
The Power to Act Locally on Criminal Justice Reform

This caucus seeks to broaden and deepen local League's ability to advocate for effective reforms to the criminal legal system in our communities. We will also provide information for local League implementation of LWVC-supported Legislation.



California Convention Caucus
May 20, 2023 from 5:00-5:50pm

Presenters

(in order of appearance)



Maxine Anderson
LWVC Board, San Francisco
LWVC Criminal Justice Interest Group



Carolina Goodman
LWV Los Angeles
LWVC Criminal Justice Interest Group



Jeanne Brown
LWV San Diego
LWVC Policing in Schools Working Group



Michele Musacchio
LWV Orange Coast
LWVC Policing in Schools Working Group

Presenters

(in order of appearance)



Norma Nelson
LWV Sacramento County
LWVC Sheriff Working Group



Veronica Jones
LWV Pasadena Area
LWVC Sheriff Working Group



Ashley Raveche
LWV Marin
LWVC Deputy Director of Social Policy

The Criminal Justice Position and Interest Group

Join Us!



Maxine Anderson
LWVC Board, San Francisco
LWVC Criminal Justice Interest Group



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- 2019 - LWVC adopted [Criminal Justice Position](#)
 - 2022 - LWVUS concurred with LWVC's Criminal Justice Position
 - LWVC Criminal Justice Interest Group
 - Police in Schools Working Group
 - Sheriff Accountability Working Group
 - Join [LWVC Criminal Justice Google Group](#)

Local League Advocacy on AB481

Collaborating with partner organizations



Carolina Goodman
LWV Los Angeles
LWVC Criminal Justice Interest Group



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- LWV Butte County raised the topic of the militarization of police departments.
 - [California AB 481 Policy for use of military equipment \(2022\)](#)
 - [American Friends Service Committee California AB 481 Toolkit](#)
 - LWV Greater Los Angeles (LWVGLA) observes weekly LAPD Commission meetings
 - LWVGLA met with LAPD Director of Constitutional Policing and Policy
 - LWVGLA met with Los Angeles City Council Public Safety Committee

Police in Schools

What have we learned?



Jeanne Brown
LWV San Diego
LWVC Policing in Schools Working Group



Michele Musacchio
LWV Orange Coast
LWVC Policing in Schools Working Group

When were police brought into our schools?

1. 1900s?
2. 1950s?
3. 1970s?
4. 1990s?
5. 2000s?

History: Before the 70s

- 1972, things began to change
- 1993, New York City, more militarized approach to school policing.
- 1990's - Slow introduction of School Resource Officers (SROs)
- 1999 - Columbine High School Shooting
- 2000 - Federal COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services) grants
- 2013 through 2016 - drop in juvenile crime, but increase in detentions
- Today

Why were police brought into our schools?

- resistance to school integration
- school shootings
- fear of violence
- gangs
- all of the above

Arguments for police in schools

1. School shootings are increasing
2. School Resource Officers (SROs) can act as more than police officers

Beyond law enforcement, SROs also serve as educators, emergency managers, and informal counselors.

“We know from past experiences that the most effective tool for keeping kids safe is armed law enforcement on the campus.”

-Senator Ted Cruz, hours after the Uvalde shooting

Research shows that SROs

- do effectively reduce some forms of violence in schools
- do not prevent school shootings or gun-related incidents
- do intensify the use of suspensions, expulsions, police referrals & arrests of students
- negative effects are consistently over two times larger for Black students than white students
- increase chronic absenteeism, particularly for students with disabilities

- *Brown University Study 2021*

Arguments against police in schools

Research shows:

- violence isn't reduced; presence of weapons increases chance of violence
- presence of police may be an incentive for "death by cop"
- students are intimidated by presence of armed police
- other resources (counselors, etc) are not affordable
- discrimination by SROs against handicapped & students of color is measurable

What about the counselors & nurses in schools?

- Federal dollars opened the door
- School shootings made people feel their children weren't protected
- More dollars for police meant fewer dollars for counselors and school nurses
- Less mental health help, led to more shootings
- More shootings led to more police

Department of Education Study found schools with police

- Arrest rates were higher
- Students of color were arrested 3-10x the rate of white students
- Students with disabilities were arrested 3x that of other students

Possible solutions

- Inform the public
- Counselors, not cops
- Include practices such as Restorative Justice
- Limit SRO's roles & funding
- Break the school-to-prison pipeline

What your League can do

- Use LWVC positions on Criminal Justice and Juvenile Justice and Dependency
- Use California Juvenile Justice Realignment as a guide
- Join the Police in Schools Working Group:
jhisten.brown@gmail.com michelemusacchio@me.com

Research Links

1. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/17/us/los-angeles-school-police.html>
2. <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-educations-office-civil-rights-seeks-information-nondiscriminatory-administration-school-discipline>
3. <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/california/la-me-ln-sd-restorative-justice-20181209-story.html>
4. <https://education.uconn.edu/2020/10/27/the-prevalence-and-the-price-of-police-in-schools/#:~:text=>
5. <https://www.njjn.org/our-work/redesigning-justice-our-youth-action-agenda>
6. <https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/school-prison-pipeline/cops-and-no-counselors>
7. <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/students-color-students-disabilities-arrested-school-police-report/story?id=61454820>
8. <https://www.safetyreimagined.org/papers/school-safety>



Why Sheriff Accountability, Transparency & Oversight Working Group?

