

Final Report of the Program Evaluation of Milwaukee's School Resource Officer Program

Submitted to the Milwaukee Board of School Directors

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Background and Executive Summary

The Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) has an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement (IGA) with the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) to financially support police officers engaged in local schools as School Resource Officers (SROs). This program was set up to address local desires, needs, and circumstances, as determined by local stakeholders. In Milwaukee's SRO program, the officers are deployed in "mobile" fashion in the schools for the purpose of being proactive, and ready to respond in the event of an emergency or other situation requiring the police. But MPS is not content with the status quo. MPS, along with the MPD, wants to examine how it can improve its SRO Program. To that end, MPS issued a Request for Proposal, calling for an in-depth look at the SRO Program in Milwaukee. This report is the product of that call to evaluate Milwaukee's SRO program, and to develop and deliver findings that can be used to inform policy, procedures, and intergovernmental agreements about that SRO Program.

The report you are reading is the result of a process that included input from MPS and MPD, combined with best practice literature, reflected upon by the author as well as selected advisors from around the country. The report is intended to be a springboard for the Milwaukee school-law enforcement partnership as it seeks to continually improve its school safety mission in general, and its School Resource Officer program, in particular.

Prevention Partnerships was chosen to evaluate the Milwaukee School Resource Officer (SRO) program and contracted to begin the work on February 19, 2018. A number of steps were conducted as a part of this evaluation including a 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 MPD stakeholders; producing a draft of preliminary recommendations for implementation—which were developed after continual dialog with the SRO program leadership; presentation of these preliminary recommendations to the Milwaukee Board of School Directors, and further development of these recommendations, with input from specially chosen outside advisors.

Some of the recommendations for program improvement presented below can be implemented immediately. For example, many of the preliminary recommendations can be considered for inclusion in the new MPS/MPD IGA being developed in July of 2018, such as a:

- statement about roles that SROs are to carry out, and those they will not;
- description of the SRO selection process; and
- reference 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.

Project, Scope, Approach, and Methodology

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine best practices in SRO programs that might apply to the Milwaukee SRO Program, and to convey that information to the SRO program leadership in a way that can be implemented. The evaluation focus proposed by Prevention Partnerships—which brings decades of experience supporting SRO programs—presented the “clearest and shortest path in determining best practices in a large urban setting and the necessary systems required to support and sustain them, comparing these to the current program practices and current support systems, and offering recommendations for an incremental implementation plan to achieve best practices.” (Addendum 1 to SRO Evaluation Request for Proposal)

The scope, approach, and methodology of the project entailed:

- An understanding of the current situation in Milwaukee through the study of pertinent documentation and performance of a SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;
- A literature review about SRO programs with special attention paid to Milwaukee’s situation;
- An understanding of the issues and gaps between the best practices (and the systems that support them) and what the Milwaukee SRO Program is currently doing, as determined through structured interviews with local stakeholders;
- An analysis of all of this information;
- Development of recommendations for specific action and implementation;
- Review of those recommendations by a specially selected group of outside subject matter experts;
- Development of a final report/presentation of recommendations for specific action for MPS and its partners to consider.

Focus on practicality and implementation: During the course of the strategic interviews with stakeholders, constant attention was made to the practicality of strategies and ideas for implementation.

One of the key methods used in this “action evaluation” project was ongoing interaction with the SRO program leadership. The purpose of this dialog held throughout the process was to make sure that the evaluator was collecting the information needed, and that the information collected was ultimately going to be valuable to the SRO program’s goal of continuous quality improvement.

This evaluation will help MPS/MPD define what it wants its “SRO Program” to be, and to take practical action steps to implement its SRO Program. (See John Rosiak’s article, “Action Steps to Strengthen Your School-Law Enforcement Partnership” published in the National Association of School Resource Officer’s Journal of School Safety, Winter 2016, and accessible at www.rosiakassociates.com under “Publications,” where many other articles related to this proposal may be found.)

Note about the context of this work:

Before addressing the specific topic of the Milwaukee SRO program, it is important to make a note about the larger context. Building safer schools and communities is work that is broad and multi-faceted. It requires using the right strategies with the right populations, over time. It would be ineffective and fruitless to think that one program or effort was going to address all problems. One of the greatest learnings about best practices needed for building safer schools and communities is that broad collaboration is essential, with many parties doing many things well, over time. This evaluation looked at the SRO program in Milwaukee, and how it is implemented. The program is a critical part of the community’s commitment to provide a “safe and secure school environment.” The author of this report, along with MPD and MPS, recognize that the responsibility of providing such an environment is much broader than just the SRO program alone.

Notes on the Recommendations that Follow:

- The recommendations in this report are made **for consideration** by MPS and MPD.
- These recommendations are offered to the MPS Board of School Directors, and for deliberation by the **SRO program leadership team** (the leadership of the MPD Office of Community Outreach and Education (OCOE) program which oversees the SROs, and the MPS Department of School Safety and Security).
- Recommendations are framed in a way consistent with **SMART action planning**, that is to say, plans that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Action plans require that particular people/positions are identified to carry them out. Unless otherwise specified, the parties responsible for carrying out the action plans would most likely be the SRO program leadership—namely, the MPS Director of Safety and Security, and the commander of MPD’s Office of Community Outreach and Education, working jointly to carry a task to completion.
- **Time-frames** for those recommendations for action are *immediate* (those developed for possible changes in the IGA to be revised in July of 2018), *near-term*, and *long term*. Time frames for near- and long-term tasks are subject to the particular tasks, requirements, and constraints on MPD, MPS, and other partners. Near term could be about three to six months. Longer-term could be a year or more. Time frames for each task will need to be refined by the partners involved, based on their supports and limitations.
- Attention is paid to **feasibility of each recommendation**, through the lens of, “What can be done given the resources available and/or attainable?” The approach taken by the author of these recommendations was to focus on feasible *implementation of strategies for improvement*. In the course of developing these recommendations much attention was paid to how they might be put into place. Over the course of the project, regular dialog took place with SRO program leadership (MPD’s OCOE commander and Director of MPS’s Department of Safety and Security). The practical aspect of implementing recommendations, whether they be easier or more challenging to accomplish, was continually considered.

Summary of Recommendations to Strengthen Milwaukee's SRO Program

These recommendations are offered for consideration by the MPS Board as it reviews/revises its agreement with the MPD, and for further continuous quality improvement of the SRO program. These recommendations outline 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 and trainings 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 providers and recipients.** 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 a 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 the many activities of the SROs, including 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 allowing 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.

Recommendations Further Explained

Recommendation One:

Clearly define the roles and expectations of the SROs in the documentation of the program, such as the IGA, and in communications and training with school administration.

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

Clarification is important for both MPD and MPS staff, so that all parties are on the “same page” in terms of expectations. The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), in a policy statement says that best practices “clearly define the roles of the SRO to include those of:

- Law enforcement officer
- Teacher
- Informal counselor.”

NASRO and the federal Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office have traditionally defined these three functions as the “triad” roles of the SRO.

Roles can be clarified in numerous ways: Stating them in the IGA; using the defined roles in recruiting, interviewing, and selecting SROs; training SROs according to the varied roles they carry out; evaluating the SROs for the way they carry out those roles. More on SROs in below.

One of the common gaps between best practices and what is happening locally in the field is a lack of definition about the multiple roles the SROs play in a particular community. It is important to clarify what SROs do, and what they do not do. In its policy statement NASRO says that best practices “prohibit SROs from becoming involved in formal school discipline situations that are the responsibility of school administrators.” Regarding the latter point, the Milwaukee SRO program should clarify that SROs don’t carry out the role of enforcing school discipline rules.

SRO roles can also be clarified for MPS staff by MPD meeting on a regular basis with MPS administrators and staff and having clear discussions about the roles the Milwaukee SROs play, and when administrators should call the SROs. Included in this general discussion should be the MPS Manager of Student Discipline, because of that person’s role to ensure that “the implementation of the district’s policies concerning discipline are fair and equitable.” MPS recognized and reinforced that maintaining a “fair and equitable disciplinary policy throughout Milwaukee Public Schools” is a priority when it established the new position of Manager of Student Discipline.

In the regular meetings MPS administrators and staff have with MPD, all parties may need to continually reinforce that schools are not to ask SROs to be used for enforcement of school rules. This issue was a challenge for some Milwaukee schools in the past. From the interviews conducted it appears that it remains a problem today, but to a lesser extent. Clarifying SRO roles is something that has to be reinforced on a continual basis. In addition to in-person meetings/trainings, MPD can provide written materials shared with the school staff and community.

These communications efforts should make sure to share information about the *positive roles* SROs play in the life of students and the community (according to a high school principal). One comment in particular summed it up well:

"We need clear communications so that all parties understand what the role of the SROs is."
—Milwaukee high school principal.

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

As mentioned above, the traditional triad roles of the SRO include the:

- *Education function* (educating students by delivering presentations on topics such as social media/child pornography, bullying, drugs, and many other issues facing youth; informing MPS staff about safety issues in their school and how they can address them; educating parents about the same). It is important to note that this education function is not just about educating students; SROs educate staff and parents, as well. This educational function is noted in the current IGA, which states that the duties of the SROs shall include: "Working in a collaborative and positive way to provide educational resources to pupils and parents regarding issues related to alcohol and other drugs, laws, ordinances and the juvenile code, the role of law enforcement in the educational setting, violence and other crime prevention, and personal safety information and instruction."
- *Informal counselor/mentor function.* SRO roles also include building positive relationships with youth, as well as staff and parents. (As one principal noted: It is important to also share what the SRO role is with parents, because parents can get confused about their function.) Principals and SROs interviewed recommended that SROs get more involved in restorative practices by making sure that everyone is aware of the program and can refer students to it. One SRO noted that "SROs can be involved in restorative practices, which will help students to teach self-management skills. SRO presence in the circles will remind students of the consequences of their actions." Consider how SROs can participate in restorative circles.

It is important to acknowledge and support the SROs in carrying out their many positive, relationship building functions "so that they will be seen as partners, not just enforcers." (Comment from a high school principal.) Engage SROs in a range of activities related to this mentor function, including conducting "talking sessions" with youth in trouble, and having SROs be part of a program in the school that supports youth coming out of a detention program or in probation. (Request from a high school principal.) Enable SROs to get more involved in the education of youth, by presenting at assemblies and in classrooms. (Request by high school principals.)

A note on the "counseling" role of the SRO: Law enforcement officers are not trained as counselors like other school and community personnel. The counseling role of the SRO refers to their "informal" role of advising/encouraging/guiding a student. Sometimes this is accomplished when the SRO—because of the relationship that he or she has with a student—observes particular behavior that could be better addressed by a professional counselor and say to the student, "let's go talk with Ms. Smith" and walk with the student to carry out a "warm handoff" to the counselor.

The SROs, as a whole, come to the job with a wide variety of experiences. Some have worked in the field of education in previous jobs, prior to becoming a police officer. The SROs often receive a range of training that is akin to counseling, such as Mental Health First Aid, trauma-informed policing, community engagement, etc. Every day these officers “counsel” citizens regarding the law in lieu of a citation. As the OCOE commander of the SROs notes: “Officers can and certainly do advise students and schools from time to time regarding available resources such as social workers, child protective services, the Mobile Urgent Treatment Team, Office of Violence Prevention, community partners, mentoring and relationship building programs, etc.” These SROs also are trained to know their limitations and to make referrals to professional providers, as the situation warrants.

- *Law enforcement function.* During the interviews many principals and all law enforcement officers discussed the many public safety functions carried out by SROs, ranging from being “peacemakers and deterrents through their visibility and relationships” employed in afterschool activities, to dealing with drug possession, to sexual assaults, and other criminal offenses. SROs play an important public safety function “standing by” in support of administrators and school safety officers. This practice refers to allowing the school employees to do their jobs, such as a locker search, using the “reasonable suspicion” standard that applies to educators. Should something dangerous/illegal come to light the officer is on the scene to address it.

SROs can also—if afforded time—conduct “walk throughs” with principals applying their SRO knowledge of crime prevention to make the campus safer. One of the benefits of being an SRO is that, as one SRO put it, the officer can “get to know information before something happens.” As Chief Ian Moffett, President of the National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officers (NASSLEO) said recently “The role of the School Resource Officer (SRO) has dynamically changed to one of a School Police Officer (SPO). This SPO is expected to continue the role of the original SRO, and also provide quality law enforcement functions. SPO’s duties are to detect crime, track crime, reduce violent and nonviolent conflicts, protect the school’s population, and protect the school’s property. Taking all of these new duties into consideration, training and law enforcement practices are being revamped in order to provide a practical means of reducing school-based violence.”

In addition to the above traditional “triad” roles, SROs find themselves carrying out other roles. In this sense, a more proper contemporary description of SRO roles could be referred to as “triad plus.” At times these other roles extend to providing more comprehensive and effective support by conducting home visits, which was occasionally mentioned by SROs interviewed, although time constraints limit this effective practice. SROs sometimes consider themselves playing a role that is more akin to that of social worker, intervening by making sure that a child had enough clothing or adequate food to eat. Sometimes SROs will report that they have played the role of parent, providing guidance to a student that more typically would come from a parent (who is absent in the life of a child).

The key to being an effective SRO is striking a balance at carrying out the many roles. Managing these different roles is something that SRO supervisors can assist with, as well as SRO peers who have more time on the job.

In terms of roles, clarifying for MPS staff what calls do not require an on-site response by the SROs will free up the officers for more proactive work. Carrying out this proactive role is something that is strongly desired by the SROs, and would be welcomed by MPS principals. MPS principals also mentioned other roles that SROs could assist with, including mediations with students (and with students’ parents), dealing with community members, and dealing with threatening parents or neighbors who may menace students.

One of the very important roles that SROs—working in tandem with educators—can play in today’s schools is the role of diverting youth from justice involvement (sometimes referred to as the “school pathways to the justice system” or the “school to prison pipeline.”) It is a common assumption that the presence of law enforcement in schools increases the likelihood that youth will be referred to the juvenile justice system. Some publications indicate that law enforcement in schools is related to an increase in referrals to the justice system. Other experiences suggest that is not always the case. Reviews of the issue are mixed. Another relevant issue is that schools, not just law enforcement—by the way they operate—can make a contribution to the number of youth referred to the juvenile justice system if the school is not taking a positive approach to discipline and attending to school climate, integrating social-emotional learning, paying attention to racial disproportionality, etc. The issue does not seem to be only the presence of law enforcement in schools, but what these officers do in the schools, and how that school is taking a broader approach to building positive relationships and a safe and caring environment conducive to learning.

