



**Stockton Unified School District  
Police Officers' Association**

**President:** Adam Havens  
**Vice President:** Jeremy Nida  
**Secretary:** Trenton George  
**Treasurer:** Erica Chavez

640 N San Joaquin St, Stockton, CA, 95202  
susdpoa@gmail.com

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**Impact Analysis Of Using The Name  
"Stockton Unified School District Department of Public Safety"**

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**Prepared for:  
SUSD Superintendent Michelle Rodriguez**

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## 1) LIABILITY & USE OF FORCE

Peace officers, who at times, must make arrests on suspected criminal violators, may encounter a higher rate of resistance to arrest over the questionable identification of their department. If the officers are not, or cannot, identify themselves as members of a police department, but rather a "department of public safety" whether this is presented by a uniform, verbally, by a patrol vehicle, or by reputation, can lead to confusion that the peace officer actually has the proper authority to arrest the suspected criminal violator. In such cases, the suspect may not believe he/she can be arrested and could offer a higher level of resistance which can lead to a higher chance of injury to the officer or suspect.

When force is used and Penal Code 148 (resisting arrest) is charged, a question can arise where the arrested individual could legitimately or reasonably doubt that the arresting officers are actual peace officers with the proper authority to place them under arrest.

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## 2) WHAT IS A DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY?

Law enforcement agencies in California who use "Public Safety" in their names are almost entirely Police, Fire, & EMS personnel that are crossed trained in all three public safety duties (SUSD DPS being the exception).

These include:

Lindsay Department of Public Safety  
Rohnert Park Department of Public Safety  
Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety

As taken from Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety's website:

*"The Department of Public Safety is one of the few fully integrated police and fire departments in America. Public Safety Officers are cross-trained as police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMTs)"*

To add confusion, Lincoln Unified School District **Department of Public Safety** operates in the City of Stockton and maintains a **security department** as their police department was eliminated in September 1997.

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## 3) WHAT DOES CALIFORNIA LAW SAY?

California Education Code, Section 38000 states:

(b) The governing board of a school district may establish a school **police department** under the supervision of a school chief of police and, in accordance with Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 45100) of Part 25, may employ peace officers, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 830.32 of the Penal Code, to ensure the safety of school district personnel and pupils, and the security of the real and personal property of the school district.

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4) WHAT ARE THE RECRUITMENT & RETENTION RAMIFICATIONS?

All data obtained from <https://post.ca.gov/Law-Enforcement-Demographics>

**Employment Charts – 2003 to 2023**

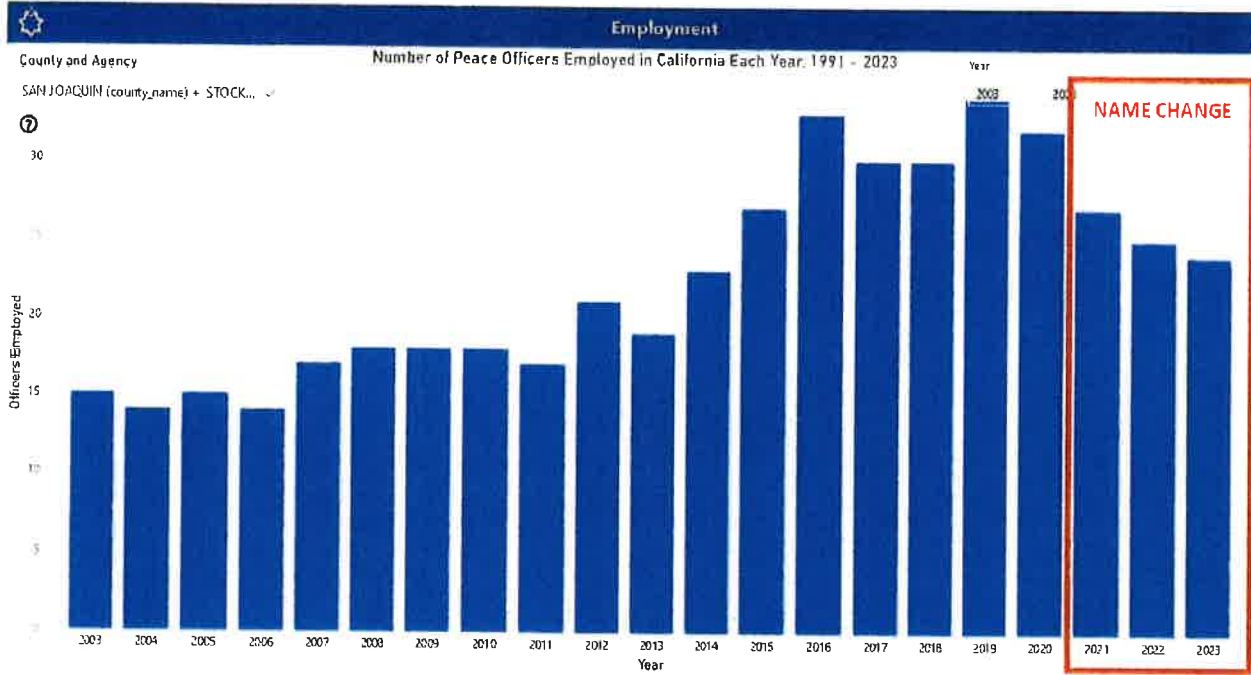
Stockton Unified School District Department of Public Safety:



