



Berkeley Unified School District

**Information Item: September 16, 2020**

**To: BUSD Board of Education**

**From: Brent Stephens, Superintendent**

**Date: September 16, 2020**

**Re: Update on RESOLUTION 20-067, Re-Envision the Role of Police on Berkeley High School Campus,  
Approved June 24, 2020**

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On, June 24, 2020, the BUSD Board of Education approved RESOLUTION 20-067, Re-Envision the Role of Police on Berkeley High School Campus, which calls for the following actions on the part of the school district:

Engage the diverse communities of Berkeley High School and Berkeley Technology Academy (BTA) including students, teachers, staff and families to re-envision the role of Berkeley police on campus

Develop a plan that addresses safety concerns while also creating pathways other than employing an armed School Resource Officer to ensure school safety without interruption to the safety needs of the students of BHS and BTA

The Resolution also calls upon the City of Berkeley and the Berkeley Police Department to:

Re-invest in racial equity for our youth and participate with BUSD in planning and sharing of resources for alternatives to policing with programs such as, but not limited to, restorative practices, violence prevention, behavioral health and enrichment activities, and

Mandate training in cultural competency, cultural humility, and implicit bias for police officers with a particular focus on respect for youth of color

As background to this resolution, Berkeley Unified School District has for decades worked in partnership with Berkeley Police Department (BPD) to forge constructive relationships among students and police officers, as evidenced by the long-standing position of the School Resource Officer, funded by the City of Berkeley, and the establishment in 2017 of the Law and Social Justice class. Funding for the School Resource Officer position is provided by the Berkeley Police Department, and decisions about BOD staffing are within the purview of the Department.

As background on the SRO position at BHS, the following data cover school years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, and represent the activity of current SRO Geoff Mitchell and past SRO Sgt. Matt McGee, who is now the Youth Service Division Sergeant, and whose bureau includes the SRO position.

Data about the School Resource Officer Position

The 2019-2020 school year saw a 35% increase in calls, and 20% increase in cases, even with the Shelter in Place Order. The kinds of cases which occur at BHS vary year-to-year, for a variety of reasons. The 19/20 year saw a large rise in reports of sexual assaults and child abuse cases.

<b><u>SCHOOL YEAR 2018-19</u></b>		<b><u>SCHOOL YEAR 2019-20</u></b>	
Total calls for service: 101		Total calls for service: 138	
Case reports: 52		Case reports: 88	
Incident Reports: 14		Incident reports: 7	
<b>Total reports: 69</b>		<b>Total reports: 95</b>	
Total days of instruction: 180		Total days of instruction: 121	
<b>Cases Handled by the SRO</b>		<b>Cases Handled by the SRO</b>	
Sexual Assaults	6	Sexual assault	34
Child Abuse	2	Child Abuse	12
Disturbances	18	Disturbances	11
Gun/weapon	17	Gun/Weapon	9
Missing person	3	Missing person	2
Domestic Violence	4	Human Trafficking	3
Assault Battery	4	Assault/battery	6
Theft	1	Domestic Violence	3
		Robbery	5
		Vandalism	2
		Theft	2
		Arson	1

- Total Calls for Service are calls which the SRO responded to which occurred on or within close proximity to the BHS campus (i.e. Civic Center Park, Shattuck Ave or the Milvia corridor)
- Gun/weapon includes calls wherein threats of gun/weapon are mentioned (social media)
- Case Reports referenced above reflect case reports wherein a criminal incident has occurred.
- Incident reports are those reports wherein an incident occurred but not to the criminal level
- Sexual Assault cases in '19-'20 are an example of the school community wanting to report either on campus, off campus, or historical abuse cases to an officer with which they are familiar
- This does not include calls for service related to patrol officers or those days where other officers worked SRO in an overtime capacity- these are the SRO numbers only

### **Notes on Arrests during 2018-19 and 2019-20:**

The 2 school years represent a majority of time SRO Mitchell has been on campus.

