



Educational Services Center | 401 Nut Tree Rd. Vacaville, CA 95687 | (707) 453-6100

To: Rommye L. Qualls, Foreperson
Solano County Civil Grand Jury
From: Ed Santopadre, Superintendent
Date: September 15, 2025
Subject: Written Response to Grand Jury Report Entitled: School Resource Officers

The Vacaville Unified School District (VUSD) appreciates the Grand Jury's efforts in analyzing the use of School Resource Officers (SRO) on our campuses. We are proud of the relationship with the Vacaville Police Department and appreciate suggestions to strengthen that partnership. Please find below the Grand Jury's findings, recommendations and VUSD's written responses to each of them.

Finding 1

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

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

Response: It does happen that the SRO's are occasionally pulled from our campuses for training or other emergencies, but we believe the coverage on our campuses is strong. The Youth Services team works collaboratively with our site and district administrators to understand the issues on each campus and staff appropriately.

While additional staffing could further minimize temporary absences from assigned campuses, we believe that the communication we receive minimizes the impact of any absences. Also, we are in regular communication with Police Department leadership on innovative ways to increase funding and/or coverage.

Finding 2

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

Recommendation 2: Adopt a five-day, eight-hour schedule to improve continuity and coverage.

Response: This particular issue is not within VUSD purview and we are satisfied with the way the Police Department manages the days when officers are off. The officers take the bulk of their vacation during the summer when school is not in session, therefore, it has minimal impact.

Finding 3

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

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.

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 officers are on their campuses as much as the high school officers.

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. Our elementary schools need significantly less coverage than the middle and high schools and the officers are available when needed there.

Finding 4

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

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

Response: The Vacaville Police Department and VUSD fully support this recommendation and are already actively engaged in joint training initiatives. We employ 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.

Recommendation 5:

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



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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.

We cannot chase down every social media site to correct misinformation. We can't possibly respond to each individual post. We believe that our communications on our platforms provide timely and accurate information to our community. We have received many commendations from students, parents and community members for our description of serious events.

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.

VUSD is committed to improving safety and security on many levels and has plans to continue to upgrade our safety protocols, communication systems and preventative measures. It is an ongoing effort that we work on every day.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ed Santopadre", is positioned above the printed name.

Ed Santopadre
Superintendent
Vacaville Unified School District