School Resource Officer (SRO) Proposal

Pembina Trails School Division

December 13, 2007

Presented by the Parent Councils of:

Acadia Junior High School
Henry G. Izatt Middle School
Fort Richmond Collegiate
Oak Park High School
Shaftesbury High School
Vincent Massey Collegiate

Presented to:

PEMBINA TRAILS SCHOOL DIVISION
A Community of Learners Committed to Excellence

History

- ✓ Our district school has experienced significant loss of community police services (expand: loss of the police officer- Jeremy Harewood)
- ✓ Lost the connection between community policing (pro-active) and police response (reactive) within the Pembina Trails Division. When the community policing was in place, the response time varied greatly and it was mostly a reactive response after something had already happened.
- ✓ Simultaneously, school violence places increasing demands on school staffs, students and parents. (stats?)
- ✓ Meanwhile Winnipeg and Brandan school divisions and other places in Canada, have taken the initiative to hire a school recourse officer, that is a proven solution to deter if not eliminate school violence. (add research from Barb Paul).

What is a School Resource Office (SRO)

- ✓ **Fundamentally a SRO is a uniformed police officer:**
  - **He or she works with staff, students, and parents in a cooperative venture to reduce or eliminate school violence.**
  - **The SRO over time understands each school's dynamics, the "players", and becomes a valuable contact for sharing of information that would prevent an incident before it happens. (pro-active nature)**
  - **The SRO becomes a welcome addition, promoting a positive atmosphere, through the formation of relationships with staff, students and parents.**
  - **In the event of an incident the SRO has intimate knowledge of the layout of the school, the school emergency plan, and becomes the main point of contact for our police response.**
  - **A community police officer is essentially a response mechanism to an incident (doesn't necessarily know the staff, students, layout of the school or emergency plan.) (reactive)**
  - **Conversely, an SRO has detailed knowledge of all of the above and is in essence a mitigative and preparedness resource (pro-active)**

Representation

- ✓ **The Pembina Trail Schools listed are driving this initiative with their Parent Advisory Groups and would like to see the installation of two SRO's for the fall of 2008-2009 school year.**
- ✓ **We would like to bring to your attention the attached support letters from the other – schools within PTSD.**
- ✓ **While we fully appreciate that installation of a police officer in a school may not be within our jurisdiction we recognize that we have both the responsibility to keep our children safe and recognize the liability attached for not doing so. (Attachment)**
- ✓ **Our schools are miniature communities, as such they are provided fundamental aspects of public safety such as, medical care and fire safety. The installation of an SRO would provide that third critical pillar; physical security.**

Representation

- ✓ **The SRO would also provide an education component – essentially assisting school teamswith enabling students to make better, more informed choices around behaviour that might lead to criminal involvement**
- ✓ **The SRO would be able to assist Threat Assessment team member who is on site when needed (PTSD threat assessment attachment)**
- ✓ **The Pembina Trails divisional policy and practice re: Standard of Behaviour provision of a "safe and caring community" for all involved with the Pembina Trails School Division which includes the freedom from harassment, intimidation (Attachment)**
- ✓ The Pembina Trails divisional priorities and belief statements that tie in (also on-line)
- ✓ Also refer to rational handout that Cristina generated

Detailed SRO Proposal

- ✓ As you can see in the detailed School Resource Officer (SRO) Proposal, we are asking for two full time SROs to share their time between the families of schools (primarily the junior and senior high schools). One officer would be responsible for the east side of the school division and one officer would be responsible for the west side of the school division.
- ✓ We bring your attention to Appendix C, the three year budget, which amounts to approximately $100,000 per year.
- ✓ The cost sharing formula would not be onerous to any one organization, yet provides a reasonable level of coverage within the six schools.
- ✓ the one third of the salary would provide PTSD an officer who would not be able to be re-deployed – essentially part of the division team but someone with an immediate connection to police resources if needed.

Project Evaluation

- ✓Appendix B provides a detailed position description of an SRO.
- ✓It is absolutely vital that we evaluate the effectiveness of this position, through the collection of testimonials and statistics that indicate the impact that an SRO makes in the school.
- ✓An annual report will be provided after the first year that includes a statistical collection of data, journal logs, and testimonials from students, staff, teachers, and parents.

Conclusion

- ✓ What is the price of our children's safety?
- ✓ What is our responsibility as community leaders in protecting our children? (trustees, staff, teachers and parents.)
- ✓ What role do we have in helping all of our children to make better choices?
- ✓ Finally, what is our liability if we choose to do nothing?
- ✓ These are the questions that our group has wrestled with and we think that an SRO is an effective answer to all of these questions.
- ✓ We want to ask our Trustees to help us meet this challenge.