Preliminary Recommendations
from the Evaluation of the Milwaukee School Resource Officer Program

Prepared by John Rosiak, Prevention Partnerships, April 26, 2018

Background

> The preliminary report you are reading is part of the larger report that will be provided to the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) Board of School Directors in June 2018. That larger report will contain more background on the SRO program evaluation, additional recommendations developed over the next month, more detailed recommendations inserted at the ellipses (…) below, plus conclusions. In addition, quotes from the interviews with SROs and MPS administrators will be included in the final report to further illustrate recommendations.

Prevention Partnerships was chosen to evaluate the Milwaukee School Resource Officer (SRO) program and contracted to begin the work on February 19, 2018. As of April 26, the evaluation is still a "work in progress." A number of steps have been conducted: Review of the literature on best practices related to school-based law enforcement; review of documentation on the experience of Milwaukee's use of SROs; interviews with MPS and Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) stakeholders; and producing this draft of preliminary recommendations for implementation.

Steps to be completed by June 2018 include further analysis of all of the information gathered to produce a final report of recommendations framed in the form of action plans for implementation. It is in this context that the "preliminary recommendations" are made below.

Some of these recommendations can be implemented immediately. For example, many of the preliminary recommendations below can be considered for inclusion in the new MPS/MPD intergovernmental agreement (IGA) being developed in July of 2018, such as:

- a statement about roles that SROs are to carry out, and those they will not;
- reference to SRO roles, along with input into the SRO selection process; and
- recommendations about training the SROs could receive, as well as deliver.

Other recommendations (some near term, some longer term) could be referred to in the new IGA as work to be carried out by the MPS/MPD SRO partnership, such as:

- developing and delivering joint training involving MPD, MPS, and community partners;
- developing a plan to forge partnerships with new community groups who can support students;
- creating a plan to communicate to various publics what SROs do;
- expanding new ways to measure the activities of the SROs; and
- reviewing options for effective deployment of the SROs.

> Note on the SRO program review: MPS, along with its partner MPD, is to be congratulated for its willingness to undertake a review of its SRO program. This shows bold leadership open to continuous quality improvement in the way it delivers an important component of school/community safety. It should also be noted that some of these recommendations build on work already begun by the SRO program.

Summary of Preliminary Recommendations (to date)

These preliminary recommendations are offered for consideration by the MPS Board as it reviews/revises its agreement with the MPD, and for further continuous quality improvement. These recommendations will be supported by a fuller report to be delivered by June 2018, outlining how MPS and MPD, along with other community partners, can "co-produce" a stronger SRO program that is consistent with the beliefs stated in the IGA that "all MPS pupils deserve to receive a good education in a safe and secure school environment."

1. **Clearly define the roles and expectations of the SROs in the documentation of the program, such as the IGA, and in communications with school administration.** Clarification is important for both MPD and MPS staff. This includes defining SRO roles as educator, informal counselor/mentor, and public safety officer. This also includes clarifying the roles that are NOT the purview of the SRO, namely enforcing school rules/discipline; that is the role of school administrators. These roles need to be communicated clearly to MPS staff and other publics via policy documents/trainings.

2. **Examine the selection process for choosing SROs.** Make it clear to SRO candidates and to those MPD, MPS administration/school safety and security, and community representatives interviewing them what the SRO roles are, and the temperament and skillset required for this specialized position.

3. **Review how SROs are involved in training, as recipients and providers.** A) Identify and secure consistent training **for** the SROs on a wide range of topics. B) Identify how SROs/MPD can provide training **to** MPS administrators and staff on a wide range of topics. Most training, because of the multi-disciplinary nature of school safety, should often be conducted jointly along **WITH** school administrators, as well as other school and community partners.

4. **Review/revise the policy documents that govern the SRO program.** Make changes in the IGA, agreed upon by both MPS and MPD leadership, by adding clarifying language about: Roles and expectations; providing input into the SRO recruitment/selection process; recommendations about training; engaging with community partners; expanding and tracking a range of SRO activities; and examining the most effective manner and hours of deployment of the SROs. Make ongoing communication about policies that guide the SRO program a priority.

