



# San Diego City Attorney JAN I. GOLDSMITH

## MEDIA ADVISORY

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### **“Please Do Not Write On Our Walls!” The City Attorney Neighborhood Prosecution Unit’s Innovative Approach to Fighting Graffiti at Bell Middle School**

**What:** In the fall of 2010, the Safe Passage/ Safe Routes to School collaborative, consisting of representatives from Bell Middle School, the Bay Terrace and Paradise Hills community, and several city, county and private agencies including the City Attorney, SDPD, Parks and Recreation, Health and Human Services Agency, Councilman Ron Roberts, Rady Children’s Hospital, and Probation, developed a comprehensive action-oriented approach to boost safety around the campus and surrounding community. The partnership strives to create and support sustainable and transferable programs, activities, and outreach to provide a safer and healthier environment for all community members in and around the school.

Through Safe Passage/Safe Routes to School, Bell Middle School Principal Michael Dodson and the City Attorney Neighborhood Prosecutor Jon Dwyer identified Graffiti as a problem on campus. To fight that battle, Bell Middle School will be the first to implement the anti-graffiti campaign, “Please Do Not Write On Our Walls.” The campaign couples the simple request with student involvement to improve student ownership and pride in their school while preventing graffiti on campus. Multiple students submitted their artwork in a sign competition and the artwork above won with its innovative and colorful take on the Bell Middle School community.

A graduated incentive plan, integral to the campaign, creates a stake for continual student involvement. After talking to the student body, free dress, pizza, and ice cream were chosen as incentives for the campaign. The longer Bell Middle School’s walls remain free of graffiti, the better the rewards; however, if graffiti is found on campus, the rewards go back to square one. By increasing student ownership of the project the campaign hopes for a lasting behavioral change. Ultimately, the campaign depends on the students for its success.

**Why:** If successful, the “Please Do Not Write On Our Walls” approach to fighting vandalism will be valuable to both Bell Middle School and its students, improving student pride in the school, rewarding the students for their success, and keeping Bell Middle School’s walls free of graffiti.

**When and Where:** **Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, at 9 a.m.** campaign signs, large and small, will be posted around Bell Middle School’s campus to officially begin “Please Do Not Write On Our Walls” Bell Middle School, 620 Briarwood Rd., San Diego, CA 92139.

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