**21 Total arrests.** Arrests include those students transferred in custody to Juvenile Hall, in custody to BPD to be released to a guardian or those arrested on BHS campus and released to guardian or BHS at the campus.

(One arrest, not counted above, was of an off-campus adult who approached two BHS female students immediately after school, annoyed and molested them. The SRO wrote the case, sought an arrest warrant, and made the arrest of the suspect.)

Of the 21 total arrests over a two year period, 17 (81%) of those arrested were released back to school or guardian, while only 4 (19%) were transported to Juvenile Hall.

Those transported to Juvenile Hall were for following:

- Two were arrested for possession of a firearm on school grounds (both had prior juvenile cases)
- One was arrested for stalking/threatening another student. The arrest was made after a warrant was obtained by SRO prior to arrest
- One was arrested for attempted robbery in front of school, and involved a student with truancy/multiple prior BUSD interventions.

21 arrests of students arising out of 134 cases wherein a criminal report was taken means only 15% of cases worked on by the SRO resulted in an arrest disposition. This is because the SRO actively uses alternatives to law enforcement involvement and only pursues law enforcement action where legally mandated to and/or, where after communicating with the school community (administrators or guardians of victims/suspects) it is deemed the most appropriate action.

#### **Race of arrested:**

- 10- African American 48%
- 7- White 33%
- 2- Hispanic 9%
- 2- Asian 9%

Implementation of the Resolution, 2020-2021

Working closely with City of Berkeley and BPD, BUSD staff propose the following engagement process and timeline, designed to provide adequate time for thoughtful engagement, partnership between multiple public entities, and to deliver a final recommendation to the BUSD Board of Education and City Council by February, 2021 - in time for decisions about budgeting for the 2021-2022 school year.

Steering Committee members will be recruited and selected by the Superintendent.

Key Activity	Key Participants	Month
<p>Steering Committee Meeting(s)</p> <p><i>Objective: Ensure that the community engagement process is inclusive and effective' develop a draft recommendation to the Superintendent</i></p>	<p>Director of Student Services                      BHS Administrator (1)                      School Safety Officer, BHS (1)                      Counselor, BHS (1)                      BHS Teacher (2)                      City of Berkeley Representative (1)                      BHS Student Representatives (3)                      Parent Representative (1)                      Community Representative (1)</p>	<p>October</p>
<p>Student Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Berkeley High School</li> <li>● Berkeley Technical Academy</li> </ul> <p><i>Objective: Collect a diverse set of perspectives on the SRO position at BHS and BTA.</i></p>	<p>Students at BHS and BTA</p>	<p>October-November</p>
<p>Parent Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Berkeley High School</li> <li>● Berkeley Technical Academy</li> </ul> <p><i>Objective: Collect a diverse set of perspectives on the SRO position from parents at BHS and BTA.</i></p>	<p>Parents at BHS and BTA</p>	<p>October-November</p>
<p>Staff Survey (BHS and BTA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Administrators</li> <li>● Teachers</li> <li>● School Safety Officers</li> <li>● Counselors</li> </ul> <p><i>Objective: Collect a diverse set of perspectives on the SRO position from school staff.</i></p>	<p>Staff at BHS and BTA</p>	<p>October - November</p>

<p>Student Focus Groups (2)</p> <p><i>Objective: Collect the perspectives from a small group of students whose own experience at BHS and BTA might be affected by the SRO position.</i></p>	<p>Black Studies Department  BHS Student Government  BTA Students  BHS Stop Harassing</p>	<p>November</p>
<p>Steering Committee Meeting</p>		<p>November</p>
<p>Preliminary Recommendation to the Board of Education</p>		<p>January, 2021</p>
<p>Preliminary Recommendation to the Berkeley City Council</p>		<p>January</p>
<p>Steering Committee Meeting</p>		<p>January -February</p>
<p>Final Recommendation to the Board of Education</p>		<p>February</p>
<p>Preliminary Recommendation to the Berkeley City Council</p>		<p>February</p>