5. **Expand engagement with the community.** Encourage SROs to build upon existing community partnerships. Create a communications plan (such as distribution of materials about the SRO program, as well as valued tools like resource directories of community agencies/organizations) whereby SROs help bring awareness about the SRO program, and resources available to the school and community.

6. **Review the way MPD tracks SRO activities.** Include in the many activities of the SROs measures that capture efforts to *divert* students from justice involvement. These measures can include referrals of students to restorative practices, mental health and other service providers, mentoring, etc.

7. **Revisit the manner in which SROs are deployed.** While balancing resources available, examine the present use of the "mobile" model where SROs are not assigned to particular schools. Weigh the merits of the mobile model, which allows the flexibility to respond to many more schools, versus the relationships of trust that are developed when assigned more regularly to particular schools. Reconsider the hours SROs are available to ensure coverage of schools beginning before 8:00 a.m.

Preliminary Recommendations Further Explained

Recommendation One:

Clearly define the roles and expectations of the SROs.

Clarify roles of SROs, what they can do, and what they do NOT do.

Clarification is essential for both MPD and MPS staff, so that all parties are on the "same page" in terms of expectations…

Clarify what SROs do. Clarify what role they don't carry out, namely enforce school discipline rules…

One comment in particular summed it up well: "We need clear communications so that all parties understand what the role of the SROs is."—High school principal.

Build out a comprehensive list of SRO roles that Milwaukee's SROs do/can engage in.

These roles include the:

•   Education function…

•   Informal counselor/mentor function…

•   Law enforcement function…

In addition to the above traditional "triad" roles, SROs find themselves carrying out other roles. Sometimes these other roles extend to providing more comprehensive and effective support by conducting home visits, which was occasionally mentioned by SROs, although time constraints limit this effective practice…

The key to being an effective SRO is striking a balance at carrying out the many roles…

Clarifying calls for service SROs do not need to respond to will free them up for more proactive work…

Note the positive roles SROs play in *diverting* youth from justice involvement (sometimes referred to as the "school pathways to the justice system")…

SRO roles need to be communicated clearly to MPS staff and other publics via policy documents and trainings…

Include the role of providing data about SRO activity related to school safety…

Clarify supervision. Make it clear that all of the SROs work for the MPD, and that their supervisors are officers in OCOE, not the school administers…

Recommendations for immediate action (revision of the IGA):

SRO program leadership should revise the IGA by adding a reference to the multiple roles that the SROs carry out, and the role they not carry out, namely school discipline.

(This addition could be placed in the current IGA in Section I. B. as a new entry under Officer's Duties. The language below could be number 1, with the existing 1-5 moving down the list.

Suggested language as an addition, listing it as the first officer duty:

1. Carrying out the multiple roles of the SRO, including that of educator (of students, staff, and parents), informal counselor/mentor, and law enforcement officer. One of the roles that SROs do NOT carry out is that of enforcing student discipline or school rules.

Suggested language to add as a supplement to current duty #4 regarding training:

[Existing language:] Attending various MPS meetings and training sessions to learn about school policies, practices and concerns.

[Consider adding the following statement about the SRO training role:] OCOE/SROs will also be involved in developing/delivering regular joint training in concert with MPS staff on a variety of safety topics, as needed.

The SRO program recognizes that it is critical that all parties agree upon safety policies and carry out a common approach with everyone comprehending the roles that each partner plays. Training topics will include understanding the roles of all parties in situations like active shooter and other emergency management trainings. Topics will also include clarifying the roles and limitations of the SROs as they interact with the school.

Recommendation for near-term:

In regular OCOE meetings and in roll call have regular discussions about the varied roles SROs are playing to get a sense of any changes in proportion of time spent in certain activities, and whether new roles are being played or asked for by school administrators. SRO program leaders (OCOE and the Department of Safety and Security) should have regular (monthly, or more frequently if needed) meetings about roles to monitor that goals are being met.

