

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

September 2, 2025

Continuation of School Safety Transformation Grants

A safe and welcoming school environment fosters a sense of belonging and empowers students to reach their full potential. Yet, in 2021, 13% of Los Angeles Unified School District high school students reported missing school because they felt unsafe either on campus or on their way to or from school. Between 2021 and 2023, 24% of 7th graders in Los Angeles County (County) reported fear of being beaten up at school, while 15% of 9th graders reported suicidal ideation. In September 2022, First 5 LA published findings from a survey of parents with children aged five or younger. Amongst other findings, the survey found that two years after the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, 79% of parents believed their child's emotions or behavior had been affected by the pandemic, and 25% said their child was more scared.¹ Additionally, increased levels of violence nationally and in the County exacerbated the stress felt by children and families, placing an added burden on schools across the County. The combined impacts of the pandemic

¹ First 5 LA Survey Finds COVID-19 Pandemic Affected Learning, Health and Behavior of L.A. County's Youngest Children | First 5 Los Angeles

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and increased violence continue to affect communities and schools across the County.² Although children and youth have demonstrated their resilience and tenacity, they deserve sustained support and resources to address the added burdens exacerbated by the pandemic, especially in the most impacted areas.

On July 12, 2022, the County Board of Supervisors (Board) passed a motion, “Enhancing School District Capacity for Student Safety,” directing the Department of Public Health (Public Health) Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) to collaborate with County departments, school districts, community organizations, and other stakeholders to develop recommendations to improve how County departments support school districts to promote student safety and well-being. On April 13, 2023, and August 29, 2023, Public Health submitted reports to the Board that included recommendations to support school districts in communities disproportionately impacted by violence. One of the key findings emphasized the need for a collaborative approach to ensure schools are not only physically safe but also emotionally supportive and conducive to the holistic well-being of both students and staff. Additionally, investing in community-based organizations (CBOs), offers a trauma-informed approach to improve campus safety and address broader community factors that influence school climate. With trusted relationships in the communities they serve, CBOs are uniquely positioned to engage disconnected students and families, leverage additional resources, and implement restorative practices on campus that reduce contact with the criminal justice system. OVP proposed to the Board to 1) Implement pilot projects with community-based organizations, in partnership with school districts in communities experiencing the highest rates of violence in the County; and 2) Establish a school safety learning community in partnership with the County Office of Education to provide peer learning opportunities with a broader group of school districts.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2013–2023. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2024.

In March 2022, OVP received \$20 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to implement Trauma Prevention Partnerships. OVP partnered with California Community Foundation (CCF) through a Subrecipient Agreement to contract with more than 40 CBOs to implement violence prevention, intervention, and healing programs to address increased violence as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In May 2023, OVP was awarded a second Tranche of \$5 million in ARPA funding that was utilized to implement School Safety Transformation Grants. CCF conducted a solicitation process to award five CBOs with \$1 million each to work in partnership with school districts to implement holistic safety strategies between January 2024 and May 2025.

The School Safety Transformation Grants successfully demonstrated the importance of building strong partnerships between CBOs and school districts, and revealed many opportunities for County departments to support school districts. Grantee agencies engaged 37 schools across 7 school districts providing holistic school safety strategies including safe passage, conflict mediation, case management and referral services, and out-of-school time youth mentoring programming. The preliminary evaluation found that over 1,900 students directly engaged in programs, workshops, and leadership opportunities provided by grantee agencies. As a result, 110 families received wraparound support services, and community peace ambassadors provided more than 5,000 safe passage walks to and from school. In addition, over 165 school staff and community members were trained by agencies in restorative justice, student and family engagement, and trauma-informed practices. The Learning Community training series covered addressing acts of hate through County and community resources, creating trauma-informed schools, and becoming a trauma-informed care leader.

In September 2024, OVP submitted a request to the County Probation Department's Juvenile Justice Coordinating Committee to fund the School Safety Transformation project at \$5.7 million annually, including funds to continue five CBO-school district partnerships, a program evaluation, and a learning collaborative for school districts. In May 2025, OVP was notified that funding was approved.

The goal of this motion is to delegate authority to Public Health to quickly execute contracts with the previous five School Safety Transformation grantees in time for the beginning of the Fall 2025 school year, to continue the effective work they began through ARPA funding and continue to build recommendations for County support of school districts to advance safety.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Delegate authority to the Director of the Department of Public Health (Public Health), or designee to execute contracts and future amendments to the contracts with five Community-Based Organizations to continue to implement School Safety Transformation grants utilizing funding from the Probation Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act or other sources as available. The maximum contract sum for each contract shall not exceed \$1 million. The term of the agreements shall be one year with up to 2 additional one-year options that can be exercised at the discretion of the Director of Public Health if funding for future years of the agreements is available. Any future School Safety Transformation agreements would be selected through a solicitation process. Contracts shall be effective for a maximum of three-years, dependent on availability of funds and performance, followed by a solicitation process. The contracts include:
 - a. Just Us 4 Youth, Pomona Unified School District (First District);
 - b. Centinela Youth Services, Compton Unified School District (Second District);
 - c. Inner City Visions, Diego Rivera Learning Complex, Los Angeles Unified School District (Second District);
 - d. Southern California Crossroads, Lynwood Unified School District (Fourth District); and
 - e. HELPER Foundation, Antelope Valley School Districts (Fifth District).
2. Direct the Director of Public Health to report back to the Board in writing within

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120 days on the School Safety Transformation Grants, including the status of each contract and any implementation challenges. Also, report back to the Board in writing with a one-year program evaluation within 30 days after the end of the first year of each of the contracts. The evaluation report should include, but is not limited to:

- a. Percentage of students who reported safety concerns going to school and returning home;
- b. Percentage of students who expressed a fear of being physically harmed at school;
- c. Percentage of students who expressed suicidal ideation and number of reports; and
- d. Metrics that align with how the school district captures positive behavior climate and culture.

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