students from low-income families, LGBTQ students, and males are disproportionately suspended.⁶

When educational, health, developmental, safety, and other needs of youth go unmet, it reflects a systemic failure to address the root causes of disengagement, truancy, dropouts, and justice system-involvement.⁷ Suspensions and expulsions often leave young people unsupported and unsupervised, without positive alternatives to keep them engaged, very often causing them to fall behind academically.⁸ The harm can be further compounded for students, as well as family members, who are undocumented, with “zero tolerance” policies and the presence of school law enforcement reinforcing the “school-to-deportation” pipeline.^{9 10}

² Leung-Gagne, Melanie; McCombs, Jennifer; Scott, Caitlin; and Losen, Daniel. “Pushed Out: Trends and Disparities in Out-of-School Suspension”.

Link: <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/crdc-school-suspension-report>

³ Skiba, Russell; Michael, Robert; Nardo, Abra Carroll; and Peterson, Reece. “The Color of Discipline: Sources of Racial and Gender Disproportionality in School Punishment.”

Link: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1021320817372>

⁴ Losen, Daniel; Orfield, Gary. “Racial Inequity in Special Education Undefined.”

Link: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED568855>

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Lamont, Jeffrey; Devore, Cynthia; Allison, Mandy; Ancona, Richard; Barnett, Stephan; et al. “Out-of-School Suspension and Expulsion.”

Link: <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/131/3/e1000/30944/Out-of-School-Suspension-and-Expulsion?autologincheck=redirected>

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Dillard, Coshandra. “The School-to-Deportation Pipeline.”

Link: <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/fall-2018/the-school-to-deportation-pipeline>

¹⁰ Tynan, Emma; Kim Pak, Sarah; Rodriguez, Ignacia; Warren, Mark. “Caught in an Educational Dagnet: How the School-to-Deportation Pipeline Harms Immigrant Youth and Youth of Color.”

Link: <https://www.nilc.org/2022/05/19/caught-in-an-educational-dagnet-how-the-school-to-deportation-pipeline-harms-immigrant-youth-and-youth-of-color-the-torch/>

The harms of the school-to-prison pipeline can be exacerbated for young people who are incarcerated in the Los Angeles County (County) Probation Department's (Probation) facilities. The Board of Supervisors (Board) has taken significant steps to depopulate the Probation camps and halls, including implementing an initiative to decarcerate girls and gender expansive youth and creating a system of structured release.^{11 12} While these strategies are important for dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline, the work of reducing youth incarceration needs to begin well before young people come into Probation's jurisdiction, including at the school level.

Through the newly established Department of Youth Development, the Board has invested in a range of "upstream" strategies that support and align with efforts to reduce youth incarceration, including the development of diversion and youth development networks. Additionally, the Department of Public Health's Office of Violence Prevention has supported school districts' efforts to improve school climate and safety through its School Safety Innovation Pilot program.¹³ While the Board continues to invest in rehabilitative, developmentally appropriate alternatives, it has also identified a need to more closely regulate and provide stronger oversight for school law enforcement services.

Researchers have found evidence that a law enforcement presence on school campuses can exacerbate the risks of over-criminalization and unconstitutional policing

¹¹ Motion by Supervisors Hilda L. Solis and Janice Hahn. "Decarceration of Girls and Young Women: Addressing the Incarcerated Youth in the Los Angeles County Camps and Halls." Item #8 on the November 30, 2021 Board agenda. Link: <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/164026.pdf>

¹² Motion by Supervisors Holly J. Mitchell and Lindsey P. Horvath. "Ensuring the Use of Least Restrictive Placements for Young People in the Probation Department's Care and Custody." Item #2 of the March 21, 2023 Board agenda. Link: <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/178944.pdf>