Recommendations for long-term:

SRO program leadership should monitor data (OCOE data reports, SRO Sharepoint and Excel reports, input from SRO supervisors and SROs) related to roles and make any needed adjustments in policy, training, communications, data tracking, etc. This recommendation could be carried out at least yearly during annual reviews of the SRO program.

Review the description of SRO duties used in the current OCOE job posting to consider whether all of the expected job tasks are included, such as the informal counseling/mentoring role as appropriate for law enforcement, and others identified by leadership and the SROs themselves. This recommendation recognizes that SROs can sometimes play an informal counselor role, which is a support, but not a substitute for the regular counselors available to the students.

Recommendation Two:

Examine the selection process for choosing SROs.

Review the criteria for recruiting and selecting SROs.

Best practices in selecting SROs include applying a set of formal screening criteria that considers both officer experience and whether the officer has the right demeanor to work in a school setting…

Selecting criteria. Selecting the "right" SRO is critical for program success and supports the MPS vision statement that "Schools will be safe, welcoming, well-maintained and accessible community centers meeting the needs of all." Likewise, the SRO candidate must also "possess a strong interest in education, juvenile engagement, and community engagement activities," as stated in the current OCOE job posting for the SRO position. SROs must be officers who have a special dedication to carrying out their job in a "fair and equitable" manner…

Select officers who show special abilities to carry out the "guardian" approach to policing. This concept was described well in the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015)…

Background needed for SROs…

Some best practices literature emphasizes the importance of minimizing turnover among SROs…

Ensure that all candidates chosen are qualified. It is critical that all SROs placed in the job are qualified in terms of experience and temperament. Recruitment efforts should be strong and sufficient to gain a qualified pool of candidates. Officers who do not "fit" and meet all requirements should not be put in the position of SRO…

Examine the selection process to ensure that it reflects the diverse and clear roles that the police/school/community wants in its SRO program.

In the SRO selection process continue the multi-step process of written and oral application…

Include expanded representation of MPS and community representation in the process of selection the SRO.

Ensure that there is input into the process from a variety of parties, not just MPD and human resources from MPS. SRO program leadership should determine the composition of the interview panel or those to be involved in other ways, such as providing input into the interview questions…

MPS representation. In addition to human resource staff from MPS, the selection should involve an experienced MPS administrator, and the MPS Department of Safety and Security.

Community representation. Include representation from community youth-serving organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Clubs, Violence-Free Zones, or others…

Make sure that these community representatives are clear about the roles and responsibilities of the SROs so that they are adequately prepared to provide input into the SRO selection process. It is important to note that when including representatives who are not directly familiar with the SRO program care must be taken to clarify the roles and expectations for SROs, so that everyone has a common point of reference…

Recommendation for immediate action (revision of the IGA):

SRO program leadership should revise the IGA by adding a reference about officer selection. (This addition could be placed in the current IGA in Section I. City's Responsibilities at the end of Section A. Officer Assignment, or by adding a new section on "Officer Selection".)

Suggested language to consider adding:

Officer Selection:

Given the special demands of the SRO position, particular attention should be paid to the process of selecting the SROs with the right background, temperament, and approach. The process will involve a job posting that clearly outlines the roles and requirements of an SRO. It will involve written and oral questions, and an interview process that involves representation from MPD, MPS safety and security, experienced MPS school administration, and the community. All parties interviewing will understand the multi-faceted roles and limits of the SROs.

Recommendations for near-term:

Revise the "Selection Criteria" in the current job posting memo to include a statement that the successful SRO candidate will "Express an interest/willingness to seek/participate in specialized training that will equip them for the SRO duties."

Revise the selection process to always include an interview panel. (The current process says "*may* include a panel interview.") This panel should be made up the list indicated in the suggested language change for the IGA, namely, that it will include "representation from MPD, MPS safety and security, experienced MPS school administration, and the community."

Align any changes in the IGA with the OCOE job posting.

Recommendation for long-term:

Work with SRO program leadership during the annual review of the SRO program to examine whether changes need to be made to the selection criteria and process for hiring the SROs.

Recommendation Three:

Review how SROs are involved in training, as providers and recipients.

