

## District Office Program Review – Executive Summary

Unit title Public Safety Department

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### Executive Summary

#### 1. **Unit description.**

It is the mission of the Public Safety Department to provide a safe and secure environment that supports and enhances the educational mission of the colleges.

The Department is responsible for providing professional safety, security, emergency and parking operations for the entire community college district on all of its facilities. The Department is also responsible for the ongoing training of emergency preparedness for students, faculty and staff.

The Public Safety Department is currently comprised of 25 public safety professionals.

#### 2. **Describe major accomplishments since last review.**

This is the first full Public Safety Program Review since centralizing the Department.

#### 3. **Describe the current state of the unit.**

The Public Safety Department is functioning well and this is a tribute to the men and women who diligently do their jobs each day and the leadership provided by the three campus chiefs and the previous director.

Emergency preparedness trainings are professional and provide good, regularly updated information to the district community. It is clear that this is an area in which much emphasis and coordination is placed by the District.

Conversations with those within the Department and district faculty and staff report areas where improvements should be made.

#### Equipment

There are concerns about the equipment used by the officers, such as a 10+ year-old radio system that is shared with the Facilities Department. The system does not have mutual aid radio communications with first responders, such as police and fire departments. This could be a problem in any type of emergency situation or disaster. Currently, officers on each campus communicate independently, so officers on one campus are unaware of activities on another campus. There are problems with transmissions bleeding onto other channels.

CSM has two 2013 Ford Taurus Police Interceptor model patrol vehicles. These cars are in good shape and are built for the purpose for which they are being used. They do not have plush carpeting or luxury appointments. They have plastic flooring, cloth upholstery, spotlights and wiring harnesses, which allow for easy installation of accessory lighting. Often, these vehicles are less expensive than their civilian counter-parts. One is equipped with a Department radio and console. The other is not.

Skyline College has two 2015 Ford Focus patrol vehicles. These vehicles are not made for public safety work. They do not have center consoles, however both have public safety radios. A major complaint from officers is that the vehicles are too small. Even smaller statured officers have difficulty getting in and out of the vehicles with their equipment belts on. There is little room for additional accessories such as radio consoles, PA systems, flashlight mounts, etc.

At Cañada College, patrol vehicles are 10 year-old (2006) Ford Crown Victorias that have well-over 135,000 miles. These vehicles have been re-purposed from a police department after a full, hard life. More costly maintenance and repairs are anticipated.

All three campuses have Ford Ranger pick-up trucks which are utilized to transport equipment such as barricades, cones and delineators. They are not typically used for patrol purposes. Some of these trucks are very old and showing their age as hand-me-downs from Facilities. Public Safety graphics are faded and peeling. Additionally, there is no system in place for tracking and performing routine vehicle maintenance.

The Department has a cumbersome phone system, which requires different public safety phone numbers for each campus and officers must answer the phone while engaged in their duties. This could become very problematic while performing first-aid and calling for paramedics or running to aid someone in distress and calling police at the same time.

#### Staffing/Schedule

Staffing concerns are related to the lack of having at least one officer on each campus at all times, 24 hours a day. Currently, one officer patrols the three campuses and district office between the hours of 11:00 PM and 7:00 AM every day. This means that when the patrol officer is in transit between campuses during this shift, none of the campuses has an officer present. If an officer is called to either Cañada College or Skyline College and the officer is at the opposite college, the response time will be approximately 20 minutes. This is an extended response time if someone needs help and none of the college facilities has public safety protection during this transit.

KCSM radio and TV personnel often work until 2:00 AM. They have called for escorts to their cars during dark and foggy nights. Some have also had vehicle trouble and waited for a tow truck alone in the parking lot at these times. Upon calling Public Safety, they have been told that there would be an extended response time. Employees have expressed fear about walking to their cars alone late at night.

#### Training

The District clearly encourages employee professional development. The Department needs to make employees more aware of these opportunities and accommodate their schedules to facilitate attendance. This would also impact staffing.

There is no standard on-going technical training in the Public Safety Department. While officers have been trained in CPR/First Aid, there is little emphasis on tracking refresher training. Expandable baton and OC (pepper spray) refresher training is non-existent and some officers have never been taught how to respond tactically and safely to a burglary alarm, which are some of the most common calls for service during the night.

