



# AGENDA REPORT


**TO:** Jestin D. Johnson  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Joe DeVries  
Deputy City Administrator  
Interim Chief of Violence  
Prevention

**SUBJECT:** Public Safety And Violence  
Prevention Investments And Current  
Efforts In Oakland Unified School  
District Schools

**DATE:** November 8, 2023

City Administrator Approval

  
Jestin Johnson (Nov 9, 2023 11:29 PST)

Date: Nov 9, 2023

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report On Public Safety And Violence Prevention And Intervention Investments And Current Efforts In Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) Schools From The City Of Oakland And OUSD Including But Not Limited To The \$2,400,000 Into The Department Of Violence Prevention For School Safety In Partnership With OUSD Adopted In The City Of Oakland's Fiscal Year 2021-2023 Biennial Budget, The Role Of OUSD Culture Keepers In Schools And Other Public Safety Initiatives.**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides an overview of the Department of Violence Prevention (DVP)'s School Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) Program for a special concurrent meeting of the Education Partnership Committee and the Oakland Unified School District Board of Education.

## **BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

The School Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) Program was conceived and implemented as a community-based response to violence impacting high school students in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). During the 2022-2023 School Year, OUSD suspended high school students for violence over 600 times, and two shootings occurred on OUSD high school campuses. In 2022, 67 shootings with injury, 56 incidents of intimate partner violence, and 46 rapes involving victims ages 14 to 18 were reported to the Oakland Police Department. Although data on incidence of gender-based violence (GBV) impacting students in OUSD is not readily available, it is widely understood by school staff and youth service providers to be pervasive.

In response to the need for additional resources to prevent and respond to violence impacting OUSD students, the DVP invested \$2.4 million during the 2022-2023 School Year into bringing violence intervention, life coaching, and GBV services to students in school. The resulting

Education Partnership Committee  
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School VIP Program placed three individuals – one violence interrupter, one GBV specialist, and one youth life coach (school VIP team) – in four comprehensive high schools and three continuation high schools during the 2022-2023 School Year. Each school received its own life coach but shared five violence interrupters and four GBV specialists across sites (**Table 1**).

**Table 1. Full-time equivalent staff assignments by high school during the 2022-2023 School Year for the School VIP Program.**

High school	Life coaches	VIs	GBV specialists
Castlemont	1	0.5	0.5
Dewey	1	0.5	0.5
Fremont	1	1	1
McClymonds	1	1	0.5
Oakland	1	0.5	0.5
Ralph Bunche	1	1	0.5
Rudsdale	1	0.5	0.5

The DVP tasked school VIP team members with the following responsibilities:

- **Violence interrupter (VI):** Identify potential student conflicts, conduct safety assessments, proactively mediate conflicts, intervene to prevent retaliation following conflicts, and refer youth to needed services.
- **Life coach:** Provide case management to students who have caused or been victims of violence; help students and their families reduce high-risk behaviors, improve functioning, increase motivation, and address unhealthy beliefs.
- **GBV specialist:** Deliver workshops for students to address dating violence, stalking, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and commercial sexual exploitation; provide service referrals and general support for impacted students.

The DVP selected agencies that it already funds to deliver violence interruption, life coaching, and GBV services in the community to hire and supervise school VIP team members due to their content expertise and existing relationships in the community (**Table 2**).

**Table 2. Agencies funded by the DVP to deliver School VIP Program services.**

School VIP team position	Funded agencies
Life coaches	Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice East Bay Asian Youth Center Student Program for Academic and Athletic Transitioning Youth ALIVE!
VIs	Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice Community & Youth Outreach Youth ALIVE!
GBV specialists	Family Violence Law Center

School VIP team position	Funded agencies
Community healing	Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth

The pilot year of implementation of the School VIP Program revealed both the invaluable role that VIP teams can play at their school sites and opportunities for improvement in service scope and reach. In March 2023, the DVP led conversations with administrators and school VIP team members from each site to receive feedback on the model. Administrators expressed deep appreciation for school VIP team staff, highlighting their relatability to students, dedication to supporting students by any means necessary, flexibility in approach based on the needs of individual students, and alleviation of work from classroom teachers. Administrators also overwhelmingly expressed the desire to have a dedicated violence interrupter and GBV specialist at each site rather than splitting them between sites due to the expansive need for services and the pivotal role that daily exposure plays in fostering trusting relationships with students. Administrators described an increase in recent years of on-campus violence that is related to community conflicts as well as an increase in instances of non-students showing up at school campuses with weapons to fight students.

**ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

In September 2023, the DVP received approval from City Council for a spending package that will allocate \$2.7 million annually to the School VIP Program for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school years so that each school site receives their own dedicated GBV specialist in addition to one life coach. Also in September 2023, the DVP received a three-year grant for \$999,998 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)’s Fiscal Year 2023 *Enhancing School Capacity To Address Youth Violence* grant program to fund three additional violence interrupters for three years. **Table 3** presents the school VIP team staff assignments by school as a result of this additional funding from the DVP and OJJDP.

**Table 3. Full-time equivalent staff assignments by high school during the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 School Years for the School VIP Program.**

High school	Life coaches	VIs	GBV specialists
Castlemont	1	2	1
Dewey	1	1	1
Fremont	1	1	1
McClymonds	1	1	1
Oakland	1	1	1
Ralph Bunche	0	1	1
Rudsdale	1	1	1

With funding from OJJDP, violence interrupters will perform the following new activities at their school sites in addition to standard violence mediation and referral activities: (1) education and support groups for students who are involved in or at high risk for group violence; (2) training for school staff on signs and symptoms of youth violence and the process for referring impacted students to the school VIP team; (3) outreach to families of high-risk students to engage family

members in efforts to reduce student risk factors; and (4) educational and support groups for caregivers of high-risk students.

The School VIP Program addresses the citywide priority of **holistic community safety** by funding full-time staff members who are dedicated to reducing and responding to violence impacting high school students in OUSD.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This is an informational report and does not have a fiscal component.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST**

No public outreach was deemed necessary for this report beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures.

### **COORDINATION**

This report was developed in coordination with the City Attorney's Office, Finance Department, and City Administrator's Office.

### **PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION, AND FOLLOW-UP**

The School VIP Program is currently being evaluated by Urban Institute, and results will be available in August 2024. The three service components of the School VIP Program, however, were developed based on evidence of their impact in community settings. Multiple evaluations of the Cure Violence model of violence interruption and street outreach in Baltimore, Chicago, and New York have demonstrated significant reductions in shootings and homicides, including a 63% reduction in shooting victimizations in New York City.<sup>1</sup> An evaluation of the DVP's shooting and homicide response in 2019 and 2020 found that victims who engaged with VIs largely avoided retaliation and re-injury in the following two years. An evaluation of the DVP's life coaching services in 2017 and 2018 found that individuals who received life coaching services had fewer short-term arrests for a violent offense relative to a comparison group.<sup>2</sup> Roca's similar model of intensive case management found that individuals who received services had a 42-46% reduction in recidivism over a three-year period.<sup>3</sup> Lastly, a statewide study in Illinois found

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<sup>1</sup> Cure Violence Global. (2021). *The evidence of effectiveness*. Retrieved February 4, 2022, from <https://cvvg.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Cure-Violence-Evidence-Summary.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Mathematica Policy Research. (2020). Evaluation of Oakland Unite: Year 1 Strategy Report.

<sup>3</sup> Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. (2023). *Intervention Strategies*. Retrieved April 20, 2023, from <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/other-laws-policies/intervention-strategies>.

that domestic violence services including hotlines, counseling, advocacy, and shelter led to improvements in survivors' decision-making abilities, self-efficacy, and coping skills.<sup>4</sup>

### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** There are no economic opportunities associated with this report.

**Environmental:** There are no environmental opportunities associated with this report.

**Race and Equity:** Less than 5% of the student body at each school served by the School VIP Program identifies as White. Any reductions in violence or trauma that result from the program will disproportionately benefit students of color, particularly Black and Latinx students.

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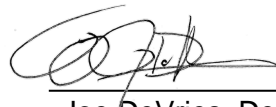
<sup>4</sup> Bennett, L., et al (2004). Effectiveness of Hotline, Advocacy, Counseling, and Shelter Services for Victims of Domestic Violence: A Statewide Evaluation. Journal of Interpersonal Violence.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report On Public Safety And Violence Prevention And Intervention Investments And Current Efforts In Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) Schools From The City Of Oakland And OUSD Including But Not Limited To The \$2,400,000 Into The Department Of Violence Prevention For School Safety In Partnership With OUSD Adopted In The City Of Oakland's Fiscal Year 2021-2023 Biennial Budget, The Role Of OUSD Culture Keepers In Schools And Other Public Safety Initiatives.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Jenny Linchey, Acting Deputy Chief of Grants, Programs, and Evaluation, Department of Violence Prevention, at 510-238-2374.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe DeVries, Deputy City Administrator  
City Administrator's Office

Jennifer Linchey

Jennifer Linchey (Nov 8, 2023 18:07 PST)

Prepared by: Jenny Linchey  
Acting Deputy Chief of Grants, Programs, and  
Evaluation, Department of Violence Prevention

Attachment:  
School Violence Intervention and Prevention Feedback and Take-Aways