



CITY OF COSTA MESA

Agenda Report

77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

File #: 25-386

Meeting Date: 9/2/2025

TITLE:

AGREEMENT FOR A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM BETWEEN THE CITY OF COSTA MESA AND NEWPORT-MESA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

DEPARTMENT: POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESENTED BY: SCOTT STAFFORD, LIEUTENANT

CONTACT INFORMATION: SCOTT STAFFORD, LIEUTENANT, (714) 754-5675

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

1. Approve the agreement for a School Resource Officer (SRO) Program between the City of Costa Mesa and Newport-Mesa Unified School District (NMUSD) for Fiscal Year 2025-26.
2. Authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the agreement.

BACKGROUND:

In 2001, the Costa Mesa Police Department began an SRO Program with NMUSD. The program consisted of two full-time police officers to staff Costa Mesa's two high schools and one intermediate school. The program was viewed as a tremendous success and a benefit to all parties involved.

Since then, the City and NMUSD have entered into annual agreements in connection with the SRO Program. In September 2022, the Department committed a third officer to the SRO Program, which was outlined in the SRO Program agreement for FY 2023-24.

ANALYSIS:

Since the SRO Program's inception, the primary mission of the SROs has been to prevent and deter school violence before it occurs. SROs help mitigate problems that might otherwise result in an emergency call for police services, thereby reducing the burden on Patrol Services and protecting those in the learning environment. SROs accomplish this by their presence on campus and regular interaction with school staff and students. In addition, SROs are a resource for students to advise on potential issues, which the SROs can proactively address and mitigate.

SROs are present on school campuses to ensure the safety and security of our schools. Additionally, SROs respond to and handle all criminal acts occurring on school campuses or in the immediate vicinity. In this respect, SROs conduct the initial investigation on a variety of crimes such as child abuse, assaults, thefts, graffiti, and narcotics-related crimes. Furthermore, SROs also provide

immediate and direct support to the school administration and campus security staff.

The current SRO agreement between the City of Costa Mesa and the Newport-Mesa Unified School District covers the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. The proposed agreement for July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 maintains the same structure, terms, and scope of services as the existing agreement. Pursuant to the proposed agreement, the City will continue to assign three full-time Costa Mesa Police Department officers to serve as School Resource Officers at Costa Mesa High School, Estancia High School, and Back Bay High School, with additional support provided to other District schools in Costa Mesa as needed. The District will reimburse the City for 50% of the total salary and benefit costs of the assigned officers, and 100% of the costs for supplemental services requested for special events. The only substantive changes from the current agreement are the increase in salary and benefit costs for the officers and access to any camera or security systems.

ALTERNATIVES:

No other alternatives have been considered. If the SRO Program were discontinued, the Police Department would have to utilize staffing from Patrol Services to handle any campus-related calls for service. This alternative would draw upon the resources in the field and render them temporarily unavailable in other parts of the community. There would also be a lack of consistency in the services provided to the School District.

FISCAL REVIEW:

The combined annual salaries and benefits expense for three officers amounts to \$1,136,604. NMUSD's share of this cost, which is \$568,302, covers fifty percent (50%) of the total salaries and benefits. The remaining portion of the officers' salaries and benefits, is included in the Police Department's FY 2025-26 adopted budget.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney's Office has reviewed this report and the agreement and approved them as to form.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

This item supports the following City Council Goal: Strengthen the Public's Safety and Improve the Quality of Life.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

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