¹³ Motion by Supervisors Holly J. Mitchell and Hilda L. Solis. "Enhancing School District Capacity to Protect Student Safety". Item #13 on the July 12, 2022 Board of Supervisors agenda: <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/170803.pdf>

of youth.^{14 15 16 17} The probability of negative outcomes for a young person increases, even with a *single arrest* – making them less likely to stay in school, among other concerning indications of educational achievement, health, and well-being.^{18 19 20}

Unfortunately, the County is not immune to this problem. An analysis of County Sheriff's Department (LASD) data found troubling evidence of bias and disproportionate criminalization of Black students resulting from contacts with LASD's School Resource Deputies (SRDs) in certain schools. A report by Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County (NLSLA) and researchers from California State University, Northridge found that Black students in two cities were stopped by SRDs "more than every other racial *and* ethnic student group **combined**."²¹ Findings of disciplinary bias against Black and disabled students ultimately led to the filing of a lawsuit against one school district.²²

¹⁴ Stern, Alexis; Petrosino, Anthony. "What Do We Know About the Effects of School-Based Law Enforcement on School Safety?"
Link: <https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/JPRC-Police-Schools-Brief.pdf>

¹⁵ Bachman, Ronet; Randolph, Antonia; and Brown, Bethany. "Predicting Perceptions of Fear at School and Going to and From School for African American and White Students: The Effects of School Security Measures."
Link: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0044118X10366674>

¹⁶ Finn, Jeremy; Servoss, Timothy. "Misbehavior, Suspensions, and Security Measures in High School: Racial/Ethnic and Gender Differences."
Link: <https://digitalcommons.library.tmc.edu/childrenatrisk/vol5/iss2/11/>

¹⁷ Hirschfield, Paul. "Preparing for prison?: The criminalization of school discipline in the USA."
Link: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1362480607085795>

¹⁸ Kirk, David; and Sampson, Robert. "Juvenile Arrest and Collateral Educational Damage in the Transition to Adulthood."
Link: <https://www.asanet.org/wp-content/uploads/savvy/journals/soe/Jan13SOEFeature.pdf>

¹⁹ Legewie, Joscha; Fagan, Jeffrey. "Aggressive Policing and the Educational Performance of Minority Youth "
Link: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0003122419826020>

²⁰ Geller, Amanda; Fagan, Jeffrey; Tyler, Tom; and Link, Bruce. "Aggressive Policing and the Mental Health of Young Urban Men."
Link: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4232139/>

²¹ Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County and California State University. "Mapping Racially Biased Policing in the Antelope Valley." (October 2021)
Link: https://nlsia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Mapping-Racially-Biased-Policing-in-the-AV_compressed.pdf

²² Dugdale, Emily. "In The Antelope Valley, Sheriff's Deputies Settle Schoolyard Disputes. Black Teens Bear The Brunt."
Link: <https://laist.com/news/criminal-justice/antelope-valley-schools-sheriffs-deputies-discipline-black-teens-bear-the-brunt>

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Similar biases and disproportionalities exist throughout the County: SRDs disproportionately contact Black and Hispanic students at higher rates, and more than any other racial group, including through arrest and citation; the suspension rates of Black students in SRD contract schools exceeded statewide averages; and *SRDs contacted children as young as 5 and 7.*²⁶ Reversal of these trends will require changes in policy, practice, and culture, as well as stronger oversight to avoid systemic failures and timely identification and addressing of factors and circumstances that hasten a student's journey through the school-to-prison pipeline.

Students shared a significant amount of troubling feedback about their experiences with SRDs with the County's Human Relations Commission's (HRC) Transformative Justice team.²⁷ As summarized in a report by the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (COC), "most" of the students interviewed "had a negative view of SRDs and believe that they should not be on school campuses." Some of the students' feedback included feeling "intimidated" when SRDs wear "full gear including bullet proof vests;" "most" of students' conversations with SRDs are "aggressive;" students feel "targeted for being themselves

²³ Dale, Mariana (May 24, 2023). "Families Of Black and Disabled Students Sue Antelope Valley Schools Over Discipline Policies." Link: <https://laist.com/news/education/antelope-valley-union-high-school-district-discipline-lawsuit-black-students-students-with-disabilities-racial-discrimination>

²⁴ CANCEL THE CONTRACT-ANTELOPE VALLEY; B.Y.; C.Y.; L.W.; O.W.; V.X., minor by and through their guardian ad litem T.X.; H.N., minor by and through their guardian ad litem J.N.; and K.D.; A.D., PLAINTIFFS,

v.

