

## DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 379 766

EA 026 510

AUTHOR McGee, Jerry C.; Knowles, N. Jane  
TITLE Crime in the Schools: One Solution in Texas.  
PUB DATE 94  
NOTE 9p.  
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.  
DESCRIPTORS Crime; \*Crime Prevention; Elementary Secondary Education; Juvenile Gangs; Law Enforcement; \*Police; Sanctions; School Safety; \*School Security; \*Security Personnel; \*Social Control  
IDENTIFIERS \*Aldine Independent School District TX

## ABSTRACT

This paper describes how one Texas school district, the Aldine Independent School District (ISD), created its own police department as an effort to control school-related crime. Formed in 1990, the Aldine Police Department (ADP) entitles officers to issue citations to students or make arrests according to their assessment of the situation and with their supervisor's approval. Citations usually involve a \$200 fine for which parents are responsible or student performance of community work. The APD also sponsors community and student awareness programs. An APD report for one unspecified month indicates that the Department handled 256 cases, for which the greatest numbers of violations involved alarm responses (N=47) and miscellaneous (N=62). Out of 54 citations for that month, 22 were traffic-related and 19 were for disruption of classes. Area business owners and the police chief view the program as effective. A list of questions to be considered prior to creation of a district police department are posed, with a focus on responsibilities and evaluation. Copies of violation and warning forms are included.

(LMJ)

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made \*  
\* from the original document. \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

# CRIME IN THE SCHOOLS: ONE SOLUTION IN TEXAS

by

Dr. Jerry C. McGee  
Professor of Education Leadership  
Sam Houston State University  
Huntsville, TX 77341

and

N. Jane Knowles  
Graduate Student  
Sam Houston State University  
Huntsville, TX

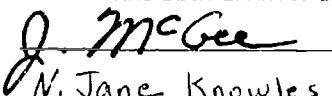
Fall, 1994

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement  
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION  
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as  
received from the person or organization  
originating it  
 Minor changes have been made to improve  
reproduction quality

Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-  
ment do not necessarily represent official  
OERI position or policy

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS  
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

  
Dr. Jerry C. McGee  
N. Jane Knowles

## CRIME IN THE SCHOOLS

In a society faced with daily headlines connected with violence and crime, the protection of students, teachers and school property has become more and more of an issue with local school districts. Within school buildings, administrators and teachers are given the responsibility of school safety which is a formidable task in some schools.

Michael J. Gant, a veteran teacher with the New York Public Schools, speaks out after a violent attack against him. "I believed that all was under control, that backup was available, and that my presence would bring order."<sup>1</sup> His beliefs changed in a matter of seconds as an explosive device containing 1/4 stick of dynamite was thrown at him exploding only two feet from his head. Gant still believes the "final responsibility for teacher and student safety rests with the teacher. Alert teachers have uncanny instincts for trouble. They seem to know when trouble is in the air and are very sensitive to changes in the environment that signal danger."<sup>2</sup>

As instances of vandalism, possession of weapons, and assaults while on school property continue to rise,<sup>3</sup> the Aldine Independent School District, Texas responded by creating its own police department. The department was formed in September, 1990.<sup>4</sup> Four years later, the department employees 13 officers, operates 16 patrol cars, covers 105 sq. miles, and protects 44,000 students. A.P.D. jurisdiction covers all Aldine I.S.D. property and any rented facility (i.e. - football stadium for play-off game). Its duties, according to A.I.S.D. Police Chief David Walden, include "protecting students, faculty, and district property, and upholding federal and state laws concerning adults and juveniles."<sup>5</sup> Walden believes his department is a service oriented department as its patrol officers balance day-to-day duties and educational

opportunities on a 24 hour basis. Its officers are equipped with bullet-proof vests, pocket recorders, video recorders in patrol cars and a revolver. One officer is assigned to the Harris County Gang Task Force and both departments share information concerning gang activity.<sup>6</sup>

Officers are visible in all secondary schools including the intermediate level. They often walk the hallways acquainting themselves with students and faculty members. They work closely with building administrators and are of great assistance to diffuse difficult situations which might escalate.<sup>7</sup>

Officers issue students citations or make arrests according to *their* assessment of the situation and with the approval of the A.P.D. supervisor. Citations may be issued for assault, disorderly conduct, disruption of classes, possession of drugs/alcohol paraphernalia, and/or public intoxication. Citations are also issued for traffic violations as well as the listed infractions. Serious violations may result in arrests.<sup>8</sup>

Citations usually involve a \$200 fine which parents are responsible for, however, the student may be sentenced to community service work by the Justice of the Peace if the family is unable to pay the fine. If a student refuses to do community service work, he/she may be detained in the Juvenile Detention Center.<sup>9</sup> If a student is arrested by the Aldine Police Department, they are only released to a parent or guardian.<sup>10</sup>

A.P.D. monthly report for one month indicates that 256 cases were handled by the department. These cases involved:

Juvenile arrests	24
Adult arrests	10
Alarm responses	47
Disturbances/fights	19
Disorderly conduct or student out of control	15
Assaults/agg. assault/sexual assault/threat	22
Criminal mischief	27
Stolen/abandoned vehicles	7

Burglary of a motor vehicle	5
Possession of controlled substance	3
Possession of firearm/weapon	7
Burglary/theft	14
Possession of paging device	19
Miscellaneous	62

