

Attachment A

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

September 15, 2020

Honorable Michael J. Carrozzo
Presiding Judge
Santa Barbara Superior Court
County Courthouse
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara CA 93101

Reference: Response to Santa Barbara Civil Grand Jury report titled, "Juveniles in Gangs in Santa Barbara County, Has Accountability Been Forgotten?" published June 26, 2020.

Judge Carrozzo:

Please find attached the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors (Board) response to the above referenced Civil Grand Jury Report. As directed by the Grand Jury, all responses are provided in accordance with Section 933.05 of the California Penal Code.

The Board appreciates the work conducted by the District Attorney, Probation and Sheriff Departments for their assistance in responding to this matter.

Sincerely,

Gregg Hart, Chair
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

CC: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Attachment

**Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury 2019-2020 Report
“Juveniles in Gangs in Santa Barbara County, Has Accountability Been
Forgotten?”**

Finding 1

No comprehensive database exists to identify gangs and gang membership.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 1

That the Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s Department, the Probation Department, the District Attorney and the police departments of Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Guadalupe and Lompoc pool their resources to establish a comprehensive data base that includes a gang roster across jurisdictions.

This recommendation will not be implemented, as it is not warranted. The County is unable to implement this recommendation within the current and anticipated budgetary constraints. Additionally, any such cross-agency database would require a comprehensive MOU between all involved entities.

Finding 2

The number of programs available to at-risk youth, including those through the Santa Barbara County Probation Department, is declining.

The Board of Supervisors disagrees wholly with this finding. While many programs for youth have been impacted by closures, changes and service reductions during the current pandemic, there does not appear to be evidence that community-based programs were declining prior to the current crisis. Services offered by the Probation Department have increased over the past two years, as the Department has contracted for additional evidence-based programs and targeted interventions for youth, as well as grant-funded community-based diversion services.

Recommendation 2

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors direct the Santa Barbara County Probation Department to reestablish youth programs including the after-school programs.

This recommendation will not be implemented as it is not warranted. Community-based organizations (CBOs) are often well-positioned to provide after-school and recreational programs for all youth, including youth not yet involved with the juvenile justice system. Programs run by county agencies can be expensive (due to salary, facility and contract costs) and require that the Probation Department contract out responsibilities that could be provided more directly and with lower overhead by CBOs at community facilities. Probation involvement with such programs also opens the door to further youth contact with the juvenile justice system. Programs run by government authorities can have a stigma and youth may avoid them; Probation can instead require youth to attend community-run programs as part of achieving positive pro-social youth development.

Finding 5

A wide variety of vocational, educational and counseling programs are offered at Los Prietos Boys Camp for at-risk youth.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding.

Recommendation 5

That the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors support the Santa Barbara County Probation Department in continuing the programs at Los Prietos Boys Camp and extending them into the community

This recommendation has been implemented. The Department has been and continues to be grateful for the Board's support of Los Prietos Boys Camp. The Department continues to enhance and add programs to the Boys Camp, in order to focus more fully on positive youth development and transitional services. Youth exiting the camp have access to programs and services by referral, and many of those programs are continuations of what was provided to them at camp.

Finding 6

Gang activities cross jurisdictional boundaries of local law enforcement agencies.

The Board of Supervisors agrees with this finding

Recommendation 6a

That the Santa Barbara County District Attorney form a consortium including the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department, the Santa Barbara County Probation Department and the Police Departments of Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Lompoc and Guadalupe to hire a full-time crime analyst and share data to reduce gang crime.

This recommendation will not be implemented as it is not warranted. Data-sharing efforts are already underway between these departments; a staff position has already been dedicated to an ongoing data-sharing initiative between the County's criminal justice partner agencies, including the Sheriff's Office, Probation and the District Attorney. Probation already produces and shares a variety of data, as does the Sheriff's Office, and these agencies are responsive to requests for additional data as needed to address particular issues.

Recommendation 6b

That the Santa Barbara County District Attorney form a consortium including the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department, the Santa Barbara County Probation Department and the Police Departments of Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Lompoc and Guadalupe and hire staff that would apply for grants to fund anti-gang programs.

This recommendation will not be implemented as it is not warranted. Partnerships already exist where grant opportunities can be discussed in a coordinated fashion – for instance, the South Coast Youth Safety Partnership (SCYSP) and its Strategy Team and Community Engagement Team (CET), as well as the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) and its associated workgroup. CommUnify

(formerly the Community Action Commission), in partnership with the City of Lompoc, is currently leading an effort in Lompoc to bring in grant funding to assist the community with creating a youth safety partnership similar to the SCYSP in South County. Eventually, this initiative may result in the coordination of the county's regional youth safety partnerships.

There are few evidence-based or promising practices for juvenile gang intervention that have shown positive results; even fewer are designed around a model of cultural responsiveness. Many support services for children and youth are already provided in our local schools, as highlighted by the County Education Office's recent response to the Grand Jury's report. The County Probation Department continues to seek promising programs to implement and pilot locally.

Additionally, it should be noted that community partners, including the Community Action Commission, have been instrumental in bringing youth-oriented resources to our local communities, specifically seeking to enhance the safety of youths within our local communities.