When the diversion role of SROs is well-defined (and the right officer is trained to carry out this role—more on these ingredients below) SROs can actually reduce the number of students arrested. This approach—a best practice promoted by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges—requires a school-law enforcement-judicial-community partnership to agree on the criteria about lower level offenses a student is NOT going to be arrested for (or suspended or expelled) but will be held accountable and supported by various other steps. For more information see: <http://www.ncjfcj.org/our-work/schools-and-justice>

A related approach is the Community Accountability Panels (CAP). The Milwaukee Police Department and the Milwaukee County Delinquency and Court Services Division (DCSD) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the juvenile diversion program called CAP. The CAP provides youth who commit first time, minor offenses the option of appearing before a panel of community volunteers rather than entering the juvenile justice system. This is a voluntary program and the youth must admit to the charges against them, have family involvement, and have no cases pending, no prior adjudications and no prior referrals to the CAP. Repairing the harm and rebuilding relationships in the community is the primary goal of the Community Accountability Panels. Results are measured by how much repair was done rather than by how much punishment was inflicted. It is important that SROs are well aware of this program as a resource available.

"Our job is to prevent kids from going to jail."—Experienced Milwaukee SRO.

This officer understood the diversion role of the SRO.

SRO roles need to be communicated clearly to MPS staff and other publics via policy documents and trainings. Communicating these roles through many different avenues, including the MPS and MPD websites; flyers to be handed out; presentations at school, parent, and community meetings; and multi-disciplinary trainings should be encouraged.

One of the roles related to OCOE/SRO work is providing data about what the SROs do related to school safety. This important task is referenced in the IGA (Section I. C. MPD Record Keeping and Data Sharing). Carrying out this role is essential to monitoring progress toward achieving the school safety goals of the program. Data sharing entails a number of important functions starting with accurate reporting, communications, and strong partnership skills. (Recommendation 6 below deals specifically with the issue of data and how it can be used to monitor and improve the SRO program.)

Concerning the varied SROs, it would be helpful for OCOE to share with school administrators how the SROs spend their time. Regarding their roles, not only do school administrators need to understand what the SROs

do, there is a desire on the part of principals to know how SROs structure their time. As one principal put it, it would be good to know if the SROs are walking the perimeter of the building, checking out hot spots in the school, or other activities.

One of the benefits of well-defined roles is that SROs have greater job satisfaction. This also results in less perceived conflict with school administrators about what the SRO is supposed to do. Clear roles—ones that the candidate buys into—can be an important incentive to attract and keep an SRO in the job.

Related to roles, it is important to clarify supervision of the SROs. Make it clear that all of the SROs work for the MPD, and that their supervisors are officers in OCOE, not the school administrators. One of the weaknesses of some SRO programs is a lack of clarity about to whom the SRO reports. Working in a school environment it can be tempting for the principal to assume that the SROs “report to” the principal. An argument by a principal could even be that, since the school district pays for the SRO position, then I (the principal) have the right to supervise them. But this is not accurate. The issue of SRO supervision must be made continually clear—that the SROs report to their chain of command in the police department.

At the same time, it is critical that the SROs are in regular and frequent communications with school administrators. As one Milwaukee school leader pointed out, it is important for the SRO program to establish clear lines of communication. The program should identify how the school communicates with the SRO, and vice versa. It should identify what modes of communication are used (telephone, email, radio). Communication between school and the SROs should be clear about if and how teachers communicate with SROs. The issue of confidentiality should be clear when it comes to communications between SROs and school personnel.

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 roles they should 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 student discipline or enforcement of 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 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 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 should have regular (monthly, or more frequently, if needed) meetings about roles to monitor that program goals and objectives 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. 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. Ongoing review of the activities of the SROs should include analysis of any other roles SROs are carrying out, as identified by leadership and the SROs themselves.

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. The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), in its policy statement say that best practices “require that all school resource officers (SROs) be carefully selected law enforcement officers who have received specialized SRO training in the use of police powers and authority in a school environment.”

Selection criteria: Selecting the “right” SRO is critical for program success. For the Milwaukee SRO program selection criteria must support the MPS vision statement that “Schools will be safe, welcoming, well-maintained and accessible community centers meeting the needs of all.” SROs should be aware of that vision, and believe in it. 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. To help provide a safe and welcoming environment, SROs must have the ability to form positive relationships with adults and students; they must have impeccable judgment and character; they must be a self-initiator (because, as the current job posting says, they must “possess the ability to work with minimal direct supervision), they must be able to exercise the discretion needed to keep the school-community safe and assist in students getting the supports they need to stay in school and out of involvement in the justice system, if possible. As one high school principal put it, SRO candidates must have an "attitude of collaboration," not just enforcement.

“SRO candidates should be concerned about the safety and security of citizens, including schools. They need a special temperament to deal with the youth of today.”—Milwaukee high school principal.

As another principal noted, the program should “select SROs on the basis of wanting to support children and make a difference in their lives.” And another principal put it this way: “SROs should come in with a skillset of being able to work with adolescents; they must be able to de-escalate situations and be able to communicate with youth in a different way.”

The selection process must 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). <https://cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2828> The guardian mentality is accomplished by ensuring that there are non-enforcement opportunities for positive interaction between youth and the police. The SRO selection process should recruit, and then ensure through the interview and background investigation process that the SRO has the guardian mentality.

Background needed for SROs: One principal interviewed suggested that police officers had to have 3-5 years of law enforcement experience, plus a background in working with children, to be a candidate for an SRO position. (The current job posting for assignment to OCOE states that there is “a minimum of three years of uninterrupted service.”) This is standard practice for SROs across the country. There should be match between

the officer and the schools he or she will support. The way one principal put it: "There should be a fit between the SRO and the school administration." Including experienced school administrators in the selection process will help assure that fit.

Some best practices literature emphasizes the importance of minimizing turnover among SROs. SRO programs can sometimes experience high turnover problems which can pose a challenge to the overall SRO program. Taking the time to find, train, and replace an SRO can make the program less effective for an extended period of time. Part of the effort to reduce turnover is careful scrutiny of the candidate applying for the SRO position, selecting enthusiastic SROs who can serve for the long term. Another key ingredient is clearly defined roles of the SRO so the officer knows what is expected of him or her.

Part of this selection process should recognize the potential advantages of selecting and maintaining a number of female SROs. One study (Kelly, 2015) showed that female SROs tend to have different approaches to the roles taken by an SRO and that schools with female SROs show more effective results. Sometimes female officers spend less time engaged in law enforcement activities, relying on a style of policing that uses less physical force. Female officers may be better at defusing and de-escalating potentially dangerous situations. SRO programs can benefit from having these approaches shared with all SROs involved.

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. OCOE should make broad efforts to recruit SRO candidates so that there is a sufficient number of qualified officers who are enthusiastic about becoming an SRO. Recruitment efforts can tout the benefits of the job, both personally and professionally. The ability to make a difference in the lives of young people by working with them to prevent them from getting into trouble, can be a real motivator to candidates. MPD commanders can promote the fact that SROs play a critical role on the frontlines, working "in partnership with the community" to "create and maintain neighborhoods capable of sustaining civic life." (from the MPD mission statement, http://city.milwaukee.gov/police#.WvQ_hlgvxPY). This kind of top-level support will also result in higher morale and motivation for the SROs. Finally, officers who do not "fit" and meet all requirements of temperament, attitude, and experience 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 current MPD OCOE multi-step process of written and oral application to ensure that the officers chosen, not only "meet the minimum requirements" (the first step in the process), but that they "like working with youth," and do not want to arrest youth, except as a last resort for criminal matters. Include interview questions that are situational to help those interviewing the candidate determine his or her abilities to handle different roles.

"Being an SRO should be something people want to do; they should be interested in the work and have a passion for it."—Milwaukee school administrator.

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

Ensure that there is input into the process from a variety of parties, not just MPD and human resources from MPS. SRO leadership should determine the composition of the interview panel, and how those school and community representatives are to be involved, such as crafting interview questions for the SRO candidates, providing input into the job description, and sitting on the interview panel. To the extent possible, those involved in the selection process should represent and/or be competent to deal with the demographics of the schools/communities the SROs are serving.

MPS representation in the selection process. 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 in the selection process. Include representation from community youth-serving organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Clubs, Violence-Free Zones, or others. One school administrator suggested including a parent or member of the neighborhood, pointing out that including this type of representation could help create the “buy-in” from the community to the SRO program, as well as help ensure that the SRO candidate is a good “fit.” Another voice to bring to the process is that of the youth. The SRO program can consider in its deliberations what it is students are looking for from their SROs.

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. Including representatives from community agencies in the process of selecting SROs makes sense because, in the words of one SRO, “SROs will be working with those community agencies.” And, in the words of another SRO, “Involvement of the community is a good thing because they see who they are getting.”

Community representation is consistent with the desire of MPS and MPD to be transparent in its service of the community. The clarity of defined roles is important so that those involved in the interview process understand the goals and objectives of the SRO program. 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 add:

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 OCOE 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 better 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 of the list indicated in the suggested language change for the IGA, namely, that it “shall 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 so they are fully prepared to do their job.

SRO program leaderships should seek out or develop training that supports the SROs in doing their job most effectively. The current IGA states that the duties of the SROs include “attending various MPS meetings and training sessions to learn about school policies, practices, and concerns.” In addition to these local issues, MPD should make sure that each SRO receives Basic SRO training by sending new officers to a national or state basic SRO training.

Make it a goal that all SROs have the same basic training to provide consistency in the implementation of their roles.

Continue to provide SROs with more advanced training in the area of school-law enforcement partnerships. Consider “advanced SRO” training for SROs who are in the position for a couple of years, to supplement their basic SRO training. OCOE leadership should also secure supplementary training in a variety of specific areas, as described below.

The “Model Memorandum of Understanding for School Resource Officer Program” developed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, along with the Wisconsin Department of Justice, states that “The School Resource Officers receive the necessary support and training to ensure a safe school environment while respecting the rights of students and improving the overall school climate.”

Priority topics for SROs. 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.

Cross training of MPD and MPS personnel will help all parties to better understand each other’s roles during lockdowns and shelter in place drills.

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.”

https://rems.ed.gov/docs/BuildingBlocksToSchoolSafety_ToolkitForEOPs.pdf

Have all SROs, their commanders, and MPS administrators trained in National Incident Management Training (NIMS) <https://training.fema.gov/nims/> and Incident Command Systems (ICS) for schools, in particular.

<https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is100sca/instructor%20guide/01%20ig.pdf>

SRO program leadership should work to get all SROs, and as many school principals as possible trained in NIMS and ICS. OCOE coordinates this training with MPS Department of Safety and Security, MPD, Milwaukee Fire Department. MPD and MPS should reconsider whether to use students in such training events with the police where they play the roles of victims. While such a practice can provide a more realistic feel, there may be

concern about oversharing law enforcement tactics related to handling such an event, which could give a student information that could be used in a possible future attack. Also of concern is the potential for trauma experienced by a student who has volunteered for the exercise; this can arise from a realistic event where police use heightened stressors, namely realistic sights and sounds. For these reasons it may be best not to involve students in emergency drills with police. For clarification, students should be involved in drills where they are practicing the appropriate response, such as Code Red lockdown. Having some idea about what might happen in a crisis like an active shooter situation may actually alleviate shock and overload during an actual incident. Students demonstrating the appropriate response during a drill can become leaders to their peers prior to law enforcement arriving. This type of drill can help a student approach a crisis more rationally and carry out a more informed response during periods of stress.

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

Other training topics. Many topics are appropriate for training for SROs. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, along with the Wisconsin Department of Justice, developed a list of what content should be included in SRO training. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspw/pdf/srobestpractices.pdf> That document noted that “these areas may include, but are not limited to:

- school values and mission.
- child and adolescent development.
- cultural competency.
- federal and state disability, anti-discrimination, and special education laws.
- seclusion and restraint policies.
- positive behavioral supports, strategies and interventions.
- restorative justice practices.
- trauma informed practices.
- de-escalation strategies.
- the responsibilities of SROs/law enforcement as told by them and shared with school administrators.
- mental health.
- alcohol and other drug abuse.
- mandatory reporting.”

Training regarding children with special needs. NASRO makes a clear statement that SROs must receive training regarding special needs children “to help SROs understand how special needs children and their behaviors are different from those who don’t have special needs.” NASRO also notes the SROs need “information on special education laws, regulations and policies, including the Individualized Education Program (IEP) document that schools create for each special education student. Typically, the IEP for a student known to have behavior issues clearly specifies how educators will respond to such issues.”

Related to training on dealing with special needs children, NASRO goes on to say that “the use of physical restraint devices is rarely necessary. NASRO recognizes that every state and local law enforcement agency has its own policies regarding the appropriate use of physical restraint. NASRO believes the U.S. Department of Education’s position that “restraint and seclusion should be avoided to the greatest extent possible without endangering the safety of students and staff” is the best practice to follow in nearly all situations. Further, when agencies and educational institutions follow NASRO’s recommended practice of prohibiting SRO involvement in formal school discipline, an SRO should need to use a physical restraint device (e.g. handcuffs or flex cuffs) only in a case that requires the physical arrest of a student for referral to the criminal justice

system.” This practice can be consistent with an officer operating under the emergency detention law of Wisconsin (Chapter 51) dealing with an individual who is suicidal or homicidal (a threat to harm self or others).

Train SROs in specialty topics that are going to equip officers to do their job with today’s students. Topics mentioned most frequently in the interviews with the SROs and school administrators were mental health training (Mental Health First Aid for Youth, in particular), de-escalation (“verbal judo”), Crisis Intervention Team training (which all MPD officers are supposed to receive); CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute training available through MPS), trauma-informed care; the critical issue of the rights of students in an educational setting (including issues regarding the fourth amendment (searches) and sharing of information).