State of California

**Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training**

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



**San Joaquin County (All Agencies):**  
*Slightly Decreasing*



**California (All Agencies):**  
*Slightly Increasing*



As indicated by the above charts, San Joaquin County and the California as a whole are retaining their officer numbers, while the Stockton Unified School District Department of Public Safety is trending significantly lower.

**Before Name Change:**

- 2018, gained 7 police officers while losing 6 for a net gain of +1, total of 30 officers
- 2019, gained 9 police officers while losing 5 for a net gain of +4, total of 34 officers\*\*
- 2020, gained 1 police officer while losing 3 for a net loss of -2, total of 32 officers

**After Name Change:**

- 2021, gained 0 police officers while losing 5 for a net loss of -5, total of 27 officers\*
- 2022, gained 4 police officers while losing 6 for a net loss of -2, total of 25 officers\*/\*\*
- 2023, gained 3 police officers while losing 4 for a net loss of -1, total of 24 officers\*

*\*Several open positions needing to be filled.*

*\*\*Officer discharged but later obtained job back.*

The general sentiment from SUSD DPS recruiters is that potential applicants do not know what the department is or what they do. SUSD DPS is often mistaken for school security.

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## **5) WHAT ARE OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICE CALLED?**

List of California K-12 School Districts currently having their own Police Departments employing police officers:

- 1) Apple Valley Unified School District Police Department
- 2) Clovis Unified School District Police Department
- 3) Compton Unified School District Police Department
- 4) El Rancho Unified School District Police Department
- 5) Fontana School District Police Department
- 6) Hacienda La Puente Unified School District Police Department
- 7) Hesperia School District Police Department
- 8) Kern High School District Police Department
- 9) Los Angeles School Police Department
- 10) Montebello Unified School District Police Department
- 11) San Bernardino City Unified School District Police Department
- 12) San Diego Unified School District Police Department
- 13) Santa Ana Unified School District Police Department
- 14) Snowline Joint Unified School District Police Department
- 15) Stockton Unified School District Department of Public Safety**
- 16) Twin Rivers Unified School District Police Department
- 17) Val Verde Unified School Police Department

The only school district police on this list that is not called "Police Department" is Stockton Unified School District Department of Public Safety.

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## 6) FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Restoring the name to "Police Department" is paramount to promoting trust and clarity within our community. The original name reflects our direct responsibility and focus to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff within our schools. Restoring our "Police Department" name reaffirms our commitment to serving as guardians and protectors, reinforcing the bond between law enforcement and education. By aligning our name with our primary function, we reinforce our dedication to creating a secure and conducive learning environment for all.

The Stockton Unified School District Police Officers Association continues its pledge of unwavering support for the mission and vision of the department. We remain fully committed to advocating for equality, inclusivity and reducing disproportionality within our educational system. Embracing a guardian mentality, we actively promote a positive academic environment while striving to create a safe and just community for all members. We stand firmly behind the department's vision, working diligently to prevent students from being ensnared in the "School to Prison Pipeline" through implementing restorative justice, youth engagement, community involvement, and a holistic approach to school safety. Our dedication to these principles remains resolute as we work collaboratively toward improving our schools and community.

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[End of Analysis]