ANTELOPE VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT; GREG NEHEN in his official capacity as SUPERINTENDENT; and CHARLES HUGHES, JILL MCGRADY, DONITA WINN, CARLA CORONA, and MIGUEL SANCHEZ IV in their official capacities as members of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES. DEFENDANTS.

PETITION FOR WRIT OF MANDATE AND COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF.

Link: https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/23823994-5242023_petition-and-complaint_ctc-v-avuhsd?responsive=1&title=1

²⁵ Emily Dugdale (June 17, 2022). "A Sheriff's Captain Called Our Investigation an "Entertaining Piece of Fiction." An Inspector General Disagrees."

Link: <https://www.propublica.org/article/a-sheriffs-captain-called-our-investigation-an-entertaining-piece-of-fiction-an-inspector-general-disagrees>

²⁶ Los Angeles County Office of Inspector General. "Report Back on Improving School Climate and Safety (Item No. 20, Agenda of June 28, 2022)."

Link: https://assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/0234f496-d2b7-00b6-17a4-b43e949b70a2/6e218997-05d1-4bd1-a6aa-6e0573d153c6/Report%20Back%20on%20Improving%20School%20Climate%20and%20Safety_Final.pdf

²⁷ Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission. "LACCHR Comments on Los Angeles County Sheriff School Resource Deputies."

and/or for their appearance;” SRDs cause “problems to escalate;” and SRDs “antagonize students to get a reaction from them.”²⁸

This feedback follows the filing of a lawsuit by a student involving multiple allegations against an SRD, including excessive use of force; use of a racial slur; driving the student for two hours to book her into juvenile hall (where she was picked up by her mother that evening); and subsequent “mocking, teasing,” and harassment by the SRD.^{29 30 31 32} A 2021 LA Times article contained a troubling video of a portion of the incident.³³

Additionally, one community member provided disturbing testimony to the COC about a group of LASD deputies that allegedly used significant and undue force against her son that resulted in severe facial, neck, and back injuries.³⁴ One of the deputies who recently worked as a SRD at her daughter’s school, and the community member shared with the COC that her daughter experienced ongoing trauma as a result.³⁵ This testimony not only raised concerns about the alleged use of force on her son but the assignment of one of the involved deputies as a SRD as well.

Students also shared concerns with HRC staff about their school’s discipline policies. Students reported that their school administration “defers discipline matters to SRDs too often” and that instead of getting “to the core” of disciplinary issues, their

²⁸ Quality of Life Ad Hoc Committee. “Report and Recommendations on Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department’s School Resource Deputy Program” (October 19, 2023).

Link: <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/AdHocReport-LASDSchoolResourceDeputies10.19.2023.pdf>

²⁹ City News Service (April 12, 2023). “Teen alleges deputy called her an animal during school Lancaster High School clash.”

Link: <https://theavtimes.com/2023/04/12/teen-alleges-deputy-called-her-an-animal-during-school-lancaster-high-school-clash/>

³⁰ City News Service (March 29, 2023). “New claims sought against LA County in deputy body slam lawsuit”

Link: <https://theavtimes.com/2023/03/29/new-claims-sought-against-la-county-in-deputy-body-slam-lawsuit/>

³¹ City News Service (March 14, 2023). “Personnel records of deputy who allegedly body slammed student sought.”

Link: <https://theavtimes.com/2023/03/14/personnel-records-of-deputy-who-allegedly-body-slammed-student-sought/>

³² City News Service (May 5, 2022). “Lawsuit filed on behalf of Lancaster High School student allegedly assaulted by deputy.”