Training for SROs could also include (but is not limited to) topics like: Understanding school policies and procedures, crime prevention, cultural competence to break down the lack of understanding between students and officers. Best practices would call for all SROs to be trained in the above topics to meet the needs of today’s students.

Creating a safe environment for students requires a level of trust in the SROs that work in schools. Building this trust can be difficult if officers lack cultural competency to connect with students. Ensuring that trainings address appropriate ways to respond to unique situations can help with this. Trainings should include topics that enable officers to confidently handle situations that arise involving race, religion, gender (including LGBTQ), and disability status. One principal recommended that SROs learn some basic Spanish and Hmong, “which would go a long way to build relationships.” The principal also recommended that SROs also receive training about the “culture of adolescents” so that they understand how youth think and act, and how to approach youth, including those who might be in crisis.

Some of the most important trainings an SRO can receive revolves not around law enforcement in schools, but around teaching and mentorship roles. Trainings should focus on preparing officers to teach classes of students, as well as work one on one with students.

Training, which should be ongoing, would be augmented by job aids such as an SRO manual that includes the IGA, job description, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) information on how to carry out the multiple roles of an SRO, sample lesson plans for classroom presentations, evaluation tools, etc.

Additionally, another item was recommended by a principal: Training on items like time management and effective collaboration with school administrators can be important to an SRO program’s success.

Ensure that SRO supervisors play a key role in getting SROs the training they need.

Make sure that SRO supervisors are vigilant advocates for training for SROs. SRO supervisors play a key support and guidance role for their SROs. They provide support daily, with legal and practical consultation, assisting the SROs through situations that are new and delicate. Supervisors should continually review how they can arrange ongoing training in priority areas like active shooter training, Incident Command for Schools (along with school administrators so that all parties are clear about their roles), as well as other topics.

Write into the job description of SRO supervisors the responsibility for identifying/developing/delivering training for SROs. Supervisors need to work through OCOE, and MPD department-wide units (for example, on providing regular trainings on emergency management, to clarify and practice roles and communication so vital in emergencies). As part of their responsibility SRO supervisors should periodically meet with school administrators and SROs on-site in the schools. This on-site observation, as well as collecting input from the

school administrator, can be helpful for the evaluation of the SROs' performance. This evaluation should be done assessing how the SRO performs against the job description and other measures agreed upon.

When new SROs are put on the job, supervisors should continue the practice of pairing them with an experienced SRO. Training can include some portion of on-the-job "shadow" teaching from veteran SROs as an effective method of preparation, in addition to traditional training sessions. This type of shadowing can be particularly helpful for the work that SROs might do in settings where the new SRO might be expected to give presentations to students, staff, or parents. An effective training regime should include on-the-job support by supervisors and peer officers to help the SRO become acclimated to the job.

Sources of training. The supervisors can also identify a variety of sources for training SROs, including information from groups like:

- the National Association of School Resource Officers (<https://nasro.org/>),
- the School Safety Advocacy Council (<http://www.schoolsafety911.org/training.html>),
- the National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement (NASSLEO) <http://www.nassleo.org/>,
- the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center (<https://www.rems.ed.gov/>) (which can develop customized training, working through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction);
- Fox Valley Technical College's Public Safety Training Center, including its SRO Training Conference, <https://ncjtc.fvtc.edu/training/details/TR00000091/school-resource-officer-training>; and
- WILENET <https://wilenet.org/index.html>, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Training and Standards Bureau (including its programs on juvenile justice).

Supervisors can encourage SROs to take advantage of existing programs like tuition reimbursement for courses taken through Fox Valley Technical College.

Training venues. OCOE can continue to take advantage of MPD hosting the Regional Law Enforcement Training Center, with SROs applying for and taking courses locally, usually at no cost. SROs can be trained (along with MPS administrators and staff, when appropriate) in a variety of programs or other centers used by MPS. MPD's training bureau, which is accessible internally on an intra-net, collects training opportunities from all over the nation and posts announcements. Other jurisdictions and the U.S. Department of Justice also come to MPD's academy, which might afford additional training opportunities for SROs. The Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office may also be a source of training relevant to SRO needs.

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

MPS, through its Department of Safety and Security, makes available to school administrators a wide variety of training. MPS administrators and staff should take advantage of this training. To supplement this training, MPD can provide training to MPS and other partners on a range of topics related to making students and staff safer. In the words of one school administrator, "MPD can use its expertise about what to do to be safer and to feel safer." These topics include how to handle active shooter and other emergency management situations (including the respective roles of MPD and MPS), how to handle students who make threats, standards for searching students (reasonable suspicion vs. probable cause, which is addressed by written policy and procedures and vetted through the city attorney), cases of bullying and cyberbullying, pornography shared via social media, drugs and how they are carried and used, signs of gang involvement, sex trafficking and the signs of possible involvement, de-escalation, understanding mental health and behavioral issues (best delivered with

mental health providers), trauma-informed care, the education of special-needs children, CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design), and other school safety topics.

MPD, working in concert with the MPS Department of Safety and Security, can play a key role in training MPS staff, including school safety personnel, in the topics listed above, and others.

MPD should coordinate with MPS to see how each agency can support each other, if/when needed to provide training to MPS staff. Some trainings can be directly related to helping MPS staff, such as those offered by MPS designed to assist MPS staff in avoiding car break-ins by securing their vehicle and keys, etc. MPD and MPS Safety and Security can ask MPS staff what kinds of other trainings they would like to receive from MPD. These trainings should not just convey important information; they can be used to demonstrate protocols with school administration, school safety officers, and other staff.

Provide training using interactive formats such as role playing and case scenarios. Training that deals with how MPD SROs and MPS school administrators can work together should address realistic scenarios that warrant a call to MPD, and those that do not. MPD can work with MPS on communications to determine whether an issue at school requires an officer to come to the school to address that situation.

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.)

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.

The training of SROs and MPS staff is consistent with MPS board “Objective 7: Develop our workforce.” Principals and police interviewed talked about how MPD, often in concert with MPS and other partners, could develop this workforce by training **together** on a range of topics related to making students and staff safer.

Training should be uniform/standard for all parties so as to allow or provide consistency across the district. Simply put, when it comes to issues of safety and security, MPD and MPS must be on the “same page.”

MPD and MPS should conduct joint trainings. Much of the training of SROs, as well as the training provided by MPD/SROs can be “joint.” MPD and MPS can work together to secure training that addresses common issues, like roles of police and roles of school administrators/staff, what to expect from school safeties, how SROs and TABs (Truancy Abatement and Burglary Suppression) officers can assist the school properly, etc. Many of the principals and SROs interviewed noted that there is presently not much training that involves both the MPS staff and SROs and their supervisors. Because of the multi-disciplinary nature of school safety, training should often be conducted where MPD/SROs train WITH school administrators, school staff, "safeties", as well as other school and community partners.

One example of joint training that should be a priority is training where MPD supervisors meet in pre-service training in the beginning of the year with MPS administrators for the purpose of addressing the misunderstandings that some school administrators and staff have about the roles/functions of the SROs. For example, MPS administrators may sometimes try to use SROs to enforce school rules to make it easier to remove a student. These types of infractions are the purview of school administration, not the police. This

issue can be addressed in joint training on role clarification about what SROs can do, and what they cannot do. After the roles are laid out plainly, real-life table top scenarios or role plays can be presented that will clarify/reinforce roles, and to show MPS employees how to handle cases that do not involve the police, or that do require police.

Note: As more MPS staff realize the limitations of SRO roles, namely, that they are not to be used to enforce school rules, the SROs will have more time to spend on proactive activities.

Train SROs extensively WITH the school safety assistants (“safeties”). As one SRO supervisor noted, the SROs appreciate the work of the safeties, and having them in the schools, adding that “they have a wealth of knowledge regarding everything to do with the school.” The safeties are a special partner of the SROs. The safeties are in each school every day and know the building and the students. As such, they can provide special insights into situations involving safety. When SROs and safeties train together they clarify and reinforce each other’s roles and develop greater trust and understanding. Training with the school safety assistants (and especially other school personnel) must make clear the differences between the “safeties” and the SROs.

Joint training should be developed with input from all parties to ensure buy-in. Such input will help ensure that the appropriate topics are addressed, to address the issues of common concern. Joint involvement will also serve to reinforce the multi-disciplinary nature of the mission of “co-producing” school safety. All training developed should identify what SROs and school personnel should know and be able to do as a result of that training. The training should determine the number of hours and frequency of the particular topics, and who should attend.

In terms of training WITH school administration, one principal suggested that SROs could be a part of other kinds of staff development that MPS conducts. For example, one principal said that an SRO could join the school's professional development that is based on a book group discussion model dealing with current issues that face Milwaukee.

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” over the course of the year. One veteran SRO, who talked about the many merits of training, suggested that the SRO program take advantage of “banking days” when there is no school for students scheduled so SROs can conduct specialized training they need.

Other venues include: Back to school meetings, professional development during the Summer break and other times when school is not in session, 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 of the SROs conducted prior to their daily shifts.

Use SRO roll call as a training opportunity. Even though the period of roll call is brief, continue to use it as a time to make sure that SROs are aware of new developments in school policy and practice that they should know, and reinforce the police department’s position about SRO roles. Roll call is also an opportunity to begin the discussion about how to address challenging situations the SROs face.

Trainings can also take advantage of the principal institutes and include SROs and their supervisors multiple times a year. A joint training agenda can be developed for the principal institutes. Priority issues like active

shooter training and crisis management should be on the agenda first. MPD, in concert with MPS Safety and Security, could offer training to MPS staff on a variety of other issues, perhaps starting with crime prevention for staff, de-escalation, self-protection. Starting with these kinds of topics can set develop stronger relationships between MPD and MPS, which will make it easier to address other important topics, such as the critical issue of clarifying the roles and limits of the SRO, namely, that they are NOT to be used to enforce rules regarding school discipline. A schedule can be developed, based on need and resources, and revised as new issues arise.

The ongoing training schedule should include regular re-training and refreshers for career officers and administrators who may have shifted focus away from their school safety mission. One of the observations made about SRO programs in general is that sometimes SROs can begin their career focused and well trained, but over time revert to a, “do the minimum” mindset. Shorter check-ins and conversations with MPS administrators and MPD SROs can help maintain a quality SRO program over time.

Recommendation for immediate action (revising the IGA):

SRO program leadership should revise 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. Such training should be closely coordinated with MPS. 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. OCOE SRO supervisors and MPS administrators can 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.

Encourage and set up mechanisms where MPD and MPS can jointly identify training needs, as well as work together to develop 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.

Develop a job aid such as an SRO manual that includes the IGA, job description, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) information on how to carry out the multiple roles of an SRO, sample lesson plans for classroom presentations, evaluation tools, etc.

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 National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), in its policy statement on best practices says that, “a clear and concise memorandum of understanding is essential. Every law enforcement agency that places an officer in a school should have in place a memorandum of understanding (MOU), signed by the heads of both the law enforcement agency and the educational institution.”

Such a governing document, which Milwaukee refers to as an intergovernmental agreement (IGA), can prevent confusion among SROs, school staff, and the public, and decrease conflict between the partners, while ensuring that the SRO program upholds the school’s educational philosophy. The “Intergovernmental Agreement for School Security Program between the Milwaukee Board of School Directors and the City of Milwaukee” is a good foundational agreement. To further enhance the SRO program a number of suggestions are made for amending the IGA. The “Model Memorandum of Understanding for School Resource Officer Program” developed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, along with the Wisconsin Department of Justice is a tool the SRO program can also look to for guidance and precedent in the State of Wisconsin.

The IGA can be improved by clarifying statements about roles of the SRO. (See Recommendation One above for specific suggestions.) As noted by the commander of the SRO program: “The well-established understanding in our unit that SRO's are not the "go to" to enforce school rules, that behaviors that should land a student in the principal’s office rather than in the criminal justice system should be handled by schools, teachers, social workers etc. This is something we advise our unit on regularly through conversation both formal and informal.” Likewise, statements can also be added/amended for other program areas referenced in the IGA, including the SRO selection process, training, engagement with the community, and tracking what the SROs do.

The SRO program should review the IGA, along with all other aspects of the program, on an annual basis with the SRO leadership from MPD and MPS dedicating time at the end of the year to examine the elements of the agreement and discuss amendments for continuous quality improvement. This review of policies should also include whether there are needed protocols or operating procedures needed to carry out those policies.

Inter-agency cooperation requires the ability to be flexible. It is often based on agreement by both parties. Discussion leading to mutual agreement will lead to a stronger governing document to guide the SRO program.

Clear statements are essential in the IGA and other supporting documentation. These statements can be made about many of the topics addressed in the recommendations:

In the words of one SRO interviewed, the goal of the SRO program is "to reduce the amount of kids being arrested at schools." Policies and procedures can be developed around this statement. MPD and MPS need

guidelines defining how police should be involved in school—what roles they are to take—and what others (such as social workers), should attend to address the problems students have.

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 SROs to MPS staff, along with joint training where all parties are trained together is also recommended for inclusion in the IGA.

MPS training of school administrators, school safety, and staff can include educating them about policies and procedures of the SROs.

Example: By making it clear to school employees that SROs are not to be used by administrators to enforce school rules (but to address violations of city ordinances and state laws), the SRO program should see a reduction in calls for service to the schools, thereby allowing SROs to dedicate time to higher priority calls and proactive activities like teaching students.

MPS administrators should be trained to ensure that they understand this policy and respect the limits of SRO responsibilities and are not used to help an administrator make the case to suspend a student. 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. Likewise, the IGA can also reference the use of data to measure the activities of the SROs, and also examine in an ongoing way the most effective way to deploy the SROs for the purpose of building stronger relationships with staff and students.

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.

Regarding communications, one SRO supervisor recommended that stories be collected about SROs, and that these stories are promoted, both in the community, but also in recruiting new SROs to the job.

Communications about the program will result in greater understanding about the program. At times, issues will arise about the SRO program that will need to be addressed (example: What are these officers doing in the schools? What is their role? What they supposed to do?) The IGA can play clarifying answer by providing answers to these questions. The MPD, MPS, and the public should establish continuing lines of communication and respective points of contact to exchange information and resolve problems as the SRO program grows and develops. Keeping open dialogue throughout the partnership is crucial. Some of these issues may require the SRO program leadership to revisit these issues in its annual review of the IGA.

