[DATE]

Police presence on campus causes many issues for students and the community. The Public Records Act (“PRA”) allows you to request certain public information from government agencies, including school districts. An effective PRA request must identify specific categories of documents. Each request in this model PRA was drafted to produce information relevant to specific issues. Before sending your own PRA request, you should:

**First**, determine what concerns you and your community have about police presence on campus. Is it a lack of proper training? Failure to hold police accountable for their conduct? Teacher reliance on police as disciplinarians? Figure out the specific, nuanced issues facing your community.

**Second**, review this annotated PRA to identify specific requests that seek documents that relate to your particular concerns.

**Third**, return to the original model PRA and delete from your final version all provisions not relating to the issues you identified as important to your community.

If your request is very broad, the district may delay their response *and* you may be stuck with a hefty fee to cover the copying costs.

***Sent via electronic email and U.S. Mail***

[District and/or Police Department]

[Address]

[City], CA [Zip Code]

[Email address / Fax number]

**RE:** **Public Records Act Request**

Dear [NAME]:

Generally, you should keep this section as is. It prevents the district from avoiding your request on a technicality.

[Organization/Individual] is interested in obtaining information about the presence and practices of law enforcement officers at all schools in [District].[[1]](#footnote-1) Accordingly, we submit the following request for records, pursuant to the California Public Records Act, California Government Code §6250 *et seq*. As you likely know, this government code requires agencies to provide a response to Public Record Act requests within ten days of receipt of a request. Pursuant to this legal requirement, I look forward to your prompt response and timely disclosure of the following documents.

Definitions Used in this Request

For purposes of this request, the terms “policies and procedures” include, but are not limited to, codes, board policies, rules and regulations, exhibits, bulletins, memoranda, directives, and training materials. If any of the policies or procedures we have requested are currently being updated or revised, please let us know.

The term “documents” includes, but is not limited to, any information, electronic information, reports, evaluations, memoranda, correspondence, drafts, notes, letters, emails, charts, graphs, flyers, meeting agendas and minutes, diagrams, forms, DVDs, tapes, CDs, notes, and other similar materials.

The term “school police officer” or “[District] police officer” means any and all law enforcement officers assigned to, or working in, [District] schools or any individuals employed by the [District] or [District] Police Department for the purposes of engaging in security, emergency preparedness, or law enforcement. Such individuals can include, but are not limited to, School Police Officers I and II, Peace Officers I and II, School Resource Officers, School Security Officers, or School Safety Officers.

Generally, you should keep this section as is. It prevents the district from avoiding your request on a technicality.

The term “school” includes all elementary, middle, and high schools in the district as well as any magnet, charter, and alternative schools, including, but not limited to, continuation schools.

Records Requested

Please provide us with copies of the records specified below. Each lettered or numbered paragraph should be considered a separate request under the Public Records Act. For each set of records produced, please identify the paragraph to which the records are intended to respond.

We also request that you provide any public record identified in the following electronic formats to us in that electronic format, instead of in paper format: PDF format or all Microsoft Office formats, including Word, Excel, Access, and Power Point. *See* California Government Code § 6253.9.

**Please provide us with the following records from the [20XX-20XX] academic year until the present, including the current academic year:**

1. [District] Police Officers
	1. A list of each individual police officer employed by [District][[2]](#footnote-2) or working in a [District] school and for each officer the school or location where the officer works (if the officer rotates within several schools or is not permanently in one location, please specify);
	2. Any and all documents reflecting the qualifications and process for becoming a school police officer, including, but not limited to, trainings that school police officers are required to attend;
	3. Any and all documents used to train school police officers to work in schools and/or youth;
	4. Any and all documents reflecting the duties, responsibilities, and activities of school police officers, including, but not limited to, policy manuals used by officers;
	5. Any and all documents reflecting the procedures that school police officers are required to follow, including, but not limited to, procedures to be followed with respect to:

Consider including section “A: District Police Officers” if you are concerned about:

* Using unnecessary police force against students on campus.
* Inadequate training on proper responses to students.
* Teachers relying on police to discipline students.
	+ 1. Interrogating or questioning students;
		2. Use of force;
		3. Conflict de-escalation;
		4. Searching students;
		5. Addressing student behavior that may be symptomatic of the student’s disability, if applicable;
		6. Restraining students;
		7. Arresting students; and
		8. Using and carrying weapons (including, but not limited to, guns, TASERs, pepper sprays, and nightsticks).
	1. Any and all documents reflecting policies, procedures, or processes used by school staff (teachers, administrators, etc.) when they request help from, or the presence of, a [District] police officer on their school site.
1. Student Arrests and Referrals by School Police Officers[[3]](#footnote-3)
	1. Any and all documents containing data about arrests, and referrals for arrest, of students in [District] schools, including, but not limited to, any and all lists of [District] students arrested by school police officers which includes any or all of the following information:

Consider including section “B: Student Arrest and Referrals by School Police Officers” if you are concerned about:

* Students being referred to law enforcement for minor student misbehavior (sections (B)(1)–(3)).
* Police targeting certain student groups (sections (B)(1)-(3)).
* Teachers and school officials relying on the police as the primary disciplinarian (sections (B)(4)-(5)).