*Identify and secure training **for** the SROs.*

SRO program leadership should seek out or develop training that supports the SROs in doing their job most effectively. First of all, make sure that SROs are trained as a basic SRO by sending new officers to a national or state basic SRO training…

Priority topics… Ensure that SROs, along with MPS staff at the building level, are trained how to respond to "active shooter" scenarios, along with other emergency or crisis management situations. This training will keep in mind how each agency partner has a different, complementary role in emergencies, and that these roles need to work together. As noted in the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools "Building Blocks to School Safety" toolkit, "Diversity from within the school community, as well as from the greater community, will ensure a broader perspective and increase capacity by adding knowledge, expertise, and resources."

Ensure that the MPD training academy is involved in the process of identifying and providing training for SROs.

Other training topics…

Make sure SROs have all possible tools available…

Make sure that SRO supervisors are vigilant advocates for training for SROs…

Sources of training. The supervisors can also identify a variety of sources for training SROs, using a variety of sources…

Training venues…

*Identify how SROs/MPD can provide training **to** MPS administrators and staff.*

MPD can provide training to MPS and other partners on a range of topics related to making students and staff safer…

Ensure that those involved in developing/delivering regular training to MPS staff on a variety of safety topics are trained well themselves in those topics (example: active shooter training provided by the MPD intelligence fusion center and investigations management division.)

*Provide training in "joint" or multi-disciplinary fashion **with** MPS and other partners. Develop/arrange training so that it is delivered on a regular, ongoing basis to as many SROs and staff possible.*

Principals and police interviewed talked about how MPD, often in concert with MPS and other partners, could train **together** on a range of topics related to making students and staff safer…

Training should be uniform/standard for all agencies so as to allow or provide consistency across the district…

Train SROs extensively WITH the school safety assistants ("safeties")…

Develop joint training with input from all parties to ensure buy-in…

Develop an ongoing training schedule.

Scheduling training. Plan training throughout the year using a variety of times and venues, including MPS's regular "banking days" throughout the year, back to school meetings, professional development during the Summer break and other times when school is not in session, at joint debriefings at the end of the year to identify strategies that can be used the following year, in-service training, existing, scheduled events such as the monthly principal and assistant principal "institutes" run out of MPS Central Services, and roll call…

Recommendation for immediate action (revising the IGA):

SRO program leadership should consider revising the IGA by expanding the reference to training in current Section I. B. 4. Reference should be made in the IGA to training that the OCOE/SROs will provide **to**, and **with** MPS. (See suggested language in Recommendation 1 on roles, considering the language as an amendment to current duty #4 regarding training:

[Existing language:] Attending various MPS meetings and training sessions to learn about school policies, practices and concerns.

[Consider adding the following:] In addition to attending training sessions for their own professional development, OCOE/SROs will also be involved in developing/delivering regular training to MPS staff on a variety of safety topics. Priority topics like active shooter and emergency management, and others, as needed. Training topics will also include clarifying the roles of the SROs.

Recommendations for near-term:

Develop a system of collecting information on all trainings available to SROs. Continually add trainings to this training inventory/schedule, identifying the topic, dates, who can attend, etc.

Promote any relevant safety training to all SROs, and to MPS staff. Expand the promotion of joint training to broader community partners working in school safety.

Encourage SROs and MPS staff to identify on an ongoing basis any topical training needed to "learn about school policies, practices, and concerns" (from the OCOE job posting). Assign priority to this list and develop ways to provide needed training.

Recommendations for long-term:

During the annual review of the SRO program, SRO program leadership should examine the kinds of training SROs have taken, who has taken what training, and any associated outcomes. Those receiving training are expected to brief their peers about what they learned in trainings they may have attended as an individual, which will reinforce knowledge for all. During that annual review of training also examine the trainings OCOE/SROs have delivered **to** MPS staff, as well as all of the **joint** trainings developed/delivered.

Examine outcomes of the trainings. Conduct an inventory of the trainings provided, and review requests from the SROs and MPS for the topics/kinds of trainings desired for the next year.

Recommendation Four:

Review/revise the policy documents that underpin the SRO program.

Make changes in the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with language clarifying roles and expectations, input into the SRO recruitment/selection process, recommendations about training, and other amendments.