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; and 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 for the SROs; new actions to include when measuring the activities of the SROs; and deployment of SROs in the schools.

Specific language for the IGA is suggested in each recommendation area.

Recommendations for near-term:

On an ongoing basis, SRO program leadership (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).

In addition to the operational leadership of the SRO program meeting regularly, the superintendent and chief of police should agree to meet on a regular basis to discuss the operation of the SRO program.

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 and expand upon 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.

"I have always appreciated having the SROs because it allows us to create collaborative partnerships to improve school climate and culture."—Milwaukee high school principal.

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." This goal is about trying to "cultivate and maintain mutually beneficial partnerships and collective impact efforts to maximize resources that promote greater student outcomes." The SRO program is a natural ally to help reach this goal.

Building police-community relationships is demanding but rewarding work. The SRO program, being highly visible in the community, plays an important role in such community relations. SROs and principals often acknowledged the challenges faced in some schools/community where law enforcement is not always accepted. In this context, one of the most fundamental things that can be done is to advance that partnership between the police and the rest of the community.

The SRO program is an important opportunity to enhance relations between the police and the community.

The SRO program can be a valuable tool to advance police-community relations. In some communities, when people in the neighborhood see a police car out in front of the school, they assume there is trouble at the school. An SRO program that is known for its proactive work will help turn that perception around. OCOE recognizes this and regularly participates in community meetings—which have increased in recent years. The SRO program is a special asset that can help MPD carry out its vision "where all can live safely and without fear, protected by a police department with the highest ethical and professional standards." 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" for this positive interaction to take place. This positive experience is central to reframing the way community members see the police. Police and community members can work together to take a problem-oriented approach, scanning for crime problems, analyzing a specific problem in depth, responding to the problem by implementing solutions, and assessing the results of the project. This partnership approach will strengthen the way problems are identified and addressed. Law enforcement will recognize this process as central to community-oriented policing, which uses this manner of engaging all partners in the effort to build stronger and safer communities. OCOE/SROs can continue to work in concert with others in the community to present to them the multiple roles SROs have, and to hear from the community what their issues are, and to figure jointly how to work together to make the community safer.

In this way 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, and the SRO program—involving both law enforcement and educators—is key to this effort. In the roles section above we have highlighted how the school-law enforcement-community partnership can come together to divert youth from justice involvement. “Keeping youth in school and out of court” is a concerted effort where all parties in the community agree on the lower level offenses for which students will not be arrested (or suspended or expelled), and work together to figure out how to get the students and their families the support they need. This requires strong involvement from all partners, including parents and the mental health and other providers who play a key role in providing needed supports for youth. SROs—being on the front lines with educators—play a special role in linking youth in trouble to the existing resources available.

The SRO program should plan on regular (annual or twice a year) presentations about the program to parents, such as orientation of PTA meetings.

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. One SRO supervisor noted that SROs need to be trained for diversion by making sure that SROs are aware of those opportunities, whether working with the district attorney’s office or school staff, or community resources.

SROs can be trained to be aware of the community alternatives to which students can be referred (examples, the Mobile Urgent Treatment Team, Running Rebels, Violence Free Zones, Boys and Girls Clubs, Job Corps, Pathfinders, etc.). SROs can be cross-trained with other MPD officers, such as the TABS officers and the “coordinators” who work with the District Attorney’s Office in the restorative practices program (which is designed to help students understand the impact of their actions, change their behavior, and reduce suspensions).

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. This includes “service locators” that identify resources that deal with mental health, drug abuse, sexual assault, human trafficking, legal issues, and many more issues that confront students and their families. This recommendation is in keeping with best practices emanating from the fact that the “R” in SRO stands for “resource.”

SROs should be continually reminded that the “R” in SRO stands for “Resource.” In this way the SRO will more likely carry out that role on a daily basis.

MPS and MPD (along with other community partners) should meet to share resources in the community that are available to help students and their families. Train SROs, in concert with school and community providers, in how SROs can (in the words of one SRO) “bridge the gap” and connect youth in need with wraparound worker, if needed. This training supports the practice to get students the supports they need, rather than arrest a student, when that is not warranted and would not get to root causes to change behavior.

One of the resources that Milwaukee has at its disposal is a rich tradition of restorative practices. As one principal stated: Restorative practices is a good thing for SROs to be involved with for a number of reasons, including the fact that SROs are promoting and involved in restorative practices shows the school/community that SROs play roles other than enforcement and arresting.

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

Critical to engagement with the community is clear communications. The SRO program would benefit by establishing clearer goals that are communicated throughout MPD, MPS, and to the broader community.

Communications to community members can take a wide variety of forms, including: Articles in newspapers (including school and community newspapers); columns written by OCOE; press releases; flyers, brochures, and handouts; school (local and MPS) and MPD websites; blogs and online forums; listservs; social media; Twitter; Facebook; Vimeo; face-to-face meetings (F2F) such as assemblies, parent orientation and other mtgs; and personal contacts with parents, providers, et al. SRO program leadership can brainstorm together, including getting input from the SROs, about different communications methods to use in Milwaukee to let the community know what the SRO program is all about.

MPD/MPS can create new materials about the SRO program itself. These materials should be designed to communicate to various audiences just what the Milwaukee SRO program is all about, clarifying its guiding principles and how it is consistent with the goals of MPD and MPS. These materials should present the SRO program's purpose and roles. Content for this material can be drawn from language in the IGA. Content for these communications materials can also include the other items on this list of recommendations, namely, a clear presentation of what the SROs do and do not do, how the SROs are selected, what is in the IGA, how SRO activity is measured, etc. This communication will help the community to better understand the positive purpose of the SRO program.

This material can provide a variety of purposes, including communicating to schools and parents how they should work with SROs, including how and when to contact them for service.

"We need to communicate to MPS and the community about what the SRO program is, and what to expect from it, and what it expects from MPS."—MPS school administrator.

These communications materials are a natural part of the work of MPD. It is fitting that the SRO program is situated in MPD's Office of Community Outreach and Education. The OCOE "is responsible for providing services that assist the community in preventing crime and building relationships through educational programs, partnerships and collaboration with community-based organizations." (Milwaukee Police Department Collaborative Reform Planning and Implementation Guide, November 2015 – Present.)

Communications strategies can include print and electronic materials about the SRO program. The SRO program can develop brochures or other brief pieces to hand out to those they work with. Information about the program can also be put on the MPD and MPS websites.

SROs can distribute a variety of other materials, starting with existing resources like MPS's "A Parent's Guide to Community Resources in Milwaukee" http://mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/MPS-Public/CSA/Student-Services/Homeless/Parent_Resource_Guide_06142016.pdf Distribution of such resources not only make the

SROs aware of what is available to students and their families, they also serve to position the SROs as public servants connected to the broader community.

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. The highest level of community engagement can involve a variety of approaches. One administrator suggested that the schools could offer to facilitate a dialog with the community about the SRO program. Such a dialog could be conducted as a proactive community conversation where the SROs share with the community what they do (and the limits of their roles) and listen to community concerns with the aim of building up trust in the community.

Recommendation for immediate action (revising the IGA)

SRO program leadership should consider revising the IGA by adding a statement about close work with community partners. This language would fit naturally in Section I. City's Responsibility under Section I. B. Officer's Duties as a new entry, #6, with suggested wording such as this:

6. Working collaboratively with a variety of community partners in support of the school safety mission.

Recommendation for near-term:

SRO supervisors should encourage and enable SROs 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. This important task is referenced in the current IGA (Section I. C. MPD Record Keeping and Data Sharing). Carrying out this role is essential to monitoring progress toward achieving the school safety goals of the program. Data sharing entails a number of important functions starting with accurate reporting, communications, and strong partnership skills.

As stated in the Milwaukee Police Department Collaborative Reform Planning and Implementation Guide, November 2015 – Present, the mission statement of the MPD is “In partnership with the community, we will create and maintain neighborhoods capable of sustaining civic life. We commit to reducing the levels of crime, fear and disorder through community-based, problem-oriented, and data-driven policing.” The last phrase “data-driven policing” is also important to school-based law enforcement, namely, the SRO program. To make the most of data collection, monitoring, and sharing implies that there are regular meetings of the SRO leadership team to review and analyze the data collected for the purpose of making recommendations for improvement of the SRO program. Being data-driven is also central to the way that MPS does business, as evidenced by the work of its Research and Evaluation Department, as well as data-driven strategic planning.

The current IGA states that MPS shall document data including suspensions and expulsions from all schools resulting from weapons, drugs, or endangering behavior; perceptions of safety and discipline. For its part, MPD, through the OCOE has developed spreadsheets and other data collection that measures calls for service in schools, arrests in schools, and other activities such as school presentations, mediations, and covering extracurricular events.

Ensure regular review of data related to SRO work to support continuous quality improvement.
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As one Milwaukee school leader puts it: “It is important to measure the scope of work the SRO does. It would also be helpful in determining issues with the school. Based on data, you can determine what the most common issues are, time of day, location, if it is reoccurring students, etc. This data could be used in conjunction with discussion with the SRO/administration to determine ways to rectify issues.” This quote points out understanding the daily interactions of the SRO through data is helpful to improve the safety of a particular school.

Analyzing data in aggregate form is also helpful for overall program improvement. The SRO program can look at measures like calls for service, citations, arrests at schools, dispositions, presentations, and all the other measures collected, including suspensions and expulsions from all schools resulting from weapons, drugs, or endangering behaviors. The SRO program, meaning MPD and MPS leadership working together, can also share and analyze data related to the SROs and their connection to the climate survey that assesses perceptions of safety and discipline. the SRO program leadership can figure out how it is doing, what changes it might want to

make, and determine any new resources needed. In addition, community members and programs in the neighborhoods can also see the impact of the SRO program.

SRO program leadership should continue to look at the variety of roles carried out, and the roles that it wants the SROs to carry out. The program can take a look at adding measures for the variety of roles the SROs carry out as an educator (numbers of presentations to students, staff, and parents; possibly measured by topic); informal counseling/mentoring (numbers of student contacts or counseling/mentoring actions, as defined by OCOE), and law enforcement (citations, arrests).

Documentation should also 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, training in de-escalation, etc. Conscious application and data collection of these diversion measures, coupled with training in how and when to make the referrals, along with strong programs to which to refer, can serve to increase the diversion efforts of the SRO program and make the Milwaukee SRO program a leader in this area.

OCOE can work with MPS evaluators to examine how its SRO efforts might be related to increases in safety in and around the schools, increases in perceptions of safety, reduction in school exclusion (suspensions, expulsions, and arrests), etc. All of the measures should be analyzed, considering whether the activities measured are being carried out with consistency and proportionality. This quality control can be enhanced by reinforcing in trainings in the beginning of the year, and in roll call throughout the year, reminding SROs how to complete the data collection.

Best practice example: One example to be considered for implementation combines **training** with a revision of **how SROs track what they do**. By requiring SROs to be trained in a multi-disciplinary manner with educators and mental health providers and others—and by measuring the number of referrals that SROs make to mental health professionals and to alternative diversion programs like restorative practices—SRO practices will change, with positive outcomes for students.

Provide SRO supervisors with the tools they need to support SROs in collecting and using data to improve the SRO program.

SRO supervision is the job of OCOE. The SROs report to MPD supervisors, who have the job of supporting and improving the SRO program. Data collection is essential to this task. 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 with the SROs, and with MPS partners.

The SRO mobile model, with the distances between schools can make supervision or monitoring a challenging task. Adequate and accurate reporting of activities by SROs, and analysis by supervisors is important to get an accurate picture of what is going on with the program, so any needed adjustments can be made.

Supervision can be made easier by the clear, written documentation of SRO roles and activities. Roles and data collection work together. Making sure the roles are clear is important, and this is reinforced by collection of data about carrying out those roles. Clear guidelines can be used by supervisors to easily make sure officers

are doing what they are supposed to be doing. Keeping written records of SRO roles and activities through regular use of SRO logs enables supervisors to perform their responsibility of “data-driven policing.”

Recommendation for immediate action:

SRO program leadership should revise 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, including diversion activities, 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 aimed at diversion, 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 to 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.

SRO squads are currently assigned to areas of the city that they are generally responsible for. Milwaukee’s challenge is to maintain SRO deployment in a way that increases a school’s familiarity with the SRO, and the SROs familiarity with the school. It is important to assign SROs in a way that keeps them consistently in the same police district so that they are working with the same schools. Consistency is key to this best practice. The SRO program should 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.

“Try to keep SROs in a certain section of town so they can work with the same schools to be more familiar with those schools.”—Veteran MPD SRO.

This type of approach will allow more opportunity for the officers “to check in on a regular basis, so they can be counted upon.”—MPS principal.

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. The program should ensure a pattern of SRO deployment so that the mobile SROs are sent, when possible, to the same group of schools. Not only will this familiarity serve to form stronger relationships, but it will also—in the words of one principal—“Make response time more effective.” This same principal suggested that limiting the amount of schools that particular SROs were associated with would increase “the proactive relationships SROs had with students and the community.”

This principal wanted students to get to know SROs by seeing them on a regular basis; and coming to school to witness the positive things the students are doing. In this way the officers would see the students in a new light, and the students would see the officer in a positive situation—not an enforcement situation.

With the mobile model, continually consider ways that particular officers can be assigned responsibility to cover particular schools, when possible. As one SRO supervisor pointed out: “The benefit of being able to spend more regular time at a particular school is that it allows students to see the officer more as a person, establishing more rapport. Then the student can tell an officer something, can trust them.” Rather than dispatching officers to any school in the city, explore ways that work for MPD and MPS whereby selected SROs

are sent to schools in such a way that they have more opportunity to develop rapport with school administrators, students, and to know the school facilities better.

This practice—which will allow more familiarity and trust to be built—can have a positive return when it comes to school threats. The Averted School Violence data base (<https://www.asvnearmiss.org/>) shows the growing realization that it is students who are coming to SRO/other law enforcement, and others in authority when they become aware of a peer making a threat—usually through social media. (See the article “How Students Can Help SROs and Others Avert School Violence” in the Summer 2018 issue of the Journal of School Safety.) The ease of reporting a threat to a person of trust is increased by the familiarity that students have with particular SROs.

