

To: Chief Administrative Officer **Date:** March 1, 2021
From: Mike Younie, Chief Administrative Officer
Subject: **RCMP School Liaison Position**

Recommendation(s)

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide information about the RCMP School Liaison (Liaison) position as requested by Council at its February 1, 2021 meeting.

Background

In many municipalities, the local RCMP detachment will assign a RCMP member to liaise with the local schools. Mission has allocated one member as a Liaison whose typical duties include:

- Maintain regular (daily) communications with senior staff at Mission Public School District (MPSD)
- Attend MPSD schools with a focus on middle schools.
- Speak to students on general issues (drug use, gangs)
- Facilitate conflict resolution
- Assist with significant incidents
- Arrange for restorative resolution where appropriate

Discussion and Analysis

Staff spoke with the Superintendent of MPSD and the Officer in Charge (OIC) of the Mission Detachment to learn more about the Liaison position and challenges.

Comments by Superintendent, MPSD

- The current Liaison is not available one weekday per week. Ideally MPSD would like to see a Liaison available to the schools every day of the week.
- The two middle schools require the most attention by the Liaison followed by Fraserview Learning Centre followed by Mission Senior Secondary followed by elementary schools.
- The Liaison is critical to school operations, MPSD enjoys a strong relationship with the Liaison and receives great value. Perhaps the most beneficial aspect of the Liaison's work is to put a human face on the RCMP and policing and connecting the community with the RCMP.
- Communication is very good between MPSD and the Liaison – school activities / agendas are shared on a weekly basis with the Liaison. It would be beneficial if MPSD could build stronger relationships with RCMP management but it is acknowledged that is difficult given that management changes regularly in RCMP detachments.
- If additional resources are available, MPSD would recommend allocating those to more dedicated Liaison time to middle schools, cyber bullying and five days a week availability.

Comments by OIC, Mission Detachment

- Having a Liaison in Mission is not mandated by E Division. The decision to offer this service is entirely at the OIC's discretion after considering the RCMP's and District's objectives.
- The Liaison Program is a true partnership between the Mission RCMP and the Mission Public School Board. As in all partnerships, each entity actively participates to make the program a success.
- Having 1 fulltime Officer assigned to Liaison duties is in line with models utilized in similar sized detachments across British Columbia.
- The Liaison is dedicated to serving Youth 100% of the time. The Liaison estimates that 90% of her time is "proactive" in that she is actively engaged with the schools and the remainder of her time is spent conducting investigations with a strong nexus to Youth or schools.
- Objectives of the Liaison program include:
 - Prevention of crime and the enhancement of community safety through education
 - Promotion of the police as an accessible community service
 - Elimination of barriers between youth and police
 - Investigation of offences and enforcement of laws
 - Promotion of policing as a career
- Further training for MPSD staff on Violent Threat Risk Assessment and procedures would assist in police response to MPSD reports of drugs and weapons being located on school properties.
- RCMP are fully satisfied with the high level of reciprocal communication that takes place on a regular basis. This can take the form of daily interactions and scheduled meetings. Ongoing efforts are being made to further enhance the speed and efficiency of information sharing that does take place.
- The Liaison has full autonomy to set priorities and manage her time but is done with input from the schools, front line supervisors and the OIC who ensure that the Liaison's activities are in line with overarching goals of reducing the frequency of youth committing; or being victimized, by crime.
- While the Liaison program is an important one for the RCMP, there are higher ranking priorities based on the RCMP's mandate and community surveys including:
 - Enhancing General Duty Supervision (addition of 2 Sergeant positions)
 - Traffic Section (addition of 1 Supervisor and 1 Constable)
 - Prolific Offender Unit (1 Supervisor and 2 Constables)
- Should additional Liaison resources be available, it is recommended that an Enhanced School Liaison Officer (1 Constable) be hired which would allow for a resource dedicated specifically to Schools and another to focus on Youth issues such as at the Mission Leisure Centre.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Communication

No communication action is required.

Summary and Conclusion

Council requested information on the RCMP school liaison position. Staff spoke with the Superintendent, Mission Public Schools and the Officer in Charge, Mission detachment. There is a strong relationship between the schools and RCMP and the liaison position provides good value for Mission Public Schools, the RCMP and the community.

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