Governance documents are essential tools to guide the SRO program…

The IGA can be improved by clarifying statements about roles of the SRO…

Inter-agency cooperation requires the ability to be flexible (usually upon mutual agreement by both parties)…

Annual review of the IGA. The IGA, along with all other aspects of the program should be reviewed on an annual basis, with the SRO leadership dedicating time at the end of the year to review the elements of the agreement, and discuss amendments for continuous quality improvement…

A clear role statement is essential in the IGA and other supporting documentation…

Selection of the officers best suited to be SROs is also essential for program success. It is critical to have the right officer with the right background, temperament, and approach. Best practices demand it. Anything less can result in a problematic situation that can undermine the SRO greatly. That is why a statement on officer selection should be made in the IGA…

Training provided to the SROs, as well as by the SRO to MPS staff, along with joint training where are parties are trained together is also recommended for inclusion in the IGA…

As noted by one SRO supervisor, make sure that the SROs are aware of not just the policies, but the procedures they must follow. For example, the MPD SROs seem quite clear that they should not enforce school discipline. It would be very beneficial for the SROs, MPS staff, and the general public to know that that position is formalized in the IGA…

When revising the IGA, reference should be made to strong supervision of the SROs. This reference should engender discussion about supervision, and whether more SRO supervisors, dedicated to strictly SRO functions, should be available to support the program

Make ongoing communication about policy related to the SRO program a priority.

The IGA is a very important public document. It can be a very strong and transparent statement of the intentions of the MPD and MPS. The document is a tool that can be used to promote the SRO program by citing it in public meetings, and in communications materials used to educate all partners about the program…

Communications about the program will result in greater understanding about the program…

Recommendation for immediate action (revising the IGA):

Make changes in the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with language clarifying roles and expectations; input into the SRO recruitment/selection process; recommendations about training provided to the SROs, as well as by the SRO to MPS staff, along with joint training where all parties are trained together is also

recommended for inclusion in the IGA; strong supervision of the SROs; and new actions to include when measuring the activities of the SROs.

Recommendations for near-term:

On an ongoing basis, OCOE and the MPS Department of School Safety and Security should continue to note any issues that may need to be addressed in the next IGA revision, or other supporting documentation. These issues can be collected by paying attention to emerging issues that come up in meetings with principals, roll call, supervisor meetings, trainings, etc.

Develop the practice of using the IGA as a tool to communicate about the SRO program. Make reference to it in meetings with school administrators and others involved in the SRO program. Cite the IGA to emphasize priorities (such as the fact that the SRO is not to be involved in school discipline.

Recommendation for long-term:

Make it a practice to annually review and revise, as needed, the IGA and any other policy and practice documents related to the SRO program.

Recommendation Five:

Expand engagement with the community.

Encourage SROs to build upon and expand existing community partnerships.

Collaborative engagement with the community is one of the hallmarks of SRO best practices. This collaboration has been duly noted by police and principals interviewed. As Ms. Lolita Patrick, Principal, Pulaski High School puts it, "I have always appreciated having the SROs because it allows us to create collaborative partnerships to improve school climate and culture."

One of MPS's Eight Big Ideas is to "Strengthen Communications Systems and Outreach Strategies." This goal says that "the community is engaged in, understands and supports the work of MPS and families choose our district as a trusted and valued education provider."…

But building police-community relationships is hard work…

One SRO supervisor shared that "We know there is a tension between police and community, but I feel the SRO program bridges the gap. It creates rapport with students and the community."

One principal explained that the SRO program gives Milwaukee police the opportunity to relate to the students in a positive, not an "official way" (meaning, exercising the enforcement authority of issuing a citation). And, the school affords a "neutral place" in the community for this positive interaction to take place.

OCOE/SROs can continue to work in concert with others in the community to present to that community what the multiple roles of the SROs are, and to hear from the community what their issues are, and to figure jointly how to work together to make the community safer…

SROs, along with MPS, should continue to reach out to community partners to "co-produce" school safety. Engagement with the community is an ongoing process of learning…

To strengthen community partnerships, the SRO program should pay attention to the training of SROs to help students and staff make connections to resources in the community. In that way the School Resource Officers are a RESOURCE to the school and community…

Ensure that SROs are aware of diversion programs and resources, and know how to connect students to them.