Link: <https://theavtimes.com/2022/05/05/lawsuit-filed-on-behalf-of-lancaster-high-school-student-allegedly-assaulted-by-deputy/>

³³ Alene Tchekmedyan (October 8, 2021). “Video shows deputy slam Lancaster student to the ground at school.”

Link: <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-10-08/sheriffs-deputy-body-slam-antelope-valley-teen>

³⁴ LA County Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission. May 9, 2023. “REQUEST FOR INFORMATION REGARDING SCHOOL RESOURCE DEPUTY PAUL SALDANA AND USE OF FORCE AGAINST JOSEPH ANDREW PEREZ.”

Link: [Transparency_Civilian_Redacted_COC_Request_Letter_School_Resource_Deputy_Information_050923.pdf](https://www.lacounty.gov/sheriff/Transparency_Civilian_Redacted_COC_Request_Letter_School_Resource_Deputy_Information_050923.pdf) (lasd.org)

³⁵ Ibid

principals often “resort to discipline in the form of detention or suspension.”³⁶ ³⁷ The COC’s report generally finds that, “The community expressed a strong desire for SRDs not to be involved in discipline and to find solutions to the disproportionate contacts and uses of force with students of color.”³⁸ The report later states that, “Based on the responses received from all participants, it is apparent that educators and school administrators must refrain from involving SRDs in matters that are non-life threatening.”³⁹

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The Board’s commitment to the Care First vision of youth justice is supported by a large body of research finding a need for not just a rehabilitative, but also a *developmentally appropriate*, model of care.⁴¹ It is therefore imperative that any law enforcement services provided to schools by the County are governed by clearly defined roles and responsibilities with specific limitations on the types of contact SRDs can have with students.

An Office of Inspector General (OIG) report titled, “Report Back on Improving School Climate and Safety” found that the contracts for SRD services “use general boilerplate language to describe the services” which “provide no specific guidance as to,” among other things, “the types of situations for which students should be referred to SRDs” and the “type of services SRDs must provide when contacted.”⁴² The OIG was also “unable to find any Sheriff’s Department or school district policies that,” among other things, “clearly defined the... types of issues requiring the assistance of a SRD,” as well as “any other ... guidance as to [what] a SRD’s role should be in a school.”⁴³ Importantly,

³⁶ Quality of Life Ad Hoc Committee. “Report and Recommendations on Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department’s School Resource Deputy Program” (October 19, 2023).

Link: <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/AdHocReport-LASDSchoolResourceDeputies10.19.2023.pdf>

³⁷ Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission. “LACCHR Comments on Los Angeles County Sheriff School Resource Deputies.”

³⁸ Quality of Life Ad Hoc Committee. “Report and Recommendations on Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department’s School Resource Deputy Program” (October 19, 2023).

Link: <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/AdHocReport-LASDSchoolResourceDeputies10.19.2023.pdf>

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Emphasis added

⁴¹ Parks, Erika. “Insights on Adolescent Brain Development Can Inform Better Youth Justice Policies.”

Link: <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2023/11/02/insights-on-adolescent-brain-development-can-inform-better-youth-justice-policies>

⁴² Los Angeles County Office of Inspector General. “Report Back on Improving School Climate and Safety (Item No. 20, Agenda of June 28, 2022).”

Link: https://assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/0234f496-d2b7-00b6-17a4-b43e949b70a2/6e218997-05d1-4bd1-a6aa-6e0573d153c6/Report%20Back%20on%20Improving%20School%20Climate%20and%20Safety_Final.pdf

⁴³ Ibid

the OIG's report questions whether the "lack of specificity in the rules and policies governing SRDs and their relationships with the schools is playing a part in the observed disproportionality in outcomes."⁴⁴

Specific, accessible, and written policies are needed to ensure that SRD activities are not ad hoc in nature, varying from school to school. The absence of specific guidance heightens the risk of – among other things – disproportionate use of punitive measures in schools comprised of majority students of color.