Be sure to include section (B)(5) so you can decipher the codes on the documents you receive from the district.

* + 1. Type/name of offense committed;
		2. Student’s grade level and age;
		3. Extent and degree of force used;
		4. Student’s race/ethnicity;
		5. Student’s disability status;
		6. Student’s gender;
		7. Location of incident: school-site v. off-school site;
		8. If school-site, school name where the incident occurred;
		9. Time of incident;
		10. Final outcome of referral or arrest; and
		11. Whether handcuffs, zip ties, or other restraints were used to restrain the student.

Please also include an explanation of how [District] defines “arrest” or “referral.”

* 1. Any and all documents containing data regarding referrals of [District] students to any probation department or other branch of the juvenile justice system. Relevant records include, but are not limited to, any and all lists of [District] students whom school police officers have referred to any probation department or any other branch of the juvenile justice system via petition, complaint, or other referral. Responsive records include any or all of the following information:
		1. Type/name of offense committed;
		2. School of referred student;
		3. Student’s grade level and age;
		4. Student’s race/ethnicity;
		5. Student’s disability status;
		6. Student’s gender;
		7. Location of incident: school-site v. off-school site;
		8. Time of incident;
		9. Final outcome of referral;
		10. Whether handcuffs, zip ties, or other restraints were used to restrain the student; and
		11. Any complaints lodged against a police officer or the [District] police department and status or results of such complaints or investigations.
	2. Any and all documents containing data collected regarding [District] students who have been given a citation for an infraction or a misdemeanor. Responsive documents include, but are not limited to, the following information:
		1. Type/name of offense committed;
		2. Student’s grade level and age;
		3. Student’s race/ethnicity;
		4. Student’s disability status;
		5. Student’s gender;
		6. Location of incident: school-site v. off-school site;
		7. If school-site, name of school where the incident occurred;
		8. Time of incident;
		9. Final outcome of citation (*e.g.*, charge sustained or not sustained, etc.); and
		10. Whether handcuffs, zip ties, or other restraints were used to restrain the student.
	3. Any and all documents reflecting the total district-wide number of requests or “calls for service” made by school staff[[4]](#footnote-4) for [District] police officer presence or intervention at a school site, including, but not limited to, a numerical break-down of those requests by any of the following factors:
		1. Offense type;
		2. Number of requests made by each teacher where applicable;
		3. Number of requests made by each principal where applicable;
		4. Number of requests made by an administrator where applicable;
		5. Student’s grade level and age;
		6. Student’s race/ethnicity;
		7. Student’s disability status;
		8. Student’s gender;
		9. Location of incident: school-site v. off-school site;
		10. If school-site, name of school where the incident occurred;
		11. Time of incident;
		12. Final outcome of referral (*e.g.*, arrested, cited, disciplined, etc.); and
		13. Whether handcuffs, zip ties, or other restraints were used to restrain the student.
	4. Metadata, or documentation describing the file structure and layout of fields within files, for the Arrest and Referral data listed in the preceding items, including any explanation of field names and their definitions, and a list of possible values (or a range of values) for each field and their definitions.
1. Operations and Structure of the [District] Police Department

Consider including section “C. Operations and Structure of the District Police Department” if you are worried about:

* Oversight agencies not holding police accountable for their on-campus conduct.
* The district not investigating (or inadequately investigating) police abuse and misconduct allegations.
* The amount of money spent on school police.
* The district hiring unqualified officers.
* Teachers delegating disciplinary authority to police officers.
	1. Any and all policies and procedures related to the [District] police department’s governance and operations, including, but not limited to, the process for hiring, assigning, promoting, demoting, firing, and placing on administrative leave [District] police officers and other personnel;
	2. Any and all [District] police department budgets, including, but not limited to, budget line items in the [District] budget for [District] police department expenditures;
	3. The pay grade salary schedules for all school police officers employed by [District], including, but not limited to, all types of school police officers and peace officers;
	4. Any overtime hours and costs incurred by the [District] and [District] police department; and
	5. Any and all job descriptions for school police officers.
1. Relationship between the [District] to Other Policing Agencies
	1. Any and all documents reflecting the relationship between [District] and any other policing agency including Municipal Police Department (MPD) and County Sheriff’s Office. This includes, but is not limited to, contracts, memoranda of understanding or agreement, joint funding documents, grant or funding information for MPD policing at [District] school sites;

Section “D. Relationship of the District Police Department to Other Policing Agencies” relates to:

* Frequent on-campus presence of external law enforcement agencies, like city police departments or county sheriffs’ departments.
* Agreements between the district/district police department and external law enforcement agencies about when the school should call the police.
* Whether the school district is spending its funds on external police department services.
	1. Any and all documents reflecting the number of MPD Officers and County Sheriff Deputies who are located or spend a portion of their day on a [District] school campus; and
	2. Any and all documents reflecting the source of funding to place MPD Officers or County Sheriff Deputies on [District] campuses, including all federal, state, and local sources of funding or grants.

