



# CITY OF VACAVILLE

## POLICE DEPARTMENT



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To: Rommye L. Qualls, Foreperson  
Solano County Civil Grand Jury  
From: Chris Polen, Chief of Police  
Date: September 24, 2025  
Subject: Written Response to Grand Jury Report Entitled: School Resource Officers

The Vacaville Police Department (VVPD), in close collaboration with the Vacaville Unified School District (VUSD), appreciates the Solano County Civil Grand Jury's attention to the School Resource Officer (SRO) program and its thoughtful recommendations to further strengthen school safety and student support. The following summary outlines the Grand Jury's findings, accompanied by VVPD's responses, which reflect current practices, operational considerations, and ongoing joint efforts to enhance the program.

### Finding 1

SROs are frequently called away from their assigned campuses to cover non-staffed schools or respond to external calls for service. **Partially disagree**

**Recommendation 1:** Increase staffing to expand SRO coverage for absences related to health, training, outside calls, and after-school events. **Requires further analysis.**

**Response:** The Vacaville Police Department currently assigns School Resource Officers (SROs) to four campuses: Will C. Wood High School, Vacaville High School, Vaca Peña Middle School, and Jepson Middle School. Each of these sites hosts a dedicated Youth Services Office. These assignments are strategically planned to provide regional coverage throughout the district. While not all Vacaville Unified School District campuses have space to house a full-time officer, the placement of existing Youth Services Offices enables SROs to respond quickly to nearby schools when needed.

SROs are dispatched to calls unrelated to school matters only under exceptional circumstances, typically when there is a clear connection to student safety. For example, if an incident involving students occurs just off-campus during an open lunch period, the SRO may be the most appropriate first responder. Except in critical emergencies, SROs do not regularly support general patrol operations and remain focused on their primary responsibilities within the school environment.

While additional staffing could further minimize temporary absences from assigned campuses, any expansion must be weighed against resource limitations and the need to preserve essential public safety services. As noted in the response to finding 3, the department and Vacaville Unified School District are continually evaluating alternative staffing models to provide flexible coverage.

### Finding 2

The current four-day, ten-hour shift model leads to perceived coverage gaps. **Agree**

**Recommendation 2:** Adopt a five-day, eight-hour schedule to improve continuity and coverage. **Will not be implemented.**

**Response:** School Resource Officers (SROs) are City of Vacaville employees and operate under staffing models and scheduling policies outlined in citywide labor agreements with the relevant bargaining units. Currently, transitioning the SRO unit to a five-day schedule is not operationally feasible. However, the current deployment is deliberately structured to ensure consistent coverage and supervisory oversight



throughout the school week. This configuration provides strategic coverage across all instructional days while maintaining leadership presence and operational flexibility.

### **Finding 3**

SRO assignments are prioritized for high school campuses, with limited coverage at middle and elementary schools. **Partially disagree**

#### **Recommendation 3:**

1. Assign SROs to all middle school campuses
2. Improve on-call responsiveness to elementary schools
3. Consider roving or part-time assignments
4. Add Community Service Officer (CSO) to support Diversion Programs and home visits.

**Requires further analysis.**

**Response:** In addition to the two high schools, both Vaca Peña Middle School and Jepson Middle School have dedicated Youth Services Offices staffed by resident School Resource Officers. These assignments are based on both strategic coverage needs and the physical capacity of each campus to support a permanent officer presence.

The Vacaville Police Department and Vacaville Unified School District recognize the importance of extending support to elementary campuses and are continually exploring alternative staffing models to help meet this need. However, implementing such models would require additional funding and personnel to avoid drawing resources away from other essential services. The potential use of a Community Service Officer (CSO) in a youth services capacity is a promising concept and is currently under consideration as part of broader department-wide staffing evaluations.

### **Finding 4**

There is a need for expanded joint training between SROs and school staff. **Agree**

**Recommendation 4:** Develop joint training to improve collaboration, communication, and response to active threats. **Has been implemented.**

**Response:** The Vacaville Police Department and Vacaville Unified School District fully support this recommendation and are already actively engaged in joint training initiatives. VUSD currently employs a civilian campus safety consultant, a retired SRO sergeant, who provides ongoing training to district staff on emergency response protocols and current legal standards.

Additionally, both agencies collaborate on scenario-based campus training, including lockdown drills and critical incident simulations. These exercises regularly involve school staff, students, and law enforcement personnel, enhancing preparedness and fostering strong, coordinated responses across all stakeholders.

### **Finding 5**

Social media is not fully leveraged to counter misinformation or promote safety communications. **Partially disagree.**

#### **Recommendation 5:**

1. Address school-related misinformation
2. Share information about programs and resources



**Will not be implemented.**

**Response:** The Vacaville Police Department and Vacaville Unified School District actively coordinate communication efforts through established platforms such as ParentSquare, CatapultEMS, and all major social media channels. These tools are managed by trained Public Information Officers (PIOs) from both agencies to ensure timely, accurate, and consistent messaging, particularly during critical incidents.

Delegating communication responsibilities to individual SROs presents challenges related to oversight, message consistency, and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries. Instead, we follow a unified communication strategy designed to minimize confusion, safeguard student and staff privacy, and uphold public trust. This coordinated approach effectively meets the intent of the recommendation while ensuring transparency, accountability, and clear public messaging.

**Conclusion**

The partnership between the Vacaville Police Department and the Vacaville Unified School District demonstrates a shared commitment to safety, trust, and community service. We appreciate the Solano County Civil Grand Jury's recommendations and are actively working to strengthen the School Resource Officer (SRO) program through collaborative planning, responsible innovation, and an unwavering focus on student well-being.

We remain open to exploring funding opportunities and creative staffing solutions that will allow us to expand and enhance this already impactful program. Together, we are committed to building safer, more connected school communities.

Chris Polen  
Chief of Police  
Vacaville Police Department