On June 11, 2024, the OIG released a report titled, "Review of Contacts by School Resource Deputies with Elementary and Middle School Students" (2024 Report). The report included 21 recommended revisions for the SRD contract to provide specific guidance in the areas of "Limitations and Prohibited Conduct;" "Investigations and Notifications;" "Training and Experience;" and "Data and Complaints." These recommendations also aim to provide straightforward language that is understandable to parents, teachers, school staff, and other school community members and establish limitations on SRD conduct to "improve school climate and minimize adverse impacts on students."⁴⁵

On July 3, 2024, a new contract for SRD services was included within a Board Letter which posted on the County's Public Safety Cluster agenda for July 10, 2024, which requested a contract term of one year. On July 8, 2024, LASD revised and re-submitted this Board Letter which, among other things, requested a longer contract term of three years.

While some of the OIG's recommended revisions were not included in this contract, the Statement of Work (SOW) codified some. This includes limiting law enforcement actions to instances of criminal activity; prohibiting a student's removal from campus without a warrant or court order; mandating the publication of data on SRD contacts for public scrutiny; establishing a complaint process; and prohibiting the use of software to monitor student online behavior *unless there is reasonable suspicion of criminal activity*. These additions to the SOW represent a significant improvement on past

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ See page 1 of 2024 Report.

contracts that historically contained minimal or no guidance in these areas.

Additionally, the updated contract does not eliminate or reduce the level of school law enforcement services and does not prevent SRD enforcement actions against criminal conduct. It also does not restrict SRDs from taking action in life-threatening situations, emergencies, or violent situations.

Nevertheless, substantial differences remain between the SOW and the OIG's recommended contract revisions. To date, written correspondence has not been provided that explains the reason the remaining recommendations were not codified. The findings of the OIG, COC, HRC, and Children and Families Commission's (CCF) reports demonstrate a clear need for LASD to address the OIG's recommended revisions that were not adopted in the SOW.

While the OIG found some documented contacts to be "appropriate," the 2024 Report revealed that SRDs were often misused for needs better addressed by school staff or other professionals. Following up on concerns that arose in response to the OIG's prior reporting on SRD contact with elementary and middle school students, the 2024 Report identified 21 SRD contacts with elementary and 165 contacts with middle school students during the 2019 – 2020 school year. Many of these contacts involved mental health incidents that could have been better addressed by school staff.

The 2024 Report cites 10 instances in which SRDs responded to a mental health crisis experienced by elementary school students and 5 instances in which SRDs responded to middle school students who experienced a mental health crisis.⁴⁶ In response to these crises, SRDs served as first responders, often transporting students to local hospitals for psychiatric evaluations when trained mental health experts were absent or could not timely respond.⁴⁷ These findings indicate that SRDs are often misused for needs that should be managed by school staff, mental health professionals, paramedics, and others.⁴⁸ While it is crucial that students receive first responder assistance during a mental health crisis, schools should not rely on SRDs to perform this role, as being transported by law enforcement and having extended contact with a law enforcement

⁴⁶See page 4 of 2024 Report for a detailed summary of SRD contacts with elementary school students. See page 7 for a detailed summary of SRD contacts with middle school students.

⁴⁷ [See page 5 of 2024 Report.](#)

⁴⁸ See page 9 and 10 of 2024 Report.

officer has the potential to negatively impact a youth's mental health.⁴⁹ The use of SRDs as first responders also underscores the need for better mental health resources and protocols to ensure that students receive appropriate care without the potential trauma of law enforcement involvement.⁵⁰