Keeping youth in school and out of involvement with the justice system (sometimes referred to as "breaking the school-to-prison pipeline") requires more partners than just the school system and police department. Community providers and others outside of the school play a key role…

Identify and create communications resources SROs can use in their work.

MPD/MPS can create new communications about the SRO program itself (including print and website)…

The SRO program would benefit by establishing clearer goals that are communicated throughout MPD, MPS, and to the broader community… Materials can communicate to schools and parents how they should contact the police for service…

SROs can distribute a variety of materials, starting with existing resources like…

It is fitting that the SRO program is situated in MPD's Office of Community Outreach and Education...

To carry out the most effective collaborative efforts it is important to have the most proactive and positive SROs assigned to talk to the community to explain the goals of the SRO program and to listen to the community to build community trust…

Recommendation for immediate action (revising the IGA)

SRO program leadership should consider revising the IGA by adding statements about close work with community partners. This language would fit naturally in Section I. City's Responsibility under A. Officer Assignment and B. Officer Duties.

Suggested language to consider: TBD.

Recommendation for near-term:

SRO supervisors should encourage and enable SROs to develop a plan to participate in as much proactive community engagement as possible. Include in this plan training and communications (print and web-based) that the SROs can use to communicate what the program is all about.

Recommendation for long-term:

Make it a practice to annually review and revise, as needed, the IGA with language that strengthens the community engagement of the OCOE SRO program, based on new issues and strategies chosen.

Recommendation Six:

Review the way MPD tracks SRO activities.

Continue to review/revise the documentation that is used to capture/measure the work of the SROs.

Data collection as an important role. As the management expression goes: "What gets measured, gets done." One of the roles that the OCOE/SROs carries out is to provide data related to school safety…

Ensure regular review of data…

Measure diverse roles, including referrals of students to restorative practices, mental health and other service providers, mentoring, etc.

MPD and MPS should be mindful of the challenges of supervising a position as unique as the SRO. This challenge can be addressed by smart use of the documentation of SRO activities and with regular communications/meetings.

Recommendation for immediate action:

SRO program leadership should consider revising the IGA by adding a reference about new ways to collect and track the varied activities of the SROs.

Suggested language to consider:

To Section I. C. "MPD Record Keeping and Data Sharing" add a statement such as: MPD will track the varied activities of the SROs, monitoring them on an ongoing basis for the purpose of program improvement.

Recommendation for near-term:

OCOE/SRO supervisors will monitor data to see how SROs spend their time, including how much time is spent on MPS-related matters, and how much time is spent on other matters…

Recommendation for long-term:

OCOE, along with the MPS Director of Safety and Security should review annually the data collected on SRO activities. The analysis can be used for a variety of reasons including:

- Assessing how SROs spend their time as they carry out their various functions;
- Measuring additional SRO activities like referrals of students to restorative practices, mental health and other service providers, mentoring, etc.;
- Providing SRO program leadership and the community with data about the program;
- Providing transparency so the public better understands the roles, purposes, and accomplishments of the program;
- Presenting the insights needed for ongoing SRO program improvement; and
- Helping to make the case for the SRO program.

Recommendation Seven:

Revisit the manner in which SROs are deployed.

*Examine closely the manner in which the "mobile" model is used, where SROs are not assigned to particular schools. Explore ways to dispatch officers with more **consistency** to particular schools to promote the development of stronger relationships and support additional proactive activity.*

The current IGA states that "Schools will be prioritized based on school district needs and the age groups of the students that are in most need of police proactive interaction." This gives MPD the guidance to make sure that SROs are deployed in the most strategic manner possible, given the resources available.

