

MUSCATINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gregg Mandsager, City Administrator

FROM: Brett Talkington, Chief of Police

SUBJECT: City Council Agenda Item for August 16, 2018 – Juvenile Diversion Program

DATE: July 30, 2018

INTRODUCTION:

In a cooperative effort between the Muscatine Police Department, Juvenile Intake, Wilton Police Department, West Liberty Police Department, Muscatine Community School District and the Muscatine City Council, the city of Muscatine and surrounding communities will launch a juvenile diversion program. This diversion program is intended to curb recidivism amongst juvenile offenders, while possibly reducing the amount of juvenile delinquency within our area.

BACKGROUND:

The Muscatine Police Department would like to offer the council a brief overview of the diversion program selected to service our community. A short presentation will be given on how the program was selected, how it will operate, which juveniles will be eligible for participation. Presentation should last no more than 15 minutes with the opportunity to ask questions afterwards.

RECOMMENDATION/RATIONALE:

Juvenile diversion programs are generally driven by two different social theories, the Labeling and Differential Association theories. Labeling happens when a juvenile is arrested for a crime and enters the juvenile justice system. They become labeled as a delinquent, begin to think of themselves as a delinquent and continue to act as a delinquent. It becomes somewhat of a self-fulfilling prophecy for the juvenile.

Differential association theory focuses on juveniles who get detained or incarcerated, even for short periods of time. This allows them an opportunity to associate with other delinquent juveniles and through peer building, become indoctrinated into the subculture of juvenile deviance and delinquency.

Our juvenile diversion program is designed to prevent first-time, minor, juvenile offenders from entering the juvenile justice system. Instead, they are diverted into a one-time educational program designed to help them improve their decision making skills. It gives the juvenile the opportunity to change their path and not re-enter the system. Scott County implements a similar program and has reported great success with it.