



**REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

AGENDA ITEM

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

DATE: September 2, 2008

SUBJECT: Authorize Additional Police Officer to Reduce Alcohol Abuse in  
Secondary Schools

**Report in Brief**

The Woodland Joint Unified School District, in cooperation with the Woodland Police Department, applied for and has been awarded a United States Department of Education grant to reduce alcohol abuse among secondary students. One of the funded grant components is a full-time Police Officer to serve as a school resource officer focusing on alcohol issues on or arising from the school campus communities.

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the addition of one Police Officer position to be funded through the grant to pursue the grant objectives of reducing alcohol abuse among secondary school students.

**Background**

In February 2008, the Woodland Joint Unified School District, in cooperation with the Woodland Police Department, applied for a grant to reduce alcohol abuse among our secondary level students. This grant provides program funding for three years through the United States Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools. The grant proposal included full funding for one Police Officer for three years who will be assigned to the Project AWARE (Alliance of Woodland for Alcohol and Education) team. WJUSD received notice that the grant application was approved in August 2008.

The three components of Project AWARE are designed to create a multilayered, community wide approach to alcohol abuse prevention and intervention. All components include close collaboration with community partners to provide the depth of services necessary to fully impact the issue, make the most efficient use of both project and community resources and promote sustainability of key activities and outcomes beyond the federal funding period. Project AWARE objectives target decreasing binge drinking, decreasing overall teen alcohol use, decreasing juvenile arrests and suspensions for alcohol related offenses, increasing student perception of the harmfulness of frequent alcohol use, increasing the presence of school based external assets/protective factors,

increasing teacher awareness of the dangers of alcohol abuse and understanding of effective prevention strategies, and increasing parent understanding of the dangers of youth alcohol abuse and the legal ramifications of social hosting.

The Project AWARE Police Officer will work closely with the project social workers as a member of the intervention teams for both clusters of schools. The Police Officer will coordinate efforts with the WPD Diversion Officer and the Probation Officers assigned to the middle schools and high schools. The Police Officer will be the Police Department's first responder to school calls for alcohol-related incidents, and will proactively combat teen gatherings that include may include alcohol. The Officer will also work closely with the Alcohol Drug Mental Health Prevention Office to collaborate on community-wide projects such as a "No Social Hosting" campaign and various merchant campaigns.

### **Discussion**

Authorization to add a Police Officer position will allow the Police Department to assign personnel to this project. The project will focus resources on those juveniles who may be using and/or abusing alcoholic beverages and would also reduce the incidents of truancy thereby creating a safer learning environment. Specifically the Police Officer assigned to this project, working with counselors and existing School Resource Officers, would be dedicated to reducing alcohol abuse among our community's youth within the schools and also in the children's home environment. The Police Officer position is fully funded through the grant for three years.

It is important for the City Council to note that the decision to work with the School District in the application for these grant funds was made prior to understanding the full impact of the City's current fiscal condition. Staff acknowledges that it may be difficult to accept the grant and authorize the additional position at this time due to the potential creation of a future General Fund liability. However, staff believes that conditions can be applied that will prevent a future General Fund liability by seeking alternative funding at the end of the three year cycle or absorbing the officer position through the anticipated retirement/voluntary separation of police officers that will occur during the timeframe.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The Project AWARE Police Officer will be funded for three (3) years through the US Dept of Education grant. Year one funding for the officer (1.0 FTE) includes 12 months salary/benefit at \$113,256 salary plus \$5,182 for equipment and training for total amount of \$118,438. Funding for year 2 (\$123,175) and year 3 (\$128,102) include an estimate for any cost of living adjustments that may be granted. The project and Police Officer is funded through the grant for three years.

Upon completion of the project the WJUSD, Woodland Police Department, and other project stakeholders will jointly review the program results and consider alternatives for continuation of the program. Continuation of the program will be dependant on finding alternative funding, other than

the City's General Fund for the officer. Should the project and /or the Police Officer dedicated to the project not continue, the Police Department will examine other staffing requirements and funding opportunities to continue the position, or will absorb the added position within the Department's current personnel allocation through anticipated attrition. Given the City's fiscal challenges, there will be no additional impact on the General Fund in association with the grant funded position.

**Public Contact**

Posting of the City Council agenda.

**Alternative Courses of Action**

1. Approve the addition of one Police Officer position to be funded through the grant to pursue the grant objectives of reducing alcohol abuse among secondary school students.
2. Cease further consideration of grant funding for the additional Police Officer to work Project AWARE.

**Recommendation for Action**

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Alternative #1.

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