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. This additional time on-site allows students especially, to see officers in a different light, rather than just responding to calls and carrying out their law enforcement role only. SRO presence that allows them to build positive relations will support broader MPD departmental goals of enhancing police-community relations.

“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.

Regarding the return on investment 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.” As one veteran SRO interviewed said: In terms of the yield on the outlay put out by MPS/MPD, when SROs assist at sporting events, before school, and other opportunities to interact with students, “these kids get to see that officers are not hard-core when they get to know them.”

The return on investment for positive youth-police interaction is that the work with students greatly increases the mutual respect and rapport between police and students. This payoff can be substantial. For example, according to reports, in 2014 during a contentious event in the city of Milwaukee a group of young people were approaching a police car, seemingly with the intent to turn the vehicle over. One of the youths recognized a police officer on the scene from his work in the schools and dissuaded his peers from turning over the car. This is a powerful illustration of the lasting value of positive relations which the SRO program can provide.

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:

- Training of the MPS administrators on what school problems to call for, and what NOT to call for, which will eliminate some calls for service. OCOE’s SRO command staff should be clear with school administrators about what calls they will respond to and how.
- Making sure that police dispatch understands the priorities and collects and provides the information needed for OCOE and the SROs themselves to clarify the priority. (This prioritization of dispatch is regularly reviewed by OCOE supervisory staff.)
- Allowing officers to answer more calls for service over the phone to determine the true priority whether the situation actually warrants an officer’s presence. (OCOE uses limited duty officers to handle low priority calls by telephone.)

- Considering how SROs, because of their knowledge of youth and the schools in particular, might be best equipped to handle reported threats. SROs who are carefully selected and trained to work with youth and use their relationships with students may help to de-escalate a situation more easily than another officer or squad responding to the scene.

The mobile model of SRO deployment, as currently carried out in Milwaukee, is not set up to fully exercise all the roles SROs can play. Responding to calls for service—which seems to be the main activity of the current SROs—puts the SROs in a position to act in the "law enforcement" capacity of the officer. The greatest value of an SRO program comes when an officer also has the opportunity to fully exercise the other positive and proactive roles, namely that of educator and informal counselor/mentor.

At times, the local police district responds to calls at schools. Currently, MPD usually defers calls to the districts when SRO resources are exhausted. One approach to consider is reserving certain SRO squads for proactive actions on a daily basis and counting those officers as non-preemptible (except for priority 1--emergency calls). In this manner, OCOE's SROs would be considered exhausted without interfering with the proactive activities those SROs were engaging in. MPD could send a district squad to a priority 2 through 4 call that is pending. One drawback of this strategy would be not having an SRO respond to those calls for service deferred to the districts.

A related step to take in regards to SRO presence at schools has to do with easing access to those schools. MPS and MPD should have the conversation about access to schools when needed. As one SRO supervisor suggested, make sure that SROs are able to gain quick access to a school, when needed. One suggestion to consider is issuing SROs a master key or electronic pass cards they can use to enter schools, rather than have to be "buzzed" in, if no one is available to grant access to the school building.

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. More SROs available to the job will enable them to not just respond to calls for service in the seven MPD districts, but will provide more opportunity to engage in more proactive activities such as teaching students about social media (child pornography), bullying prevention, etc. As one SRO put it: "If we had more bodies—a fuller unit—we could accomplish more proactive work like presentations, mediations, building those positive relations, participating in listening circles."

As one school administrator summed up: The Milwaukee SRO program "is a really valuable program. We should look at expanding it. The SRO program does so much for the community. We could do so much more. It would pay dividends with regards to student and community." These dividends can be far reaching and include better relationships with youth, school staff, and the community surrounding the schools.

One veteran SRO, who recognized that many police districts need more squads, said that the SRO program needed more manpower, "so it could do [more activities like it did in the past], conducting more mediation, bullying prevention, classroom presentations." SROs desire to be able to carry out more proactive functions such as teaching students. It is important to note that the business of forging relationships with students and staff takes time. SROs need to be allowed to have this time, during which they will most likely not be available

for calls for services elsewhere. MPS administrators must understand that kind of situation which may, under current staffing and deployment, result in a wait time, or a non-SRO being dispatched.

Current numbers of SROs and manner of deployment means they are spending most of their time responding to calls for services. The current manner of deployment of SROs often limits them to reactive activities. SROs and principals consistently recommended there be a sufficient number of SROs who are able to do more than just respond to calls, which can have the result of only engaging with the police if there is a problem. "As one school administrator put it: "The issue is around availability. SROs are not always available when needed."

With additional officers comes additional costs; MPD and MPS will have to weigh the return on the investment and how to make the case for the value of the SROs to school safety, and to the community. With additional SROs also comes the need for additional supervision, which OCOE would have to take into account. Providing SROs with additional supervisors will be an additional cost but will help maximize the opportunity for MPD to carry out the varied tasks of the SROs, including proactive work. New funding from the Wisconsin Department of Justice's School Safety Grant Initiative, and the Federal COPS Hiring Program should be explored as potential sources of support for SRO work, as financial support comes available.

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. Ideally the SROs should be available when the school day begins and when it ends. This recommendation is in response to a common request by school principals so that the SROs would be able to support schools earlier in the day, and to be able to address issues related to coming to school. 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 change in coverage could be accomplished by considering how to split the day shift and have some SROs report for duty at 7 a.m. to have a presence so that SROs can respond to the calls from school that require their presence. This readjustment will have to be accomplished being cognizant of the related police assignments that may come in at the end of the shift. SROs and the MPS Department of Safety and Security also recognize the need for coverage of schools at morning arrival time. This recommendation recognizes the potential challenge of officers ending at 3 p.m., having to request overtime to complete dealing with situations at the end of the day. MPD's use of the early power shift of SROs that begin at 11 a.m. helps facilitate the coverage during the time that students move out of school and into the community, as well as afterschool events.

Ensure that SROs are supported through strong 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. As one SRO supervisor recounted, "Make sure that the SROs receive the support they need from supervisors to make sure they are well-trained and supported with guidance from peers."

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. It is helpful to remind principals that all SROs work for the MPD, even if their position is funded by MPS. (One principal—commenting on the fact that MPS pays for some of the SROs time—indicated that that SROs would have been treated with different expectations “if I knew they were working for me.”)

Supervise SROs by using a variety of ways to understand the effectiveness of individual SROs and of the program overall. These methods include SRO supervisors: Reviewing the tracking data developed/revised by OCOE; talking with SROs during roll call; visiting with the SROs while on-site in the schools; talking with SRO peers and TABS officers; talking with school administrators and others about SRO interactions; and other ways as appropriate. Because the MPD SRO supervisors are located off-site and supervise multiple SRO deployed across different schools, it is important for the supervisor to maintain regular contact with school administrators to monitor progress of the SRO throughout the year.

Supervisors can remind SROs how to respond to calls for service. For example, one principal requested that when officers are sent to a school they should identify themselves as SROs, describe what they do, provide their contact information, and discuss what it was the principal/school called about.

SRO supervisors need to consider that the assessment of the SROs should be different than the evaluation criteria used for a patrol officer. SRO evaluation should be based on comparing the performance of the SROs to the expectations the SRO program has for carrying out the specialized functions of the job. Input from school administrators into SRO performance should be welcomed. This discussion between a principal/assistant principal and SRO supervisor can be enlightening, and also be an opportunity to clarify/reinforce the proper roles of the SRO.

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 MPD and 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:

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. In its review of SRO deployment SRO program leadership should make 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.

Recommendations 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. Framing the argument for more SROs will be a particular challenge in the current climate of fiscal constraints, so a strong case will have to be made for the return on investment in terms of community relations and safety.

Conclusions

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine best practices in SRO programs that might apply to the Milwaukee SRO Program, and to convey that information to the SRO program leadership in a way that can be implemented. There are many strengths in the way the program is currently carried out; these have been noted throughout the report. At the same time, there are many opportunities to take action across all 7 areas of recommendation to make it stronger.

The results compiled from this SRO program review indicate that the current mobile deployment system has not allowed SROs enough time in schools to build the positive relationships they desire. The Milwaukee SROs frequently described their present job as “responding to calls for service” at the schools, even “running from call to call.” SROs also report that—in their view—some of those calls received are not situations requiring the immediate attention of police officers. There is some dissatisfaction on the part of SROs because the current situation does not allow them to exercise their full complement of roles, which include educating students and staff, mentoring/informal counseling, and spending time in proactive activities, building positive relationships with administrators, staff, students, and others. It is very important that SROs are provided the training and opportunity to exercise roles that are not limited to enforcement of the law. Related to this call for true proactive activities, the current IGA governing the SRO program says that “schools will be prioritized based on school district needs and the age groups of students that are in most need of police proactive interaction.”

Where to go from here? The question is, how does the Milwaukee SRO program deal with present realities and employ best practices in its SRO program to be 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.”

Appropriate action for MPS and MPD to consider in the current environment means taking action on multiple fronts. The action recommended is not just one or two steps, but multiple measures. While the shift in the 2012-13 school year to mobile deployment of the SROs may be associated with more favorable statistics, namely a decrease in citations/arrests/uses of force, there are many other best practice steps that should be considered. These additional steps, if implemented with fidelity and support by MPS and MPD, can also help contribute to a decrease of undesired results, and an increase in desired activities.

The current IGA states that Milwaukee’s SRO program “represents an effort by the City (MPD) and MPS to enhance the cooperation and collaboration between the Milwaukee Police Department and Milwaukee Public Schools by establishing and maintaining a positive partnership that promotes prevention, intervention, education, and enforcement as a means of improving the safety and security in and around MPS schools for staff, students, parents, and the community...”

The IGA statement above accurately describes the way the SRO program is currently operating in Milwaukee. In fact, there appears to be an extraordinary amount of daily communication and positive cooperation between the Office of Community Outreach and Education (MPD) and the Department of Safety and Security (MPS). The leadership of these two offices share a deep commitment to the students and staff of Milwaukee schools, coupled with a desire to continually improve and increase the benefits of the SRO program.

The recommendations in this report are presented to the leadership of MPS and MPD, and to the leadership of the Milwaukee SRO program for its consideration. Best practices are included throughout, but the key to success is for leadership at the MPS and MPD to carefully review the recommendations and figure out just how they will be implemented, by whom, and on what time frame. By engaging in this process, the SRO program leadership will own the recommendations and ensure that they are implemented.

The recommendations in this report are based on best practices. The recommendations work together in synergistic fashion to strengthen Milwaukee's whole SRO program. In its quest for continuous quality improvement, the SRO program leadership (OCOE and MPS Department of Safety and Security) should seek to accomplish all of these objectives in integrated fashion:

1. Be guided by clearly defined and communicated roles of the SRO;
2. Ensure that SROs are well-chosen through a thorough process;
3. Train all SROs in basic and specialized training, and also engage them in multi-disciplinary training with school staff and others;
4. Be guided by the strong underpinnings of a clear and comprehensive IGA;
5. Make a concerted effort to engage a variety of community partners;
6. Track the varied activities of the SROs; and
7. Critically examine how it can evolve the present mobile model to take steps that result in closer, more consistent relationships with particular schools.

Implementing the recommendations above will yield the related benefits. By putting into place these recommendations Milwaukee's SRO program should reap the following results:

1. More clearly defined roles of the SRO program;
2. A stronger, more inclusive selection process yielding the best SROs available;
3. Better, more consistently trained SROs and MPS staff;
4. A more complete policy (IGA) guiding the partnership effort;
5. Greater understanding in the community of the multiple positive objectives of the SRO program, along with greater engagement with the community;
6. Expanded ability to track the wide range of activities the SROs engage in, with more proactive and varied activities, including those aimed at diverting students from justice involvement; and
7. More strategic deployment of SROs to cover schools more frequently within particular police districts so that there is more opportunity for SROs to build meaningful relations with students and staff.

Implementing the recommendations in a comprehensive way will strengthen Milwaukee's SRO program. All those measures can help provide a safer school environment and divert students from justice involvement. This sentiment was recognized in the recent joint statement from the WI Department of Public Instruction and the WI Department of Justice: "As school districts and law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Wisconsin enter into and renew contracts for School Resource Officer Programs, there is a critical balance that school administrators and law enforcement agencies must achieve so that each party receives necessary support and training, and the presence of SROs in school buildings does not result in unnecessary contact with the criminal justice system."

The recommendations should be refined further by the leadership of the systems which support the SROs (OCOE and the MPS Department of Safety and Security), with input from staff, to create SMART action plans. These plans should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-framed. Suggested broad time frames are presented in the report. By refining such plans locally, the chances of implementation will be much greater. These recommendations should also be presented to/reviewed by top management in the MPD and MPS, as it reviews the importance and value of the SRO program. This level of support is essential.

Finally, as mentioned at the outset of this report, the business of providing safer schools requires many parties to do many things, over time. The SRO program is one critical component of Milwaukee's efforts to provide safety. It needs continued support by all levels of MPD and MPS, along with partners from the rest of the community.

Appendices

- **Recommendation Highlights and Action Steps—At a Glance**
- **Interview Questions**
- **Background on Milwaukee’s SRO Program**
- **Literature Review: Complete list**
- **Literature Review: Selected Literature Highlighted by Category**

Recommendation Highlights and Action Steps—At a Glance

Recommendation One:

Clearly define the roles and expectations of the SROs in the documentation of the program, such as the IGA, and in communications and trainings with school administration.

- *Clarify roles of SROs, what they can do, and what they do NOT do.*
- *Build out a comprehensive list of SRO roles that Milwaukee's SROs do/can engage in.*

Recommendation 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 roles they should 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 to consider as an addition 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 student discipline or enforcement of school rules.

Suggested language to consider 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:] 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. Topics will include clarifying the roles of the SROs.

Recommendation for near-term:

In regular OCOE meetings and in roll call, have regular discussion 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 should have regular (monthly?) meetings about roles to monitor that goals are being met.

Recommendation 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. 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. Ongoing review of the activities of the SROs should include analysis of any other roles SROs are carrying out, as identified by leadership and the SROs themselves.

Recommendation Two:

Examine the selection process for choosing SROs.