1. [District] Complaint Process and Oversight of [District] Police Officers
	1. Any and all complaints received from any sources about the activities of [District] police officers or other policing agencies, including, but not limited to, all informal, formal, and/or criminal complaints filed against school police officers;

Consider including section “E. District Complaint Process and Oversight of District Police Officers” if you:

1. Want to learn about the oversight of police conduct on campus.
2. Want to know if the school has received complaints about officer(s) and/or investigated officer(s) conduct toward students.
3. Want to learn about the procedures students and community members can use to complain about police behavior in schools.
	1. Any and all documents reflecting investigations and resulting outcomes of [District] police officers, either as a result of public or internal complaints or concerns;
	2. Any and all documents regarding the complaint filing and resolution process for the [District] police department, including, but not limited to, documents describing how members of the public, school personnel, and students can submit complaints to [District] against its police officers or for any other reason, documents describing how [District] investigates and resolves such complaints, and how the [District] addresses complaints of wrongdoing and school police officer misconduct;
	3. Any and all documents regarding any independent or quasi-independent oversight body that monitors the activities of the [District] police department, if such a body exists; and
	4. Any and all documents regarding staff who have improperly referred students to [District] police officers.

We understand that some of the documents we have requested may contain information that would identify individual students if produced in un-redacted form. We both expect and encourage [District] to comply with its obligation to protect the privacy of its students. We therefore request that, where necessary, responsive documents be redacted to replace student names and Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) numbers with pseudo-identifiers consisting of random sequences of numbers and letters. This will protect students’ identities while allowing us to know if certain students are repeatedly referred to in the documents provided.

If any records in the above request are claimed to be exempt from disclosure, we request that: (1) you exercise your discretion to disclose some or all of the records notwithstanding the exemption; and (2) with respect to records containing both exempt and non-exempt content, you redact the exempt content and disclose the rest, consistent with Government Code § 6253(a). Additionally, if any records are withheld or redacted, please provide a written response that describes the records being withheld or redacted and the claimed reason for exemption under the Public Records Act.

If you contend that this request does not reasonably describe identifiable public records, we request that you promptly assist us by eliciting additional information that will clarify our request and more clearly identify the records we are seeking. *See* § 6253.1.

We also reiterate our request that you provide any public record identified in the following electronic formats to us in that electronic format, instead of in paper format: PDF format or all Microsoft Office formats, including Word, Excel, Access, and Power Point. *See* § 6253.9.

Finally, we request that you waive any copying fees because [Organization] is a non-profit organization and the information requested will be used in the public interest to further the public’s understanding of public schools and its police force. No part of the information obtained will be sold or distributed for profit. If you are unable to waive the copying fees, please inform us of any potential duplication costs.

We look forward to working with you to obtain the public records identified in this request and look forward to your response to this request within ten (10) days of receipt of this letter. *See* § 6253(c). Please contact me directly at [phone number] or [email address] with your response. Additionally, please provide all records as they become available, rather than waiting to send them together.

We thank you in advance for providing us with the records we have requested. Please send all responsive documents to:

[Name]

[Organization]

[Address]

[City, State, Zip Code]

[phone number]

[email address]

Again, if you have any questions, please do contact me at [phone number] or by email at [email address].

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

 [Organization]

**BEFORE SENDING**:

1. Make sure you include only the requests that relate to the issues you want more information about. You do not want to request too many documents (especially unnecessary documents) because **the district can refuse to produce the documents unless and until you pay the copying fees**; and
2. Make sure to replace all bracketed words with information specific to your district.
1. [District] or [District] Police Department refers to both the school district and the school district police department. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For confidentiality purposes, please omit the name and/or identification number of each officer and replace it with a unique pseudo-identifier that is consistent across all data supplied in response to this request. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. To project student confidentiality, please omit student names and ID numbers, and replace them with pseudo-identifiers in the form of a random sequence of numbers and/or letters that remain consistent across all data supplied in response to this request. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For confidentiality purposes, please omit the name and/or identification number of each staff member and replace with a unique pseudo-identifier that is consistent across all data supplied in response to this request. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)