A total of 54 citations were issued for the following reasons:

Traffic related	22
Assault	9
Disorderly conduct	3
Disruption of classes	19
Possession of drugs/alcohol	0
Public intoxication	1

Along with these written citations, 32 warning citations were written and 47 verbal warnings were issued.<sup>11</sup>

The Aldine Police Department is also involved in educational programs which include a student program much like DARE. They also do community awareness seminars for PTA or civic organizations, as well as staff development on drug/gang awareness.<sup>12</sup> Aldine officers may also be called on to assist district truancy officers in some cases.<sup>13</sup>

The task of picking up and delivering district and school deposits is carried on by officers who are not on regular duty. They "sign on" and are paid through a local and federally funded operating budget.<sup>14</sup>

As many other school districts embrace the growing problem of crime in the schools, one option which might be considered is a district police department. In Aldine, it has proven to be an effective tool to assist administrators and school personnel. Waldron states that "area businesses have expressed their gratitude" as the Aldine Police Department carries out its duties in areas surrounding the schools. As an administrator, great

comfort can be taken in knowing that officers are readily available and highly visible.

As school districts move to create their own police force, certain questions need addressing:

1. Who will evaluate the performance of the police force? Will teachers and principals be involved?
2. Are we replacing an existing local police service or is this an additional service?
3. Under what conditions do we permit a "hot pursuit" in a vehicle?
4. Can an officer fire his weapon in a school?
5. What will we do with the police force during vacation periods?
6. How do we articulate with other agencies and police departments?

The modern police force in a school district is here to stay. It is probably time we standardized some of the above answers. Crime in the school is real and we need police support. We also need to use and control police in our schools.

ALDINE I.S.D. POLICE DEPT.  
14910 ALDINE - WESTFIELD RD.  
HOUSTON, TX 77032

Class C - → J.P.  
No 003378 Court



I hereby promise to appear at the time and place designated  
in this notice.

**SIGNATURE:**

VIOLATOR	LAST NAME	FIRST	MIDDLE			
RESIDENCE ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	TELEPHONE		
DRIVER LICENSE NO		STATE	DATE OF BIRTH	SEX	RACE	HEIGHT
<input type="checkbox"/> COMM VEH <input type="checkbox"/> COMM CL <input type="checkbox"/> INTER ST <input type="checkbox"/> INTRA ST		OWNERS/LESSER NAME NO	OTHER LOCATOR INFORMATION BUSINESS TELEPHONE			
		GIVN	PASSENGER'S NAME NO	MAZ MAT PLAC	SOC SEC NO	
VEHICLE LICENSE NO	STATE	COLOR	YEAR MOFL	MAKE	TYPE	
COUNTY	DATE	TIME	WEATHER	TRAFFIC	ACCIDENT	
LOCATION						ALLEGED SPEED
VIOLATION(S)						SPEED LIMIT
1						RADAR CAL
2						
YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED TO APPEAR BEFORE						
JUDGE	CT	TELEPHONE				
AT	ON OR BEFORE	19	AT	M		
ISSUED BY	ID NO					

No 001951

ALDINE ISD POLICE DEPT.  
14910 ALDINE WESTFIELD  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77032

DATE                    HOUR  
                          M

DRIVER NAME	LAST	FIRST	MIDDLE
RESIDENCE ADDRESS	CITY		STATE
DOB	D L NO & STATE	VEHICLE LIC NO	YEAR & STATE
LOCATION	YEAR OF VEHICLE		

**VIOLATION**

THIS IS A WARNING ONLY for an infraction of the law, committed to a minor degree or with extenuating circumstances present. No penalty will be assessed and no further action on your part is necessary other than to comply with the laws in the future.



ISSUED  
BY

SIGNATURE X

This warning is given to you in an effort to secure your cooperation in better observance of the laws. The AISD Police Department believes that good citizens will comply with laws when reminded.

## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND GANGS

ESTABLISH FIRM, FAIR POLICIES THAT REFLECT AN ATTITUDE OF COMMUNITY UNITY WITHIN THE CAMPUS

HANDLE DISCIPLINE VIOLATIONS INDEPENDENTLY WITH EACH GANG MEMBER

NOTE → DISCUSS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

INVOLVE LAW ENFORCEMENT IN SERIOUS CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

COMMUNICATE TO GANG MEMBERS THAT THEY WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR ACTION - LAW VIOLATORS WILL BE PROSECUTED

CUTTING AWAY SWIFTLY AT GANGS REDUCE THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF GANG ACTIVITY FOR BORDERLINE GROUPS

## NOTES

- 1 Michael J. Gant, "Teacher Authority: The Great Illusion," School Safety, (Fall, 1992): 13.
- 2 Ibid., 14.
- 3 Carlos Aguilar, Channel 13 Evening News, (April 21, 1994).
- 4 Judy Williams, AISD Director of Public Information, AISD Administrative Internship Address, (Spring, 1992).
- 5 Aldine ISD Police Chief David Waldron, Personal Interview, (April 19, 1994).
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Aldine ISD Police Department, Monthly Statistics, (March, 1994).
- 12 Aldine Police Lieutenant Vicki Ruhmann, Interview. (April 19, 1994).
- 13 Waldron
- 14 Ibid.