- *Review the criteria for recruiting and selecting SROs.*
- *Examine the selection process to ensure that it reflects the diverse and clear roles that the police/school/community wants in its SRO program.*
- *Include expanded representation of MPS and community representation in the selection process of the SRO.*

Recommendation for immediate action (revision of the IGA):

SRO program leadership should consider revising 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.

Recommendation 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 of the SROs.

Recommendation Three:

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

- *Identify and secure training **for** the SROs.*
- *Ensure that SRO supervisor play a key role in getting SROs the training they need.*
- *Identify how SROs/MPD can provide training **to** MPS administrators and staff.*
- *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.*
- *Develop an ongoing training schedule.*

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, OCOE/SROs will also be involved in developing/delivering regular training to MPS staff on a variety of safety topics. Such training should be closely coordinated with MPS. Priority topics like active shooter and emergency management, and others, as needed. Training topics will also include clarifying the roles of the SROs.

Recommendation for near-term:

Develop a system of collecting information on all trainings available to SROs. OCOE SRO supervisors and MPS administrators can continually add trainings to this inventory/schedule, identifying the topic, dates, who can attend, etc.

Promote any relevant safety training to all SROs, and to MPS staff. Consider expanding the promotion of 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.

Encourage and set up mechanisms where MPD and MPS can jointly identify training needs, as well as work together to develop training.

Recommendation 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.

Develop a job aid such as an SRO manual that includes the IGA, job description, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) information on how to carry out the multiple roles of an SRO, sample lesson plans for classroom presentations, evaluation tools, etc.

Recommendation Four:

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

- *Consider making changes in the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with language clarifying roles and expectations, input into the SRO recruitment/selection process, and recommendations about training.*
- *Make ongoing communication about policy related to the SRO program a priority.*

Recommendation for immediate action (revising the IGA):

Consider making changes in the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with language clarifying roles and expectations; input into the SRO recruitment/selection process; and recommendations about training provided to the SROs, as well as by the SRO to MPS staff, along with joint training where parties are trained together is also recommended for inclusion in the IGA; and new actions to include when measuring the activities of the SROs.

Recommendation 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 meeting 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).

In addition to the operational leadership of the SRO program meeting regularly, the superintendent and chief of police should agree to meet on a regular basis to discuss the operation of the SRO program.

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.*
- *Ensure that SROs are aware of diversion programs and resources and now how to connect students to them.*
- *Identify and create communications resources SROs can use in their work.*

Recommendation for immediate action (revising the IGA)

SRO program leadership should consider revising the IGA by adding a statement about close work with community partners. This language would fit naturally in Section I. City's Responsibility under Section I. B. Officer's Duties as a new entry, #6, with suggested wording such as this:

6. Working collaboratively with a variety of community partners in support of the school safety mission.

Recommendation for near-term:

SRO supervisors should encourage and enable SROs 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.*
- *Provide SRO supervisors with the tools they need to support SROs in collecting and using data to improve the SRO program.*

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, including diversion activities, 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 aimed at diversion, 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 to support additional proactive activity.*
- *Assign more officers as SROs.*
- *Consider adjusting the timing of SRO availability for coverage at the beginning of the school day.*
- *Ensure that SROs are supported through strong supervision.*

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 MPD and 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:

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. In its review of SRO deployment SRO program leadership should make note of obstacles to more consistent coverage, as well as strategies to overcome those obstacles. Given the current situation where SROs are continually responding to calls for service, consider dedicating a smaller unit of SROs that could focus on these calls so that the majority of the SROs can focus more on proactive activities.

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.

Recommendations for long-term:

OCOE, along with the MPS Director of Safety and Security should review annually 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.

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

Interview Questions

(Protocol approved by MPS Research and Evaluation, Office of Innovation and Information)

Hello. My name is John Rosiak, Principal of Prevention Partnerships. As Mr. Ed Negrón has informed you, we were selected to conduct a study of the current practices and potential improvements of the SRO program in MPS. I'm calling you because Mr. Negrón identified you as someone knowledgeable about this program. Is this still a good time to talk?

[If participant answers "yes" continue.]

This interview could take up to an hour, depending on your responses. Neither your name, position or affiliation will be connected to your answers. You are free to stop the interview at any time. There are no risks or benefits to you personally for participating in this interview, but the results of the study have the potential to improve the SRO program in Milwaukee, and perhaps in other districts, as well.

In addition, I am not going to ask you any questions concerning interactions with specific students. This is for student protection, so I ask that you not share your observations about specific students.

Do you understand, and agree to participate the interview? Any questions?

Let's begin.

The first set of questions are about the five "Officer Duties" [spelled out in the Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement]. From your point of view:

1. How do the SROs work in collaborative fashion with others?
2. How do the SROs work with administrators to identify conditions that could be harmful to the welfare of students and the safety of the school environment?
3. How do SROs cover after-school events?
4. What kind of meetings and trainings do SROs attend, and what impact does that have?
5. In what ways do the SROs provide assistance to school personnel to improve safety and reduce disorder?

Questions related to MPS duties:

6. How does MPS provide training with regard to school policies, procedures, and perceptions of school safety?
7. Do SROs get involved in suspensions, expulsions, referrals to restorative practices, and other alternatives to discipline? If so, please explain how.
8. Are you aware of any effects (impact, issues) related to the current expense-sharing model where MPS and MPD share the total costs? What are those effects?

Other:

9. How do the hours of SROs being deployed or assigned (to work in different shifts) make a difference in the implementation of the SRO program?
10. What are your thoughts on the “mobile” (or “roving”) model as an effective way to assign the SROs? [Explain mobile model.]
11. In your opinion, what is the return on investment (ROI) for the SRO program? Is there an enhancement of relationships with youth and other community members? Please explain why/how, or why not.
12. What recommendations do you have for the strategic goals and measures of Milwaukee’s SRO program, as you see them? (Ed is checking.)
13. What are the opportunities/risks/threats that might exist related to the implementation of best SRO practices in Milwaukee?
14. What are the gaps between what MPS/MPD currently does with its SRO program, and “best practices”?
15. What support systems are needed to enable Milwaukee to implement best SRO practices?
16. How are the SROs selected and assigned?

Thank you very much for your time today. Do you have anything else you’d like to add?

If you have any questions or follow-up comments, please feel free to contact me at john@rosiakassociate.com

Background on Milwaukee's SRO Program

Since school year 2005-06, the Milwaukee Public Schools administration has collaborated with the Milwaukee Police Department to provide a police presence at the high schools for after school hours with the purpose of providing officers dedicated to the safety of students at dismissal time and social/sports events. Since January 2007, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors has approved School Resource Officer intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) each year between MPS and the MPD. Beginning in school year 2007-08 (SY 2008), Milwaukee instituted its SRO program by assigning SROs in pairs to a small number of particular schools in the city (Bradley Tech High School, and a cluster of schools near Custer High School), then expanded placement of officers to a handful of additional schools. After a few years of experience with the program, some concerns were identified. One concern was the need to cover incidents that occurred in other schools. Another issue was that, in some cases, SROs were used by administrators to enforce school rules. It was noted that the way some of these cases were handled, officers ended up making arrests as the situations escalated; arrests in schools increased.

The response agreed upon by the leadership of the school administration and police department to address this increase in arrests at schools was to remove the SROs from the particular schools in school year 2012-13 and to deploy them in "mobile" fashion throughout the city. The "mobile" approach was implemented to allow more schools to be covered by SROs. The idea was that if the officers were not present full-time in the schools, then arrests would go down. Also, in 2013-14, the Stop Talk it Over with Police (S.T.O.P.) curriculum was added as an additional component of the SRO model for the purpose of allowing more positive student-police interaction in up to 30 schools.

A 2013-14 MPS report entitled "School Resource Officer (SRO) Model, 2013-2014" indicated that the goal of removing the SROs from being assigned to particular schools was to decrease citations/arrests. That report presented how the numbers of citations/arrests/uses of force all decreased dramatically from school year 2012-13 to school year 2013-14. The report stated that the reasoning for the shift to the mobile model of deployment was that the mobile model would give SROs more time to "respond to any school in a mentoring capacity" and that SROs were "rarely (if ever) going to have to enforce laws and ordinances involving the same community they just mentored, thus creating the conditions to build positive relationships and mentoring opportunities between school communities and the MPD." (Page 4.) The 2013-14 MPS report mentioned above also notes that the SRO "model and program must be monitored and changes need to be implemented as deemed necessary so as to change with a district's needs."

In 2017 MPS Board of School Directors sought to review the SRO program (where the officers work in the School Security and Juvenile Outreach Program). The purpose of the evaluation was to examine how the program was doing, and what might be done to improve it. That is the impetus to the development of this report.

SRO Literature Review: Annotated List

Note: Following each citation below is a brief description of the source's main findings related to SRO best practices. Some sources have lengthy descriptions with findings related to several recommendations, other sources have only one or two points of interest in relation to SRO best practices. This selection of articles and research papers presents an overview of key findings throughout SRO best practices literature.

Barnes, L. M. (2008). Policing the schools: An evaluation of the North Carolina school resource

officer program. Rutgers The State University of New Jersey-Newark. Retrieved from

<<http://search.proquest.com/openview/345cf618bb3809fcbc398fedc15f1f01/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>>

Dissertation on a North Carolina evaluation designed to describe the characteristics and implementation of the program, examine its impact on school violence, and survey school staff and officer perceptions of the program. Among key findings was the fact that role conflict and ambiguity distract from accomplishing the goal of crime reduction, effective processes for screening candidates is one of the most important components of an effective SRO program. Poor planning and problem analysis are also found to hinder a program long term. The research found mixed results on reported crime in relation to SRO presence, but says that, "In schools where reported crime decreased, program administrators maintained that officers were proactive and spent much time communicating with and building relationships with students, which in turn leads to greater identification of problems" (page 225).

Barnes, L. M. (2016). Keeping the Peace and Controlling Crime: What School Resource Officers

want School Personnel to Know. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational*

Strategies, Issues and Ideas, 89(6), 197-201. Retrieved from

<<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00098655.2016.1206428>>.

Diverges from a focus on student and administrator perceptions to focus on daily operations and inner workings of SRO programs. Illuminates the approaches and methods that impact SRO program operation and success. Warns that use of an SRO to enforce school policy and procedures is a misuse of an SRO program. Time spent interacting with students and the community however, was viewed in a positive light. This approach to SRO work was also found to have spillover effects into the community. When an officer establishes a solid relationship with students in school, they become a valuable source of intelligence regarding crime in the community" (page 200).

Beger, R. R. (2002). Expansion of police power in public schools and the vanishing rights of

students. *Social Justice*, 29(1/2 (87-88), 119-130. Retrieved from

< www.jstor.org/stable/29768123>

Discusses the necessity to protect the rights of students against arbitrary police power in the context of police presence in schools. Article notes that overuse of officers in enforcing school policy leads to the phenomenon that, “trivial forms of student misconduct that used to be handled informally by teachers and administrators are now more likely to result in arrest and referral to juvenile or adult court.” (Page 127).

Bracey, J. R., Foley Geib, et al. (2013). Connecticut's Comprehensive Approach to Reducing In-

School Arrests: Changes in Statewide Policy, Systems Coordination and School

Practices. *Family Court Review*, 51(3), 427-434. Retrieved from

<<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/fcre.12039/full>>

Discusses Connecticut efforts through policy reform, advocacy and systems coordination efforts, and changes to school practice to form an interdisciplinary collaborative approach. Key points listed in article include:

- Change happened because stakeholders were able to work together across systems.
- Getting solid data was essential to defining the problem and to showing results.
- Model memoranda of agreement helped define the role of police in schools.
- The Judicial Branch began using discretion to push back unnecessary arrests.
- Mental health professionals offered teachers training on behavioral health and connected schools to community resources.
- The effort to reduce student arrests gained traction in Connecticut coming on the heels of other successful juvenile justice reforms. Whenever we get a “win,” we should look for an opportunity to build on it.

Bracy, N. L. (2010). Circumventing the law: Students’ rights in schools with police. *Journal of*

Contemporary Criminal Justice, 26(3), 294-315. Retrieved from

<<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1043986210368645>>

Focuses on potential unintended consequences of an SRO program with an eye towards ways SROs may compromise students’ rights. States that SROs and administrators need to be careful when searching, questioning, or sharing information about students and that policies should be well thought out in advance.

Brady, K. P. (2011). The Challenges of School Police Partnerships in Large Urban School

Systems: An Analysis of New York City's Impact Schools Initiative. *Leadership in*

Education, Corrections and Law Enforcement: A Commitment to Ethics, Equity and Excellence.

(Advances in Educational Administration, Volume 12), Emerald Group Publishing Limited 12: 99-121.

This work studied New York City’s Impact School program (a punitive-based school-police partnership that puts police in schools) affected student security and showed that, despite increased police

presence, students involved in the program schools continued to see higher than average problems related to criminality.

Brady, K. P., Balmer, S., & Phenix, D. (2007). School—Police Partnership Effectiveness in Urban

Schools: An Analysis of New York City's Impact Schools Initiative. *Education and Urban*

Society, 39(4), 455-478. Retrieved from

<<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0013124507302396>>

Uses New York City's Impact schools initiative (a punitive-based school-police partnership) to examine impacts on future criminality and student performance. Important finding was that NYC's impact schools continued to experience problems after the program was initiated and that these schools were on the whole more crowded and received less funding.

Briers, A. N. (2003). School-based police officers: What can the UK learn from the USA?

International Journal of Police Science & Management, 5(2), 129-142. Retrieved from

<<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1350/ijps.5.2.129.14325>>

Comparison of UK and American metropolitan SRO programs. Discusses the need for better developed planning and structure of SRO programs. Discusses the appropriate distribution within the "triad approach." States that officers should spend more time as teachers or counselors and less time in the role of law enforcement officer. Concludes that US program has merits in its emphasis on community connections.

Briers, A. N., & Dickmann, E. M. (2009). International comparative perspective of police in

schools resulting from a Fulbright Alumni Initiatives Award. *International Journal of*

Police Science & Management, 11(2), 130-140. Retrieved from

<<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1350/ijps.2009.11.2.117>>

Discusses the need for school safety program planning and implementation knowledge and insights gained from an exchange of officers between the US and UK. Key findings include:

- Structure of primary roles differed, with US officers frequently engaged in classroom teaching which seemed to be an effective use of time. Classroom lessons and presentations a good opportunity to develop relationships with students and staff.
- Both programs had intensive involvement with young people and both programs saw benefits from focusing on the welfare of students.
- Encourages the use of diversion opportunities and restorative practices whenever possible to divert people from justice system in both countries.
- There is often difficulty building relationships with staff, especially administration. Officers need to be willing to invest time in developing rapport with administration as well as students to be successful.

