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Mr. Lusardi:

I would like to nominate the Baypoint Middle School problem-solving project for the third annual "Herman Goldstein Excellence in Problem-Solving Award". Community Policing Officer Dean Clark utilized the SARA method to address an outcry of parental concern over perceived violence in their childrens' public middle school.

Scanning

On January 24, 1995, Community Policing Officer Dean Clark began a problem-solving project for Baypoint Middle School, 2151 62nd Avenue South, after receiving telephone calls from parents complaining that their children were the victims of violent crime acts committed by older teenagers while walking home after school. The parents also complained about gang activity among the school's students and an apparent lack of discipline by the school's teachers and staff. The parents believed that problems inside the school fostered violent behavior by the students after school was-dismissed each day.

Officer Clark met with the Baypoint School Resource Officer, Officer Jim Dressback, who said he was unaware of any formal gang

problems per se, although recently he had taken gang "bandanas" from a few of the students. Officer Clark also met with Sergeant John Snyder, supervisor of the department's Gang Intelligence Team, who was unaware of any gang problems at Baypoint Middle School.

Officer Clark researched calls for service at Baypoint Middle School, using the Department's CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) and the PI (Police Information) computer systems. He examined total calls for service for each of the city's seven public middle schools, comparing the 1992/3 school year data with the 1993/4 school year data for any identifiable trends. These data indicated that calls for service increased 152% at Baypoint Middle School during the 1993/4 school year. The high percentage of calls for service continued for the current school year to date (09/01/94 to 02/16/95) when Baypoint Middle School reported a total of 101 calls for service, which was more than twice the number of calls for service reported from any of the seven public middle schools in the city during the same time period. See Appendix A for the calls for service data.

Analysis

Officer Clark contacted School Resource Officer Jim Dressback, who worked at Baypoint Middle School the previous two years, to identify possible explanations for the increase in calls for service over the past year and a half. SRO Dressback

cited the following reasons: (a) stricter reporting policy by the school; (b) some of the calls for service occurred off-campus, but were attributed to the school's address in the CAD system; and (c) Baypoint Middle School's student population increased 120 students from the previous year {although initial estimates of the increase in student population were much more exaggerated). According to SRO Jim Dressback, school discipline was more stringent than the year before which accounted for the stricter reporting policy.

However, the CAD data did not reveal the types of violent crime that the parents had reported to Officer Clark as the "problem". Officer Clark discovered that many of the incidents of violence prompting the parents' concerns had never been reported to the police.

Officer Clark and SRO Jim Dressback organized a meeting for at the school for parents of the students to more fully discuss their concerns and gain more information on the problem. More than sixty parents attended the-meeting, along with the school principal, Police Chief Darrel W. Stephens, and members of the department's Youth Resources Section and Community Policing. After listening to the parent's concerns, the St. Petersburg Police Department agreed to provide additional officers temporarily at the school during dismissal time while continuing to analyze the problem. Parents were encouraged to become actively involved in the solution. One idea discussed was the

possibility of enacting a city ordinance to create a "buffer zone" around the school that would subject non-students to arrest for trespassing (however, subsequent research indicated such a city ordinance would be unconstitutional) . Parents agreed to volunteer their time at the school at dismissal time, and were reminded to report all crime to the police. The meeting was reported in a *St. Petersburg Times* article (see Appendix B) .

Response

The parents were mainly concerned about high school-aged teenagers coming on campus during the afternoons and crowded conditions at the school. These issues prompted the department to approve a CPTED {Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) Survey for Baypoint Middle School. The basic strategies of CPTED are designed to increase the perception of natural surveillance, improve scheduling of space to allow for "critical density", place unsafe activities in safe places, etc. The CPTED Survey examined the physical design and/or appearance of school property, and provided recommendations for decreasing opportunities for conflict.

The CPTED Survey was conducted by the Gail Hamilton, supervisor of the Crime Analysis unit, Crime Analyst Barry Talesnick, and Robert Jefferies, a neighborhood planner with the City's Planning Department. The CPTED Survey's long-term and short-term recommendations were sent to the principal of Baypoint

Middle School. See Appendix C for a copy of the CPTED Survey report, and the principal's response to the recommendations.

During the time of the CPTED Survey, Officer Dean Clark continued to meet with parents and address their specific crime related concerns. He encouraged them to become more involved in volunteering their time as monitors or mentors at Baypoint Middle School. One retired woman in the neighborhood, whose children had long since grown into adults, became a volunteer mentor for one of the students. Several parents monitored trouble spots on the school property prior to and during dismissal time to help regulate student's behavior. Each day a school staff member walked the campus at dismissal time with a video camcorder, which served both to dissuade non-students from entering the campus, and to prompt orderly behavior by students leaving the campus. Officer Dean Clark was present at dismissal time each day during the month of February, providing additional uniform presence and assisting SRO Jim Dressback oversee student's behavior.