Work to assign SROs in a way that keeps them consistently in the same police district so that they are working with the same schools. Devise ways that MPD can adjust its deployment of SROs to maintain some of the central virtues of the "assigned" model of SROs (deeper knowledge of the school building; stronger relationships with staff and students; increased trust with students) as it adapts the current mobile model…

The SRO program needs to weigh the merits of the mobile model, which allows for the flexibility to respond to many more schools versus the relationships of trust that are developed when assigned to particular schools…

Many SROs state clearly that spending more time in particular schools allows them to establish relationships with students and staff in a way that the current mobile model does not…

As one SRO put it, "Make sure officers have time to work with kids, not just respond to calls for service. Our current time is "polluted" with calls," according to a former SRO. SRO presence that allows them to build positive relations will support broader MPD departmental goals of enhancing police-community relations…

Regarding the return on investment (ROI) for the SRO program, one SRO put it this way, "with the way SROs have to respond to calls and go all over the city they do not have time to do proactive work; that [proactive work] is where you have the ROI."

Attention must be paid to the prioritization of the calls for service, and the roles that different parties (police dispatch, OCOE, the SROs, MPS Director of Safety and Security) can play in that discussion. MPD needs to consider the priority of calls, and how to respond to emergencies across boundaries, when necessary. Solutions to be reviewed include…

Assign more officers as SROs.

Greater coverage also demands that more officers be trained to work in the capacity of SRO. The observation that more SROs are needed was called for by principals, SROs, and SRO supervisors alike...

With additional officers would come the need for additional supervision…

Consider adjusting the timing of SRO availability for coverage at the beginning of the school day.

Reconsider the hours SROs are available to ensure coverage of schools beginning before 8:00 a.m. because arrival time can be a challenging time for many schools. This recommendation is in response to a common request by school principals so that the SROs are able to support schools earlier in the day. Earlier coverage, and the additional communications that affords, will better able SROs to address issues related to coming to

school, or to conduct a time sensitive investigation that originated during the prior evening or weekend (such as threats). This readjustment will have to be accomplished being cognizant of the related police assignments that may come in at the end of the shift.

Ensure that SROs are supported through supervision.

As SROs are deployed to work in schools across the city, continue to attend to their supervision by OCOE, and coordination with MPS Department of Safety and Security.

Supervision of SROs is necessary, despite the perception that SROs are often quite independent, and working on their own. This supervision needs to come from the chain of command at MPD, meaning the SRO supervisors and the OCOE commander…

Supervise SROs by…

The assessment of the SROs should be different than the evaluation criteria used for a patrol officer…

Provide SROs (particular with any increase in SROs) with additional supervisors to maximize the opportunity to carry out the varied tasks of the SROs…

Recommendation for immediate action (revising the IGA):

SRO program leadership should consider revising the IGA by adding a reference about annual review of the most productive way to deploy/assign SROs, given the resources available.

Suggested language to consider:

Current language at the end of the second paragraph in Section I. A. Officer Assignment states that "The twelve officers will not be assigned solely to one school but will be mobile to reach more schools and students."

New language to consider adding to the above paragraph:

OCOE will continually work with MPS to configure ways in which to deploy SROs in a more regular manner so that the same SROs are more consistently working with the same schools for the purpose of building stronger relationships with staff and students at those schools.

Recommendations for near-term:

OCOE/SRO supervisors should regularly review the ways in which the SROs are deployed, making note of obstacles to more consistent coverage, as well as strategies to overcome those obstacles.

Reconsider adjusting the timing of SRO availability at the beginning of the school day to ensure coverage of schools beginning before 8:00 a.m. because arrival time can be a challenging time for many schools…

Consider revisiting the experiment with principals being able to call particular SROs directly, monitoring this practice for the purpose of achieving an appropriate and strong relationship with the school, guarding against responding to calls that do not warrant an SRO's presence, and ensuring that urgent matters are addressed by calling 911.

SRO program leaders (OCOE, along with the MPS Director of Safety and Security) should review on an ongoing basis the manner in which SROs are deployed to ensure that officers are dispatched with more **consistency** to particular schools to promote the development of stronger relationships and support additional proactive activity.

Recommendation for long-term:

OCOE should develop the data (quantitative and anecdotal) to "make the case" for an increase in SROs available to the schools in throughout Milwaukee.