The absence of substantial portions of the OIG's recommendation on the use of force in the SOW raises significant concerns about the lack of clarity and specificity of protections that students should have in situations where force is used.⁵¹ For example, the SOW does not explicitly prohibit certain types of force, such as pointing or firing a gun, head strikes not involving an "impact weapon," pepper spray, mace, less-lethal projectiles, or Tasers, in situations where *there is no imminent threat of violence or serious bodily injury to students, school staff, SRDs, or other persons*. While LASD's chokeholds and carotid restraints policy appears to align with state law, it does not use the OIG's language which clearly and explicitly prohibits their use. State law and LASD policy is much less clear, only stating they can't "authorize" the use of chokeholds and carotid restraints. LASD has not provided a written explanation as to why they do not codify the OIG's language. Furthermore, the SOW sanctifies "appropriate" uses of force, authorizing SRDs to use "force consistent with Department policy and objectively reasonable to perform their duties [...]."⁵² This language is unclear and appears to allow the SRD to decide what is "reasonable" force, potentially leading to inconsistent and subjective decisions that could contribute to racially disparate outcomes.

While LASD has stated that it has revised its Taser and Use of Force Policy and will update the SOW to incorporate these changes, it has not provided a definitive or specific timeline nor have these revisions been reviewed by the OIG or other oversight entities. LASD did not make the updated policies available to oversight entities, Board offices, or the public with enough time for review. Being afforded adequate time to review the updated policies is essential to ensure sufficient protection for students and guardrails for SRDs.

The SOW also partially accepts the OIG's recommendation to prohibit the display

⁴⁹ See page 5 of 2024 Report.

⁵⁰ See page 5 of 2024 Report.

⁵¹ See recommendation #4 on page 11 of 2024 Report.

⁵² See SOW 2.2.

of deputy gang tattoos. SOW 2.8 prohibits the display of known extremist symbols. Taken together with SOW 2.9, which prohibits SRDs from participating in “political activity” while on duty and SOW 2.10, which prohibits SRDs from joining any “deputy clique” or “subgroups”, these directives can be understood as prohibiting the display of deputy gang tattoos. However, the goal of the OIG’s recommendations is to provide straightforward and understandable language for school community members. While LASD’s current collection of SOW directives appear to prohibit the display of any tattoos while on duty, including deputy gang tattoos, LASD’s law enforcement gang policy does not comply with State law (Penal Code section 13670). No LASD policy prohibits having a tattoo associated with a law enforcement gang or secret subgroup. Additionally, it does not provide the same clarity as the OIG’s recommended language does. LASD should consider codifying this language to offer more accessible language. While the SOW partially accepted the OIG recommendation by codifying a prohibition on the display of known extremist symbols while on duty, it does not explicitly prohibit the display of symbols associated with alleged deputy gangs or deputy secret subgroups. Displaying these symbols should be explicitly prohibited because they often convey messages of white supremacy, which can intimidate students, erode public trust, and undermine efforts to provide a safe and supportive learning environment.

Furthermore, training is another critical area where the OIG’s recommendations differ significantly from the SOW. While the SOW does codify the OIG’s recommended 32 hours of Mental Health Team training and the 40 hours of LASD’s SRD training prior to being assigned as a SRD, the SOW does not explicitly codify the requirement that SRD’s get training in the remaining subject areas that the OIG recommended. The OIG recommended that all SRDs attend a 40-hour block of training that **must cover** the following subjects: “youth de-escalation strategies, cultural competency, federal and state disability and special education laws, positive behavioral supports and strategies, restorative justice practices, trauma-informed practices for youth, Americans with Disabilities training, mandatory reporting requirements, and crisis response. The SOW does not explicitly codify this recommendation, but rather states that SRD training “**may** include (emphasis added)” the courses recommended by OIG. The phrase “may include,” appears to give LASD discretion to decide what training courses will **actually** be

completed by SRDs. By leaving this list of courses as discretionary, LASD not only rejects the OIG's recommendation, but also leaves SRDs potentially unprepared to interact with students in a culturally responsive, behaviorally, and developmentally appropriate way. Additionally, LASD says an abridged SRD training is in development and will be provided when a SRD is newly assigned during the academic calendar. A timeline for the roll out of this abridged training has not been provided.