The problems among students after school began to diminish after Officer Dean Clark began his problem solving project. The parents' fears, which were heightened by a few unrelated incidents, appeared to have been exaggerated by a lack of communication between them, the school and the police department. Officer Clark's analysis confirmed the problem was not as serious as the parents first believed. The department's short-term response involved a higher presence of uniform officers at the

school for two weeks, and the long-term response included recommendations to the school for environmental redesign of the campus. Officer Clark's consistent communication with the parents and the school administrators throughout the process helped de-escalate the parents' fears, encouraged their involvement in resolving real and perceived issues, and facilitated workable solutions to the problem.

Assessment

Officer Clark re-examined the total calls for service since the inception of this problem solving project to determine if there had been any meaningful changes. The analysis indicated that Baypoint Middle School had a significantly smaller percentage of total calls for service among all middle public schools in the city since the problem solving project began (20.7%) when compared with total calls for service prior to the problem solving project (30.1%).

There was a significant decrease in calls for service during the month of February (- 50%) when Officer Dean Clark visited the school each day during dismissal time. There was another decrease in April and May as parents continued monitoring students at dismissal time and school administrators began implementing CPTED recommendations. Table 1 on page seven indicates the number of calls for service at Baypoint Middle School from January through May of 1995.

Table 1

Baypoint Middle School 1995 Calls for Service per Month	
January	24
February	12
March	22
April	11
May	13

Since Officer Dean Clark began his problem-solving project, Baypoint Middle School no longer reported the highest total calls for service when compared with the other public middle schools. Table 2 on page eight indicates calls for service prior to the project and Table 3 on page nine indicates calls for service **after** the project began. The number of monthly calls for service in the census tract where Baypoint Middle School is located remained consistent from January through May of 1995, with no significant increases or decreases reported.

One significant decrease involved the reduction of 911 hangups from the public telephone on campus. The CPTED survey recommended moving the public telephone on campus to an area with better visibility. School officials temporarily locked the telephone from March through May, with plans to move it to an open location visible from offices for the upcoming school year.

Table 2

Calls for Police Service at Public
Middle Schools in St. Petersburg
09/01/94 to 02/16/95

Middle Schools	Total CFS	911 Hangups	Simple Battery	Petty Theft	D/O Juveniles
Azalea	45	1	7	10	2
Baypoint	101	32	15	10	8
Meadowlawn	53	1	12	7	6
Riviera	44	0	5	5	10
Sixteenth Street	39	0	5	3	7
Southside Fundamental	3	0	0	0	0
Tyrone	50	3	9	3	1
Totals	335	36	53	38	34

Table 3

Calls for Police Service at Public
Middle Schools in St. Petersburg
02/17/95 to 05/26/95

Middle Schools	Total CFS	911 Hangups	Simple Battery	Petty Theft	D/O Juveniles
Azalea	24	1	3	4	2
Baypoint	47	0	7	4	3
Meadowlawn	53	0	9	5	6
Riviera	32	0	6	1	3
Sixteenth Street	32	0	7	2	1
Southside Fundamental	2	0	0	0	0
Tyrone	37	2	9	0	6
Totals	227	3	41	16	21

Baypoint Middle School administrators have implemented a few of the CPTED Survey recommendations. Large pastel-colored murals have been painted on exterior building walls around campus to enhance the beautification of the school. As mentioned, the public telephone was locked out of use with plans to remove it to a more public location before school begins in the fall. School administrators are planning to remove the current fenced bicycle

compound and create a bicycle storage facility inside one of the buildings on campus to help decrease thefts. The remaining CPTED survey recommendations continue to be under fiscal consideration.

Additionally, school administrators have purchased a second video camcorder in order to provide two staff members with video camcorders at dismissal time in the upcoming year. This procedure appeared to be effective in preventing non-students from entering campus and also aided in regulating students' behavior as they left the school campus each day.

This problem solving project was significant because it involved both sworn and non-sworn members of the police department, a city planning architect, members of the public school system, and the concerned parents themselves. It also utilized the innovative CPTED environmental design strategy for crime prevention to provide long-term recommendations/solutions to Baypoint Middle School administrators.



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APPENDIX A

M E M O R A N D U M

To : Dean Clark, Community Policing Officer
District 1

From : William Proffitt, Sergeant
District 1

Date : February 22, 1995

Subject : Baypoint Middle School POP Project

Dean, Table 1 on the next page indicates calls for service at all public middle schools in our city for this school year to date (09/01/94 to 02/16/95). I compared the following schools:

- 1) Azalea Middle School, 7855 22nd Avenue North.
- 2} Baypoint Middle School, 2151 62nd Avenue South.
- 3) Meadowlawn Middle School, 5900 16th Street North.
- 4) Riviera Middle School, 501 62nd Avenue Northeast.
- 5) Sixteenth Street Middle School, 701 16th Street South.
- 6) Southside Fundamental Middle School, 1701 10th Street South.
- 7) Tyrone Middle School, 6421 22nd Avenue North.