Join Us!



Norma Nelson
LWV Sacramento County
LWVC Sheriff Working Group



Veronica Jones
LWV Pasadena Area
LWVC Sheriff Working Group

Why Focus on Sheriffs?

1. Public Safety Crisis with county jails serving as mental health facilities
2. Recidivism
3. Taxpayer burden for lawsuits & families/community suffering loss due to in-custody jail deaths
4. Intolerable jail conditions, particularly for women
5. Unchecked Sheriffs
6. AB 1185 (What is it and what it does)

Sheriff Working Group

GOAL: to encourage & provide tools for local Leagues

AREAS of FOCUS:

1. In-Custody Jail Deaths
2. Excessive Use of Force
3. Reducing Recidivism and Disparities in Incarceration Rates

Reporting In Custody Jail Deaths (AB 2761)

Some deaths were due to:

1. Incarcerate rather than treat for behavioral & medical health issues
2. Insufficient health evaluation at intake
3. Inconsistent or lack of safety checks
4. Unnecessary delays in performing proper life saving measures

Self-reported (standard under reporting) in-custody deaths data sources:

<https://www.auditor.ca.gov/reports/2021-109/supplemental.html>

Northern California: Alameda County - Santa Rita Jail

In-Custody Deaths by Manner Total 99 (2006-2020)	
Manner of Death	Number of Deaths
Accidental	19
Cannot be Determined	2
Homicide Willful (Other Inmate)	4
Natural	52
Suicide	22

Northern California: Sacramento County Jail

In-Custody Deaths by Manner Total 62 (2006-2020)	
Manner of Death	Number of Deaths
Accidental	7
Cannot be Determined	4
Homicide Willful (Other Inmate)	8
Natural	26
Pending Investigation	1
Suicide	16

Southern California: San Diego County Jail

In-Custody Deaths by Manner Total 185 (2006-2020)

Manner of Death	Number of Deaths
Accidental	31
Cannot be Determined	1
Homicide Justified (Law Enforcement)	4
Homicide Willful (Inmate)	8
Natural	88
Pending Investigation	1
Suicide	52

Southern California: Los Angeles County

In-Custody Deaths by Manner Total 421 (2006-2020)

Manner of Death	Number of Deaths
Accidental	39
Cannot be Determined	21
Homicide Willful (Inmate)	19
Natural	251
Pending Investigation	18
Suicide	63

Challenges & Obstacles to Overcome

1. Conservative Board of Supervisors (not interested in law enforcement oversight)
2. Community activist disunity, complacency, discouraged, etc
3. Lexipol policies & influence
4. Deputy Sheriff Association resistance
5. You name it.....

How to Overcome Obstacles of Establishing Community Oversight Boards

1. Need member of Board of Supervisors to take the lead on assuring Sheriff Oversight gets the Votes
2. Education and Advocacy - see resources on [LWVC Criminal Justice Toolkit](#)
3. Join the [LWVC Sheriff Oversight GoogleGroup](#)
4. Restorative justice programs
5. Community Corrections Partnership monitoring & advocacy

Action Items

1. Recommend local League support for Sheriff Oversight
2. Collaborate with other community-based organizations & activists to form a coalition
3. Educate and advocate to find Board of Supervisors support for Sheriff Oversight - be vocal
4. You name it.....

Speaking with One Voice

National, State & Local Action



Ashley Raveche
LWV Marin
LWVC Deputy Director of Social
Policy





Prop 17 Implementation -



- There are 300,000 people on probation, parole, or in jail who are eligible to vote
- League is implementing ACA-6 and Prop 17 with CDCR and DAPO to register people on parole in day centers
- Voting in California Jails, A Community Toolkit

New Face of Suffrage

- **Assembly Constitutional Amendment 4** is a constitutional amendment introduced by Assembly member Bryan.
- **Assembly Bill 1595** would change the Elections Code and is the companion bill to ACA 4.

**FREE =
THE VOTE**



Questions & Answers



Maxine Anderson
LWVC Board, San Francisco
LWVC Criminal Justice Interest Group

Next Steps

- Meet with your local League leadership about justice reform
- Join [LWVC Criminal Justice Google Group](#)
- Explore the [LWVC Criminal Justice Toolkit](#)
- Sign up for [Action Alerts from LWVC](#)
- Email criminaljustice@lwvc.org with questions
- Slides, agenda, & resources



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