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Chuck McCully, *Interim Superintendent*

September 24, 2003

Honorable Richard K. Park
Advisor Judge to the Grand Jury
Sacramento Superior Court
720 Ninth Street, Department 39
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Judge Park:

In compliance with Penal Code Section 933.05, the Sacramento City Unified School District is pleased to submit to you the enclosed response to the 2002-03 Sacramento County Grand Jury's Final Report on School Safety in Jeopardy.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide you with information on the district's participation in the School Resource Officer program.

Sincerely,

Chuck McCully
Interim Superintendent

CM:LC

Enclosure

SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Response to 2002-03 Sacramento County Grand Jury Final Report on School Safety in Jeopardy

Sacramento City Unified School District has been participating in the School Resource Officer (SRO) program for approximately four years. The district will complete its fourth year this December, 2003.

The District believes in the SRO program and it has become an essential safety component of our District. Our high schools have come to depend on the SRO program and their services. We currently have seven city police officers, one Police Sergeant, and one Sheriff's Deputy in the program. Due to budget restrictions, we will have to eliminate at least one position at the end of our current contract this January, 2004.

The Grand Jury Report, recommending comprehensive high schools, middle schools, and continuation high schools have SROs for the safety of the schools, should be the norm at all urban school districts. The SRO program is preventive and, at the same time, educational in nature addressing school violence before it occurs. I believe all inner-city schools would agree with the Grand Jury's recommendation. The SRO program is cheap insurance for the safety of our students and teachers. However, having said that, the question is where would school districts get funding to sustain an SRO program?

Our SRO program has been funded by the Universal Hiring Program grant during the past four years. Beginning this year, however, the District will pay the full cost to continue the current SRO program from the General Fund at a cost of approximately \$850,000. The District will have to evaluate this program for funding, year to year, against other competing educational programs.

I recommend that the State consolidate all safety grants under one title e.g. School Resource Officer or School Safety Officer and apportion amounts to qualifying districts. This method would eliminate the competition between school districts and take out the uncertainty of funding from year to year. Currently, most school districts are at the mercy of block grants or other type grants such as the Attorney General Office safety grant to sustain/fund their SRO programs.

September 24, 2003