In addition to the total calls for service per school, I also compared four nature categories that were common to most of the schools: (a) 911 hangup or playing on 911, (b) simple battery, (c) petty theft, and (d) disorderly juveniles.

Baypoint Middle School, 2151 62 Avenue South, reported the highest number of total calls for service (N=101), representing 30% of the total for all middle schools in our city. Southside Fundamental Middle School, 1701 10th Street South, reported the lowed number of total calls for service' (N=3), representing .89% of the total.

At Baypoint Middle School, a significant number of calls for service (N=32) were the result of a 911 hangup or playing on 911. Baypoint also reported the highest number of simple batteries (N=15), petty thefts (N=10), and the second highest number of disorderly juveniles (N=8).

It was interesting to note the low number of calls for service (N=3) at Southside Fundamental Middle School {two of those calls were the result of a burglary alarm after school hours). Southside Fundamental emphasizes strict discipline, a demerit system for student detention, mandatory parental involvement, and the parents are required to drop off and pick up their child at the school. On the surface, there certainly appears to be a correlation between parental involvement, student discipline, and those problems which generate a call for police service at the school.

Table 1

Calls for Police Service at Public
Middle Schools in St. Petersburg
09/01/94 to 02/16/95

Middle Schools	Total CFS	911 Hangups	Simple Battery	Petty Theft	D/O Juveniles
Azalea	45	1	7	10	2
Baypoint	101	32	15	10	8
Meadowlawn	53	1	12	7	6
Riviera	44	0	5	5	10
Sixteenth Street	39	0	5	3	7
Southside Fundamental	3	0	0	0	0
Tyrone	50	3	9	3	1
Totals	335	36	53	38	34

In general, these data could suggest that either parental involvement and/or school discipline is directly related to calls for service generated by problems on campus. But, more analysis would be needed to provide more explanation for the higher numbers of calls for service at Baypoint Middle School.

I do understand that the student population changed from 900 during the 93/94 school year to nearly 2,000 during the 94/95 school year when Baypoint was designated as a magnet school. Some questions are: Did the school board sufficiently enhance the staff and/or facilities at Baypoint Middle School to accommodate the higher number of students? Is the student-teacher ratio too high?

One recommendation appears obvious: it would appear prudent for Baypoint Middle School to remove public telephones from the campus.

Table 2 indicates calls for service from the same middle schools during the same time period of the previous school year.

Table 2
Calls for Police Service at Public
Middle Schools in St. Petersburg
09/01/93 to 02/16/94

Middle Schools	Total CFS	911 Hangups	Simple Battery	Petty Theft	D/O Juveniles
Azalea	37	0	4	7	2
Baypoint	40	1	8	5	2
Meadowlawn	74	0	22	7	11
Riviera	30	0	7	3	5
Sixteenth Street	37	0	5	0	12
Southside Fundamental	6	0	0	0	0
Tyrone	48	2	13	3	1
Totals	272	3	59	25	31

This table indicates that the calls for service at Baypoint Middle School were more generally distributed with the calls for service of the other middle schools. Meadowlawn posted the highest overall calls for service when SRO Kathy Vacca was at that school and used a strict reporting policy. Not surprisingly, Southside Fundamental Middle School again generated the fewest calls for service.

SRO Jim Dressback worked at Baypoint Middle School both years and has indicated several possible explanations for the drastic increase in calls for service this year: (a) stricter reporting policy this school year, (b) some reports of incidents off campus, erroneously were attributed to Baypoint Middle School's address, (c) more reported calls for service due to the increase in student

population. Table 3 compares the overall numbers of calls for service from Table 1 with Table 2 and indicates the percentage increase or decrease from the 92/93 school year to the 93/94 school year.

Table 3
Comparison of Calls For Service

Middle Schools	1992/93	1993/94	% Change
Azalea	37	45	+ 21
Baypoint	40	101	+ 152
Meadowlawn	74	53	- 28
Riviera	30	44	+ 47
Sixteenth Street	37	39	+ 5
Southside Fundamental	6	3	- 50
Tyrone	48	50	+ 4
Totals	272	335	+ 23

Hopefully this information coupled with the report from Gail Hamilton will assist in your analysis of the situation at Baypoint Middle School and help you to recommend appropriate responses.

William Proffitt, Sergeant
District 1

APPENDIX B