Of the 25 public safety officers, 10 have never been to a police academy where formalized training and certification takes place. There has been no formal training on radio procedures,

evidence protection, public relations or dealing with emergency personnel who respond to our campuses. To the credit of all involved, these officers have learned well through on the job training.

### Policies

The Public Safety Department's Policy Manual contains many pertinent policies, however some are very generic and are not specific to our district operations.

There is no Lost and Found policy.

There is no grooming policy.

There is nothing that addresses what Public Safety Officers should do during a crisis situation, such as an armed intruder on campus, other than call the police. This may be the only appropriate action in some cases. In others, it may be extremely beneficial for officers to direct first responders, assist in evacuations or become leaders in Big 5 responses.

#### **4. Action plan.**

While a major Public Safety Study is about to be underway, wholesale changes in the Department may not be prudent at this time. Depending on the outcome of the Board of Trustees' response to the study, changes to the structure and mission of the Department may change drastically. Thoughtful planning in improvements and updating will be necessary.

### Parking

Results from the Program Review Survey indicate that most respondents feel the parking system is fair and Public Safety is reasonable about enforcement. Comments indicate that many want more enforcement of parking regulations on campuses. Though the parking system can be confusing, officers are being directed to place more emphasis on enforcement of parking rules.

### Patrol and Visibility

Survey respondents indicate that they would like to see more officers out patrolling the campuses. Unfortunately, Public Safety does not have the staffing to have officers at the office for walk-in service (such as parking information, taking ID card photos and dissemination of ID cards) and patrolling the campus interior and parking lots.

Public Safety will be adding student assistant positions to the CSM campus in a pilot program to assist with certain duties to free officers for patrol and enforcement.

### Policies

Review and update policy manual.

### Training

A training coordinator has been selected and every officer in the Department has recently received training in several areas, including Conflict Resolution, Customer Service, update training for Handcuffing, Pepper Spray and Baton. Officers have been trained and updated. This type of training is necessary to have annually at a minimum.

## 5. Needs: Equipment, Professional Development, Facilities, Staffing, Research

### Vehicles

The Department currently operates four different models of vehicles (not including electric GEM cars). At some point soon, a fleet purchase of appropriate vehicles should be considered. These vehicles should be identical and should be outfitted the same as well. A strong recommendation would be the Ford Explorer Police Interceptor. This is an SUV and provides good visibility of parking lots for safety, visibility and criminal deterrence. The rear cargo area has enough space to carry equipment, cones, delineators, barricades, etc., possibly eliminating the need for the pickups each campus currently has. A more professional and updated paint scheme should be employed to avoid an unprofessional appearance.

A vehicle coordinator has been identified. While all employees are encouraged to take ownership in maintaining the vehicles, this person will ensure proper maintenance and service is being conducted.

### Radios

The District's radio provider has been contacted and recommends updating the Public Safety Department's radio system to a separate digital system that will allow interoperability with local police and fire departments. This new system will also allow communications with the existing UHF system which will continue to be used by the Facilities Department. Due to the amount of facilities employees, that department regularly struggles to have enough radios. All 27 UHF radios currently assigned to Public Safety would be transferred to Facilities. These two departments will still be able to communicate when necessary. Once this update takes place, the Public Safety Department would transfer operations to a single frequency for all communications throughout the District. Agreements would be put in place so that the Public Safety Department would have local law enforcement, fire and mutual aid radio frequencies in Department radios and they will have Public Safety Department frequencies in their radios. This is imperative to minimize response times and confusion during an emergency.

Professional Development - None.

Facilities - None.

### Staffing

The Public Safety Command Staff is currently looking at several options to cover all campuses with a minimum of one officer 24/7 and at least two officers during peak times. Upon selection of the most appropriate schedule, a few additional officers may be required if approved.

A dispatcher/clerical employee is needed for the Public Safety Department. This person would staff the front counter at CSM and be the initial contact person/receptionist for persons doing business with the Department. The person would answer phone calls and dispatch requests for service to officers in the field via radio. The position would also track calls for service, activity times and record pertinent statistics for future use.

Research – Public Safety Study in process.