



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

ANDREW M. CUOMO
GOVERNOR

Dear Dr. Lonergan,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for attending our event on September 13 and for taking the time to meet with Lisa Santeramo and me on Monday.

As discussed, the creation of the Gang Violence Prevention Unit is part of a comprehensive multi-pronged approach to protect our young people and prevent youth from joining gangs. One of the goals is to use an education-based strategy to help eradicate MS-13 from our communities.

To further protect our youth, New York State Troopers are partnering with the Suffolk County Police Department with the goal of preventing gang violence in our communities before it starts. The selection of certain schools, including yours, was not based on specific reports of gang activities in the schools, rather it was primarily based on intelligence from law enforcement in communities adjacent to and surrounding the districts. Further, we acknowledge that neither the Longwood SHS nor the JHS experience gang activity in their buildings. Our schools are the hub of every community and were chosen as vital partners to help assist our efforts to prevent vulnerable students from joining gangs. Youth are particularly susceptible to recruitment by gangs, and young people are also disproportionately the victims of gang violence. We will work with the school district to make officers available to serve as an additional resource for teachers, administrators and students and complement your existing programs.

The troopers will work with the Suffolk County Police Department to "Educate the Educators," including teachers, administrators, counselors and principals. The troopers and Suffolk County Police Department will teach educators about gangs and how to recognize when a child is at-risk of joining MS-13. They will also provide enhanced strategies for intervention including, but not limited to connecting children with existing programs tailored to their needs, teaching refusal and problem-solving skills, as well as identifying mentorship opportunities within the community.

In addition, the troopers partnering with educators will provide information to students on how to resist the influence of gangs. The presentations will focus on the dangers of joining gangs, provide students advice on how to respond to pressure to join gangs and teach them that they can leave gangs and how to do so. The program also aims to further strengthen relationships between students and the police so that they are comfortable confiding in the officers about gang activity and can help deter others from joining gangs.

Working hand in hand with the local community and local educators, New York State is committed to protecting our young people and putting an end to gang violence. The Gang Violence Prevention Unit is another step in our efforts to work together to ensure that all students have a safe learning environment inside and outside schools.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Letizia Tagliaferro".

Letizia Tagliaferro
Special Counsel for Public Safety,
Executive Chamber

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PERFORMANCE ★ INTEGRITY ★ PRIDE

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