There is a clear need for the OIG's recommendations. These revisions would provide a minimum set of safeguards for students by clearly defining roles and responsibilities, as well as provide guardrails for SRD conduct to mitigate against racially biased policing and to protect students from other harms that may arise due to the absence of specific guidance in SRD contracts. Additionally, addressing the OIG's remaining recommendations, such as limiting the use of force, enhancing training requirements, and prohibiting the display of deputy gang symbols can support school districts' efforts to provide a safer and more equitable educational environment.

Several of the County's commissions have also proposed revisions to the SRD contracts that build on the OIG's recommendations. The COC report contains a range of recommendations that are supported by the National Association of School Resource Officers best practices and NLSLA that clarify the roles and responsibilities of SRDs and more closely regulate their conduct.⁵³ In addition to supporting many of the OIG's recommendations, the COC recommended requiring quarterly SRD reports by schools, to include data on all SRD contacts with students; root cause of contacts, if known; and preventive action or use of restorative justice practices.

In its April 2, 2024 report, the CCF further built on the COC's recommendations in the areas of training, qualifications, contacts with students, and family notifications.⁵⁴ To ensure that SRDs are prepared to interact with students appropriately, the CCF urged the Board to adopt requirements for "specialized training on trauma informed care, racial

⁵³ Quality of Life Ad Hoc Committee. "Report and Recommendations on Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's School Resource Deputy Program" (October 19, 2023).

Link: <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/AdHocReport-LASDSchoolResourceDeputies10.19.2023.pdf>

⁵⁴ April 2, 2024. Los Angeles County Commission for Children and Families. "SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT'S SCHOOL RESOURCE DEPUTY PROGRAM."

Link: https://assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/0234f496-d2b7-00b6-17a4-b43e949b70a2/0f61ac48-5031-4e9d-88d7-00be576f5777/CCF%20%20Recommendations%20to%20BOS%20re%20Sheriff%20Resource%20Deputy%20Program_4.2.24.pdf

equity, and authentic youth engagement; ... demonstrated interest in youth development; and... the ability to communicate well with youth.”⁵⁵ In addition, the CCF recommended prohibiting SRD contact “with elementary school students and students with disabilities for non-safety matters,” which could include “minor disciplinary behavior, non-violent behavior, tardiness,” and “truancy.”⁵⁶ The CCF also recommended including protocols for family notifications in the contracts, including getting consent from a “parent or guardian and/or education rights holder” before a SRD can interview a student, with certain safety related exceptions; providing a right to have a “parent, guardian, or an adult ... present during” interviews; requiring immediate notification of a parent or guardian when a student is “removed from campus or arrested;” and a requirement for arrests to take place “in a private location” and not “in a counselor’s” or “psychologist’s office.”⁵⁷

In the summer of 2023, the COC conducted a series of workshops and listening sessions in partnership with the HRC to solicit community feedback.⁵⁸ In addition, given the overlapping areas of interest, as well as its work in youth issues, the Probation Oversight Commission (POC) expressed its support for a collaboration with the COC on its study of school law enforcement issues, including SRDs.⁵⁹ Between July and September 2023, over 1,100 public comments were submitted to the COC.⁶⁰ In addition, throughout this past winter, the CCF met with advocates and school districts to seek input and develop recommendations on the use of SRDs.⁶¹

Much of the feedback gained from this comprehensive engagement by multiple commissions reflected a widely shared desire to clarify the role and responsibilities of SRDs and more closely regulate their conduct. Achieving this objective will require changes in policy and practice, including updates to the SRD contracts, as well as feedback systems, including the independent complaint process, to strengthen contract compliance.

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ September 28, 2023 meeting of the Los Angeles County Probation Oversight Commission.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkJq7rFvzV0>

⁶⁰ Quality of Life Ad Hoc Committee. “Report and Recommendations on Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department’s School Resource Deputy Program” (October 19, 2023).