- Officers in both countries found that non-SRO officers were critical of work. Whole departments should work to be supportive of and articulate the value of the SRO not just to the school, but to the law enforcement entity.
- There was a lack of understanding by school SRO supervisors of their roles.
- Also a lack of formal training in school policing role.
- Encourages officers to maintain communication with officers in other schools within the SRO program.
- A need to reconcile conflicting needs of school staff and police organizations.

Brown, B. (2006). Understanding and assessing school police officers: A conceptual and methodological comment. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 34(6), 591-604. Retrieved from <<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0047235206000894>>

Focuses on adding insights to the literature on issues that arise around putting police officers in schools. Found that the diversity of duties expected of SROs is often assumed to be the responsibility of many officers but falls on the shoulders of one SRO in many instances. Understaffing of SROs is a problem to effectively carrying out the role of the SRO. Highlights a number of key issues for SROs such as the need to understand limits of the law regarding the fourth amendment and *New Jersey v TLO*.

Brown, B. and W. R. Benedict (2005). Classroom Cops, What Do the Students Think? A Case Study of Student Perceptions of School Police and Security Officers Conducted in a Hispanic Community. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 7(4): 264-285. Retrieved from <<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1350/ijps.2005.7.4.264>>

Focuses on student perceptions regarding an SRO program in a predominantly Hispanic community. Found complex perceptions among students regarding police presence in school. Found students were more favorable on general questions about officer duties than when asked specifics about the officers' ability to control drug and gang violence. Also found racial and gender differences in perceptions of officers. In the Hispanic community studied the study found "both well-acculturated and less-acculturated Hispanic youths view legal authorities favorably which, given the history of tension between racial/ethnic minorities and the police in the US, is a positive finding." (page 281).

California Office of the Attorney General Crime Prevention Ctr (1992). Evaluation of the School/Law Enforcement Partnership Program 1991/92 Executive Summary. 555 Capitol Mall Suite 290 Sacramento CA 95814.

Grant implementation improvements discussed. Primarily focused on discussing interagency coordination and partnership. Notes that communication between police departments and schools is crucial for securing additional funding for SROs and other school safety programs that use such a partnership model.

Center for Schools and Communities. (2002). Evaluation of the School Resource Officer (SRO)

Program: A Study of Six Selected Sites From 1998-2000. Retrieved from

<<https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=243152>>

Pennsylvania study on effectiveness of SRO programs as a deterrent to violence and as a resource. Also measured student and teacher perceptions of programs. Found SROs to be a valuable addition to schools. Students, parents and teachers on the whole welcomed SROs in their schools.

Carroll, J., Ben-Zadok, E., & McCue, C. (2010). Evaluation of efficiency in crime control and crime prevention programs. *American journal of criminal justice*, 35(4), 219-235.

Retrieved from < <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12103-010-9080-4>>

Presents policy recommendations that arise from a comparison of several Truancy Reduction Programs and School Resource Officer Programs. States that “long-term, ongoing evaluation is especially important in crime prevention [efforts] like the School Resource Officer Program.” Rather than assessing achievements of programs over the long term, evaluation against budget allocations results in a series of periodic efficiency ratios which may not shed light on the long term, indirect, or remote benefits of an SRO program. SRO program funding is often vulnerable to intervention in response to changing political-economic environments, rather than on the long-term merits of the program.

Chrusciel, M. M., et al. (2015). *Law enforcement executive and principal perspectives on school safety measures. Policing: An International Journal*, 38(1): 24-39

Evaluation of the perspectives of school administrators and law enforcement executives regarding (among other things) the effectiveness of SROs. Specifically analyzes the gaps between police executive and school administration in the effectiveness of SRO programs. Specifically addressed the issue of armed teachers and found that neither group found it an effective strategy for combatting school violence.

Choi, K. S., Cronin, S., & Correia, H. (2016). The assessment of capable guardianship measures against bullying victimization in the school environment. *Police Practice and Research*,

17(2), 149-159. Retrieved from

< <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15614263.2015.1128161>>

Reinforces the idea that school policy should be executed by school officials and criminal behavior referred to an SRO, both SROs and administrators agree. However, blurry lines exist when it comes to some forms of bullying behavior which are regulated both by criminal code and by school policy. Article found that, “the unique position of law enforcement officers negotiating the dual and sometimes conflicting roles of law enforcement and school resource suggest the need for policy clarification and training” (page 157)

Citizens League (2009) Proposal for improving the School Resource Officer Program.

Milwaukee Students Speak Out. Retrieved from

<<https://citizing.org/data/pdfs/sso/SSO-Milwaukee-Safety-Discipline.pdf>>

Proposal detailed testimonials from students on the ways SROs could have a bigger impact on their lives.

Clark, S. (2011). The Role of Law Enforcement in Schools: The Virginia Experience-a

Practitioner Report. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2011(129): 89-101.

Retrieved from < <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/yd.389/full>>

Recommendations in this article include a cautioning of administrators to involve SROs only when appropriate and to avoid having an SRO act as an agent of the administration. For example, Clark writes, "Ordinary cases of bullying that do not result in serious physical injury to anyone are usually handled by the school administration and counseling staff. If the act of bullying also involved a serious criminal act, such as robbery, extortion, or physical injury to a victim, then the SRO would become involved." Clark also cautions for careful selection of SRO officers to create a successful program.

Clark suggests that detailed memoranda of understanding (MOUs) are vital to SRO success. All parties need to have a clear vision of the SRO's role on campus. Clark gives this example, "it is generally considered poor police procedure to assign an officer to the same location at the same time each school day. . . however, many school administrators wish the SRO to be stationed at a particular problem area for a specified time each day. With a clear MOU. . . suitable compromises can be found."

Clark recommends using two recognized effective law enforcement strategies: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and community-oriented policing. SROs are encouraged to capitalize on opportunities to interact inside and outside of the classroom, Clark notes many effective SROs have volunteered as athletic coaches or tutors to increase interaction outside law enforcement role. Parent interaction is highlighted as a key to success. The article recommends that SROs carefully document ongoing interactions with students. SROs should also be able to act as resident expert in crisis response.

Clark says that a significant challenge to SRO programs is the difficulty to prove effectiveness. Clark shows that SROs frequently identify uncooperative administrators who refuse to report criminal acts as a hurdle.

Coon, J. K. and L. F. Travis (2012). The Role of Police in Public Schools: A Comparison of

Principal and Police Reports of Activities in Schools. *Police Practice & Research*, 13(1):

15-30. Retrieved from <<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15614263.2011.589570>>

Discusses different roles law enforcement can play in schools. Concludes that there are several keys to a successful SRO program

- Selection -- "not all police officers are well-suited for working in a school environment. At a minimum, officers should express a strong interest in youth, be adaptable to working in a school setting, and have good communication skills. Further, such officers should have supervisors who believe in their abilities and are willing to support officers in such a role" (page 27)

- Training – supports regular in-service training that should focus on the SRO’s role as teacher. Suggest allowing principals to have input on SROs content of instruction
- Good Communication Skills – “While it is obvious that school officials and police both value school safety, their backgrounds, education and training may result in drastically different perspectives about how best to achieve this goal. Problems seem particularly likely to occur when expectations and concerns are not openly and regularly discussed” (page 28)
- Broad collaboration and regular re-evaluation are also stressed as keys to success. Schools often lack sufficient personnel and other means for sufficient security, the adoption of SRO programs often go un-evaluated.

Crawford, C. and R. Burns (2015). Preventing school violence: assessing armed guardians,

school policy, and context. *Policing-An International Journal of Police Strategies &*

Management, 38(4): 631-647. Retrieved from

This article is a quantitative investigation into the effectiveness of law enforcement to operate in schools to address crime and violence. They conduct this research aware of how minority schools often face higher levels of reported violence and have a heavier law enforcement presence. Authors describe the presence of officers in schools as having mixed results. The number of SROs was negatively and significantly associated with lower incidences of attack with weapon and gun possession in grade levels lower than high schools. Authors note that it may be the case high schools may have been feeling pressure to address violence before the implementation of SROs and hired their own security personnel to solve crime related problems. Study also finds that effectiveness of armed personnel in high schools has mixed results depending on the grade level and the way in which the security officers are armed (they found statistically significant results for OC spray, and found that Taser carry was negatively associated with both threatened and actual weapon attacks). Authors make mixed claims on effectiveness of firearm possession by SROs and note the need for additional research.

< <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/PIJPSM-01-2015-0002>>

Crawford, C. and R. Burns (2016). Reducing school violence Considering school characteristics

and the impacts of law enforcement, school security, and environmental factors. *Policing-An*

International Journal of Police Strategies & Management, 39(3): 455-477. Retrieved from <

<https://search-proquest-com.proxy->

um.researchport.umd.edu/docview/1826442781?OpenUrlRefId=info:xri/sid:wcdiscovery&accountid=1

4696>

Crawford and Burns (2016) examines the role of school characteristics and SRO programs in reducing violence in schools. Rather than relying on perception surveys of students or administrators, their research examines information on school violence to consider school safety approaches (like SROs) in the future. Results showed that the impact of law enforcement presence was mixed regarding reducing violence on campus. Presence of law enforcement was positively associated with measures of violence indicating counterproductive results. When the racial composition of schools is examined it

was revealed that school administrators face very different problems. The authors note that, “In addition to having increased reports of all the measures of violence, predominantly minority schools had more SROs and security guards than white schools” (page 471).

Cray, M. and S. C. Weiler (2011). Policy to Practice: A Look at National and State

Implementation of School Resource Officer Programs. *Clearing House* 84(4): 164-170. Retrieved from < <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00098655.2011.564987>>

Cray and Weiler attempt to understand practices, procedures, and other methods that can increase the effectiveness of SROs in promoting a safe learning environment. The article arrives at several findings about how to *proactively work to improve SRO performance*. Authors discuss SRO assignment patterns.

The authors also discuss the important role the MOU plays in promoting a safe learning environment. The article emphasizes the need for policy references regarding the role of officers. The study found that many programs today lack *basic planning MOUs and action plans to make a well-defined SRO role that will be conducive to success*. Finally, the authors of this article observe that, “full transparency of the policies and expectations should be understood by both parties, namely school officials and the SRO” (page 169).

Devlin, D. N., & Gottfredson, D. C. (2016). The roles of police officers in schools: Effects on the

recording and reporting of crime. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*,

1541204016680405. Retrieved from

< <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1541204016680405>>

Examines whether deploying police officers in schools has an impact on the reporting of crime. “Results suggest that the level of crime recording and reporting generally increased with SRO presence. Further, schools with law enforcement only SROs recorded more crimes than non-SRO schools, and contrary to hypotheses, schools with mixed SROs reported more crimes to law enforcement.” (page 208). This suggests that SRO role has a significant impact on reporting of crime.

Dogutas, C. (2008). Reactive vs. proactive strategies: The effectiveness of school resource

officers to prevent violence in schools. ProQuest.

Concludes with how police need to take on a variety of roles like counseling or teaching rather than strictly being a law enforcement presence in schools.

Dohy, J., & Banks, T. (2017). The Impact of School Policing on Student Behaviors in Ohio Public

Schools. *Journal of School Violence*. Retrieved from

<<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15388220.2017.1322519>>

A quantitative analysis of Ohio public schools to predict incidents of insubordination in 2010. Included analysis of economically disadvantaged areas. From abstract: "As school size and total number of school policing measures increased, so did student incidents of insubordination in 2010. School policing and the percentage of economic disadvantage did not predict violence. Findings considered the number of behavior incidents with respect to policing in all school locales, revealing the impact of school policing on student behaviors may transcend race and geographic location."

Eklund, K., Meyer, L., & Bosworth, K. (2017). Examining the Role of School Resource Officers on School Safety and Crisis Response Teams. *Journal of School Violence*, 1-13. Retrieved from < <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15388220.2016.1263797>>

Evaluates effectiveness of the SRO position in crisis situations. Compares effectiveness to traditional mental health professionals. Finds that SRO and mental health professionals had similar ratings of school safety strategies. School administrators are shown to believe the crisis response plan is less effective.

Eisert, A., Center for Schools & Communities, & United States of America. (2005a). School resource officer evaluation: Phase one. Camp Hill, PA: Center for Schools and Communities. Phase two of a PA evaluation, discusses general best practices for SRO programs.

Eisert, A., Center for Schools & Communities, & United States of America. (2005b). School resource officer evaluation: Phase two. Camp Hill, PA: Center for Schools and Communities.

Retrieved from:

<<https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/abstractdb/AbstractDBDetails.aspx?id=243121>> or <http://pacrimstats.info/PCCDReports/EvaluationResearch/Completed%20Research/Delinquency%20Prevention/Student%20Resource%20Officer/SROPhaseTwoReport_final.pdf>

Phase two of this report details the following promising components of an SRO program (page 19):

- Law enforcement officers identified having daily contact with the SRO.
- The supervisor indicated having daily contact with the SRO.
- The supervisor indicated having contact as needed with school administrators.
- The supervisor indicated having visited the SRO on school grounds between six to twelve times within the past twelve months.
- The supervisor had over twenty-five years of experience and had supervised the SRO for a minimum of four years. In addition, the supervisor was involved in the formulation of the memorandum of understanding between the law enforcement agency and school district.

Finn, P., & McDevitt, J. (2005). National Assessment of School Resource Officer Programs.

Final Project Report. Document Number 209273. US Department of Justice. Retrieved

from <<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED486268>>

The National Assessment of School Resource Officer programs (Commissioned by the DOJ and the National Institute of Justice) states that successful programs follow several steps in developing a list of SRO roles and responsibilities (Finn and MC Devitt, 2005). Specifically, they note SRO programs should:

- identify roles and responsibilities in writing;
- avoid relying on a personal relationship, easy access, and a handshake between police and school administrators for establishing SRO roles;
- involve the schools in developing the SRO roles and responsibilities;
- distribute the roles and responsibilities, and periodically review them; and
- provide a mechanism for resolving disagreements between school administrators and SROs about the officers' responsibilities.

