

TO: Juvenile Welfare Board Members

FROM: James E. Mills, Executive Director
Lisa A. Sahulka, Director of Programs & Finance

Requested Action

The State Attorney's Office is requesting up to \$30,000 for federal match purposes for the Community Prosecuting Attorney Service System (COMPASS) component of the current State Attorney Safe School Initiative (SASS) contract.

Options

1. Approve the request contingent upon the award of the Federal Grant.
2. Deny the request.
3. Take any other action the Board deems appropriate.

Recommended Action

Allocate up to \$30,000 to the State Attorney's Office for the Community Prosecuting Attorney Service System (COMPASS) component of the current State Attorney Safe School Initiative (SASS) contract, contingent upon the award of the Federal Grant from the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice for community prosecution.

Source of JWB Funds

FY 01-02 Community Contingency – Unallocated Fund.

Fiscal Impact

The FY 01-02 Community Contingency – Unallocated Fund would be reduced by \$30,000 from \$365,349 to \$335,349.

The State Attorney SASS Allocation would increase from \$155,000 to \$185,000.

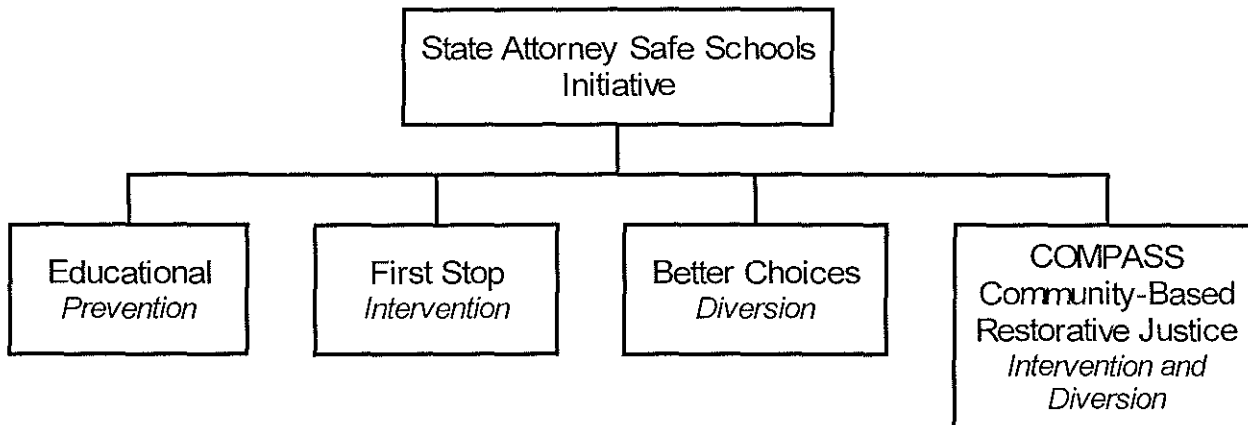
Narrative

- The State Attorney Safe School program is a community-based prosecution program for middle schools. The program places experienced prosecutors in middle school where they become part of the school community working in a preventative effort to reduce crime. Community-based prosecutors decide whether or not an individual is charged with and prosecuted for an offense. This diversion program is a viable alternative to utilizing the costly process of full court proceedings. It also provides the offender the ability to avoid criminal records, court appearances, and increases the ability to monitor the case for public safety purposes. The program is comprised of three components: 1) an education component – attorney staff present a one-period block of instruction on civil rights and responsibilities to sixth grade students; 2) First Stop – an early intervention program for youth 11-15 who have not been in trouble with the law but who have displayed at-risk behavior (students enter this day-long program at the voluntary request of their parents/caretakers); and 3) Better Choices – a diversion program for

offending students with an evening program that addresses impulse control, parent/child communication and a work sanctions program based upon the restorative justice model that has students give back to their community through supervised mentored Saturday work projects.