Link: <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/AdHocReport-LASDSchoolResourceDeputies10.19.2023.pdf>

⁶¹ April 2, 2024. Los Angeles County Commission for Children and Families. “SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT’S SCHOOL RESOURCE DEPUTY PROGRAM.”

In addition, to strengthen oversight of SRD services, the Board approved a motion that takes initial steps toward the creation of an independent process for complaints against SRDs.⁶² On April 17, 2024, the POC held a townhall to seek input on a draft ordinance creating such a complaint process.⁶³ While an independent complaint process will strengthen existing oversight mechanisms, its impact will be limited without codified protections and resources for students, including clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and rules governing SRD conduct.

The Board should limit the contract term to one year to allow LASD more time to determine whether and how to codify the OIG recommendations not contained in the SOW. While the current SOW is a significant improvement upon past contracts which greatly lacked any specific guidance, substantial differences with the OIG's recommendations – which comprise, in sum, a *minimum* set of guardrails for students – remain unaddressed. Given the deeply disturbing racial bias in SRD contacts with students, LASD should be allowed additional time to fully and transparently address the OIG recommendations that it has not codified in the current SOW.

In addition, LASD should work with the COC and CCF to determine whether and how to implement the recommendations of each commission. Codifying some of these recommendations as policies and contract provisions could further mitigate against racially disparate outcomes and build on the basic protections recommended by the OIG. The term of the contract should be limited to one year to balance the need to address the COC and CCF's recommendations intentionally with strengthening student protections responsively.

The County must ensure that there are strong safeguards and protections for students, and their families, who attend schools that contract for SRD services. Meaningful steps must be taken to address the disturbing racial disparities in SRD contacts with students, including the development of well-defined roles, responsibilities,

⁶² Motion by Supervisors Holly J. Mitchell and Hilda L. Solis. "Creating an Independent Process for Complaints Related to School Law Enforcement Services."

Item #12 on the December 19, 2023 Board agenda. Link: <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/186931.pdf>

⁶³ April 17, 2024. Probation Oversight Commission. "Virtual Town Hall: Developing a School Resource Deputy Complaint System." Video: <https://www.youtube.com/live/Dv7epLdmr6M?si=CheW5y9nokHee0CH>

and guidance within SRD contracts and policies. Excessive and inappropriate contacts with students not only risks the violation of their civil rights but hastens their journey through the school-to-prison pipeline, a trend that undermines the Board's Care First vision of youth justice and youth development, as well as its vision for racial equity and the end of structural racism.⁶⁴

WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Approve Item #71, the Los Angeles County (County) Sheriff's Department's (Sheriff) Board Letter dated August 6, 2024, titled, "Approval of School Law Enforcement Services Agreement for School Resource Deputy Program," with the following revisions to the Recommended Actions:

1. Approve the attached boilerplate School Agreement for the period from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025~~6~~, unless sooner terminated ~~or extended~~, for the provision of full-time law enforcement services on school campuses through the Department's School Resource Deputy Program. ~~(School Program) with the option to extend the term of the School Agreement for a one-year extension option from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, subject to prior approval by the Board of Supervisors.~~
2. Delegate authority to the Sheriff, or his designee, to execute School Agreements, substantially similar to the attached School Agreement, with school districts in the County requesting full-time law enforcement services, effective July 1, 2024, or upon execution by the Sheriff, whichever is later, through June 30, 2025~~6~~, unless sooner terminated ~~or extended~~.
3. Delegate authority to the Sheriff to execute ~~any and all~~ amendments to the School Agreements; that ensuring that any negative fiscal impact to the County is avoided.

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(RM/MO/IM/AM)

⁶⁴ February 8, 2023. Chief Executive Office for the County of Los Angeles. "Los Angeles County Racial Equity Strategic Plan." Link: <https://ceo.lacounty.gov/ardi/racial-equity-strategic-plan/>