Component	Minimum Service Level	Actuals FY 00-01
Educational	7250	8140
First Stop	N/A	N/A
Better Choices	280	262
COMPASS	80 Youth 24 parents	

1. 70% of the youth who were identified as eligible for the SASS program were accepted into the program. These are cases that could be potentially diverted from the juvenile court system.
 2. 114 youth completed their total requirements and were successfully terminated from the program.
 3. 52% of the students tested on knowledge of civil rights and legal responsibilities showed an increase of 10% from the pre to the post scores. The measurable objective was 65%.
 4. A database has been developed that describes the case characteristics of the incidents of 850 students in the county.
- In July 11, 2001, the Office of the State Attorney for the Sixth Circuit submitted an application to the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice for community prosecution funding. The purpose of the proposal was to seek funding for a community-based version of the S.A.S.S. model. This fourth component provides a continuum of services and allows the S.A.S.S. program to be more comprehensive.



- COMPASS will be designed as a community restorative justice model. This means that the offender and the community will both have a role in the diversion conditions. Restorative justice boards will be established in each of the target communities. These boards will consider the type and amount of work necessary to "restore" the community. The offender will agree to participate in the workdays and attend community-based anger management and decision making classes in a program which has been developed, called Pathfinder. Prior to COMPASS, communities only wanted juvenile offenders "gone". However, even if the offenders are removed from the community for a short period of time, they always return. Under the COMPASS program, the offender will stay in the community and residents will have greater contact with the offender as he or she progresses through the program. The community has an opportunity in restorative justice to build a relationship with young offenders, offer guidance, and have greater communication with the young person.

- The community-based version will be implemented in five focus communities in Pinellas County: The Starkey Road Community Policing District, North and South Greenwood, Jasmine Court and Wood Valley. The areas were identified because 1) they have active community groups already highly involved in community/justice problem solving; 2) the police agencies are model community policing sites with significant community-based interagency cooperation; 3) the focus communities have all indicated a willingness to become involved in the alternative sanctions element of the program through implementation of the restorative justice model; 4) the focus communities represent a diverse demographic mix of cultures, age groups, and socioeconomic variables that will provide a representative test of the COMPASS activities. There are a total of five collaborators including the State Attorney's Office: Pinellas County Sheriff, Clearwater Police, Suncoast Family YMCA, and the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Suncoast. The Sheriff of Pinellas County and the Clearwater Police Department will provide integration of the program into the existing community policing and crime prevention efforts, and provide space for the attorneys for their service delivery when in the community. The Boys and Girls Clubs of the Suncoast and the Suncoast YMCA will be contracted to provide transportation, supervision for the in-community restorative justice community work days, and the delivery of a six week Intervention Program.
- As per the requirement of the Federal Grant application, all of the collaborators signed an Interagency Collaboration Agreement that they will provide these services and will serve on a task force to implement, operate, and monitor this community-based initiative. Additionally, all of the collaborators, including a representative of the JWB, will serve on a program assessment advisory committee.
- In addition to SASS, the JWB funds the Juvenile Arbitration Program. Juvenile Arbitration also uses the diversion process. Juvenile Diversion Programs not only provide an alternative to spending dollars processing a juvenile through the court system, but also act as an intervention effort before a youth gets in more serious trouble. There are several differences between SASS and Juvenile Arbitration.
- The Juvenile Arbitration Program is a county-wide juvenile diversion program that operates under the Office of the Courts Administrator. Juveniles are referred to the program directly from the Juvenile Court, State Attorney's Office, police agencies, and Pinellas County Schools. Community Service is not necessarily supervised and working within the youth's community is not a mandate. SASS is limited to targeted middle schools and communities. SASS attorneys decide if the youth meet the criteria of the program. SASS mandates that the youth participate in the restorative justice model under supervision, as the goal of SASS is to return the youth to their community in a productive role. SASS attorneys meet with the families in the community. They seek out the families when there is no response to letters or phone calls. Lastly, with the addition of the COMPASS component, SASS will provide a continuum of services from the school system to the community.
- The State Attorney's Office will use the \$150,000 from the Federal Grant to hire two attorneys. The request for \$30,000 in funding from JWB will be used to contract with Boys and Girls Clubs of the Suncoast and the Suncoast YMCA to provide transportation, supervision, and 6-week workshops. Total minimum service level will be 80 youth and 24 parents in FY 01-02. The current SASS total budget would be amended from \$232,930 to \$412,930 . The contract would also be amended to include measurable objectives to capture the community services.

Staff Resource: Susan Biszewski-Eber, Contract Manager