The report also notes: In developing the written description of SRO roles and responsibilities:

- narrow the considerable leeway of what it means for SROs to engage in "law enforcement";
- make clear whether and how SROs will be responsible for enforcing discipline; and
- be specific about the SRO's teaching and counseling and mentoring responsibilities.

The assessment also stresses the importance of recruiting SROs. In their report, they note: It is especially important to develop written criteria for who can qualify as an SRO, including someone who:

- likes and cares about kids;
- has the temperament to work with school administrators;
- has the capacity to work independently;
- is not a rookie; and
- knows the community in which he or she will be working.

Other keys to successful screening and recruitment include:

- assigning officers with the right personality—someone, as one principal put it, with "an outgoing, caring, but no-nonsense personality";
- when there is a lack of qualified applicants, using incentives, such as take-home cruisers and a percent salary increment to help attract qualified candidates; and
- involving school district and school-level administrators in the screening process to increase acceptance of the SROs among school personnel (Finn and McDevitt, 2005).

Timing of training is also pulled out as an important aspect, they show that "any delay in training can be a serious problem because SROs may then have to learn their jobs by 'sinking or swimming.'"

The National Assessment of School Resource Officer Programs observes that "Some parents become concerned that an SRO's presence in the schools suggests their children's schools must be unsafe. Programs that used PTAs, other community meetings, newsletters, letters, and newspaper articles to inform parents about the program reported few or no objections from parents. In turn, parents who support the program often encourage their children to seek out the SRO for help and, in three different sites, have helped pressure city officials to reverse their plans to drop their SRO programs."

Finn, P., McDevitt, J., Lassiter, W., Shively, M., & Rich, T. (2005). Case Studies of 19 School

Resource Officer (SRO) Programs. Document Number 209271. U.S. Department of

Justice. Retrieved from < <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED486265>>

One of this case study's key findings was that review and assessment of SRO activities jointly by law enforcement agencies and school administration is highlighted as a key to success in the National Assessment of School Resource Officer Programs.

Key takeaways and best practices:

- There were two primary barriers implementing the program: community resistance and failure to clarify the SRO's responsibilities.
- "Initially, SROs in these programs learned their responsibilities by trial and error on the job, while over time the schools developed unwritten standards for appropriate and inappropriate use of the SROs. While not an ideal approach, the extremely high level of "customer satisfaction" and lack of serious friction among each site's school and law enforcement communities suggest that some programs can evolve 'on the fly' in ways that eventually serve local needs effectively" (page 363).

Finn, P., Shively, M., McDevitt, J., Lassiter, W., & Rich, T. (2005). Comparison of Program

Activities and Lessons Learned among 19 School Resource Officer (SRO) Programs.

Document Number 209272. US Department of Justice. Retrieved from

<<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED486266>>

Describes programs on a three-part continuum where SROs are engaged in either enforcing the law, teaching or mentoring or all programs fall somewhere on a continuum of those programs.

Page 13 outlines recommendations from the evaluations:

- Many law enforcement agencies and schools did not provide their SROs with either instructions on how they should spend their time on campus or training in how to teach and mentor. As a result, most SROs fell back on doing what they were trained to do and did know how to do—enforce the law.
- Many school administrators wanted the SROs to do nothing but enforce the law, while, at the same time, many SROs were nervous about talking in front of a class or mentoring students.
- Teachers were often initially uncomfortable inviting SROs into their classrooms—or were not even aware that the officers could teach.

It also says that most SRO programs should think about the level of crime and disorder, the wishes of the school administration and the personality and experience of the individual SRO when deciding how to allocate time in their specific SRO model.

This document also discusses developing SRO roles and suggests on page 23 that: "In developing the written description of SRO roles and responsibilities, keep the following considerations in mind:

- Narrow the considerable leeway in what it means for SROs to engage in "law enforcement."
- Make clear whether and how SROs will be responsible for enforcing discipline.
- Be specific about the SROs' teaching and mentoring responsibilities.
- Specify which responsibilities apply to all SROs in all schools (e.g., patrolling the cafeteria at lunch) and which responsibilities are negotiable between individual SROs and their local school administrators (e.g., standing in the corridors between classes)."

Authors also stress the importance of active recruiting and screening of SROs. Say this process should involve school district and school level administrators in the screening process to increase acceptance of the SRO among school personnel.

Specific training and supervision structures throughout and SROs tenure are also highlighted as necessary to ensure a program's success. Supervision should include performance-based evaluations. These evaluations are essential to learn where the program needs improvement and to provide evidence to funding sources of the importance of continuing the program.

This document also encourages SROs to go beyond the classroom to engage students and parents in other settings.

Finn, P., Townsend, M., Shively, M., & Rich, T. (2005). A guide to developing, maintaining, and

succeeding with your school resource officer program. Washington, DC: US

Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Retrieved from

<http://www.popcenter.org/Responses/school_police/PDFs/Finn_et_al_2005.pdf>

This report contains recommendations in five areas:

1. Recruiting SROs
 - a. Do not assign officers involuntarily.
 - b. Use more than one approach for posting the assignment.
 - c. Consider using incentives to attract candidates.
 - d. Neutralize real and perceived disincentives to the posting (ensure police don't turn away because they will have to teach [they will be trained], view the job as a "Kiddie Cop" position, or think they will be confined from campus and quarantined from the rest of the agency). Spread the truth about the program.
2. Screening SROs
 - a. Develop and implement a formal screening process that defines clear character traits the program is looking for in an SRO. Involve school administrators in this step so they can feel confident in the SRO they receive.
3. Minimize turnover
 - a. Part of the solution will be recruitment, screening, and proper training.
 - b. Take steps to counter feelings of isolation from the rest of the department.
 - c. Make sure the position is not a dead end for police professionally, make it an asset for promotion.
 - d. Keep the job exciting.
 - e. Make exceptions to mandatory rotation when an SRO performs exemplary well.
 - f. Help SROs avoid burnout by reducing customizing workload and giving preferred summer assignments.
4. Provide training
 - a. This includes pre-service training to learn how to teach, work with kids and adolescents, mentor and council, manage their time, and understand juvenile case law.
 - b. Also provide in service training, this can include learning-by-doing with an experienced SRO.
5. Careful supervision and data collection for SROs is important to keeping a successful SRO program

Fisher, B. W., & Hennessy, E. A. (2016). School resource officers and exclusionary discipline in US high schools: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Adolescent Research Review*, 1(3), 217-233. Retrieved from < <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40894-015-0006-8>>

Quantitative research on the effectiveness of SROs to provide safety and order within school settings. Some results point to a positive correlation between SROs and rates of exclusionary discipline, while another meta-analysis finds no statistically significant relationship.

Fox Jr, W. (2007). Full-range leadership: Perceptions of the school resource officer's leadership styles and effectiveness (Doctoral dissertation, University of Phoenix).

Retrieved from

< <https://search.proquest.com/openview/d8eeada31143cf543327dd974f71a884/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>>

Makes the important point that leadership matters to the success of an SRO program. Notes that, “a key function of the SRO is to encourage the power of collaboration as transformational leaders. Further, SROs serve as community-based representatives” (page 115). Also states that organizational and personal attributes play a role in the success of an SRO program. Personal attributes may contribute to the ability of SROs to engage school stakeholders and organizational concerns may have effects on SRO duties and ways they engage with the community they are in.

Gill, C., Gottfredson, D., & Hutzell, K. (2016). Can school policing be trauma-informed? Lessons from Seattle.

Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management, 39(3), 551-565. Retrieved from

< <https://search-proquest->

[com.proxyum.researchport.umd.edu/docview/1826442703?OpenUrlRefId=info:xri/sid:wcdiscovery&accountid=14696](https://search-proquest-com.proxyum.researchport.umd.edu/docview/1826442703?OpenUrlRefId=info:xri/sid:wcdiscovery&accountid=14696)>

Headline finding is that, “SEO activities align well with trauma-informed principles of safety, promoting collaboration, and impulse management and are delivered in a context of trust-building, transparency, and responsivity” (page 551).

Irby, D. J., & Thomas, C. (2013). Early arrival or trespassing? Leadership, school security, and

the right to the school. *Journal of cases in educational leadership*, 16(4), 68-75.

Retrieved from < <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1555458913517699>>

Notes that policy creators for SRO programs need to pay attention to:

1. the differences between school resource officers, school police, and local law enforcement and the desirable functions of each;
2. the educational mission and disciplinary philosophy of the district (or school);
3. the social, cultural, and political context of the district (or school) and its history and current relations with law enforcement;
4. the anticipated level and frequency of security and law enforcement involvement;
5. the nature of security and law enforcement practices and desired characteristics; and
6. the legal issues that the policy should consider (page 73).

James, N., & McCallion, G. (2013). *School resource officers: Law enforcement officers in*

schools. Congressional Research Service, June, 26(201), 3. Retrieved from

< <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43126.pdf>>

This congressional research service report is primarily concerned with potential congressional action but makes several policy suggestions with evidence to back up. They find that current levels of school violence likely warrant a well-executed SRO program. They also find that additional SROs in schools may have increased the number of students involved in the justice system compared to schools without SROs, however the SRO can also have a role in deterring crime and appropriate policy can mitigate these effects. Schools with SROs may also be more likely to report non-serious violent crime to the police than schools without SROs.

While it is not possible to identify a “one-size-fits-all” SRO program, there are promising best practices that can help maximize likelihood of success with an SRO program. This includes:

- Developing comprehensive safety plans before deploying an SRO.
- While SROs are an important part of a school safety plan, they should not be the only part.
- Define clear goals of an SRO’s activities and identify needs and data to be collected to determine whether the program is achieving its goal.
- Effective SROs engage in problem solving rather than simply responding to incidents as they occur.

The CRS report also identifies potential road blocks as:

- Lack of resource for the officer:
 - Time constraints.
 - Lack of training.
 - High turnover and reassignment.

These challenges should be addressed as a part of a clear MOU that brings together law enforcement and school officials. This MOU should also set clear roles and guidelines for an SRO.

James, R. K., Logan, J., & Davis, S. A. (2011). Including School Resource Officers in school-

based crisis intervention: Strengthening student support. *School Psychology*

International, 32(2), 210-224. Retrieved from

< <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0143034311400828>>

States the SROs have a vital role to play in crisis situations in a school environment. Specifically urges SROs to undergo training for crisis situations. The document gives several examples to illuminate the

ways SROs are involved in crisis situations. Importantly, the document also provides recommendations for effective crisis management by SROs. The number one recommendation is for the officer to be trained to handle crises in young adults. Additionally, it is important for school psychologists to imitate conversations with their SRO about ensuring crisis intervention occurs when it needs to. SROs

Jennings, W. G., Khey, D. N., Maskaly, J., & Donner, C. M. (2011). Evaluating the relationship

between law enforcement and school security measures and violent crime in schools.

Journal of Police Crisis Negotiations, 11(2), 109-124. Retrieved from

< <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15332586.2011.581511>>

Presents encouraging evidence that, “while some results are mixed between the association between SROs and school violence, there is encouraging evidence that the presence and number of SROs was negatively and significantly associated with school violence” (page 121). This suggest that having SROs independent of school security guards may be of some value.

Kelly, M., & Swezey, J. A. (2015). The Relationship of Gender on the Perceptions of School

Resource Officers Regarding Roles, Responsibilities, and School Culture and

Collaboration. *JSL* Vol 25-N1, 25, 54.

This paper suggest that female SROs may prioritize the job of SRO differently from their male counterparts and correspondingly receive higher satisfaction ratings from students and administrators. Their focus on engaging with others and teaching means SRO programs should seriously consider employing a greater percentage of female SROs.

Kim, C. Y., & Geronimo, I. (2009). Policing in schools: Developing a governance document for

school resource officers in K-12 schools. ACLU National Office. Retrieved from

<http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ873641&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=EJ873641>

A 2010 whitepaper by the ACLU noted that one of the biggest hurdles to respecting students’ rights, transparency, and accountability is a failure to define the role of the SRO in the context of the educational mission in school. The paper goes on to delineate necessary minimum training requirements and encourages non-punitive techniques to improve school safety and climate.

Kochel, T. R., A. T. Laszlo, et al. (2005). SRO Performance Evaluation: A Guide to Getting

Results. Washington, D.C., Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Retrieved

from

<http://www.popcenter.org/Responses/school_police/PDFs/US_DOJ_%20COPS_2006.pdf>

This PowerPoint and accompanying presentation suggest that SROs can make a positive impact on reducing school crime rates also provides a list of suggested activities that SROs should be engaging in during their time on the job.

- Mentor/counsel students.
- Classroom or faculty presentations.
- Parent conferences.
- Increase visibility (patrol, cafeteria, e-mails).
- Create info materials.
- Participate in faculty committees/meetings.
- Programs (Crime Stoppers, Police Explorers, peer mediation, conflict resolution, GREAT, bullying prevention).
- Participate in extracurricular activities.
- Creating student good behavior incentive initiatives.
- Keep office hours.
- Problem solving projects.
- Monitor cameras.

Slide 20 also notes that SROs:

- Need vocal support from law enforcement and school executives.
- Works best when there is collaboration between school and law enforcement agency.
- Need a motivated leader to coordinate project.
- Customers must be direct stakeholders at school.
- Number and composition of people in focus groups is critical to creating appropriate outcome goals.
- Easy to set too many priorities to be effective—3 or 4 at most is preferable.
- Setting priorities too broadly or ambitiously for timeframe is a problem.
- Must have access to school and law enforcement data and be able to conduct analyses.
- Tracking activities is time consuming and burdensome for SROs.
- Staff turnover makes the process more difficult.
- Communication with customers at 3 focus groups is insufficient—need some intermediate and informal communication as well.
- Outcome measures overlooked “small successes.” At-school, anecdotal or individual assistance is valuable, in addition to changing a negative crime trend

Kupchik, A. and G. Ward (2013). "Race, Poverty, and Exclusionary School Security: An

Empirical Analysis of Us Elementary, Middle, and High Schools." *Youth Violence and*

Juvenile Justice Online First.

Gives important light to the fact that, “school and student body characteristics relate to the use of inclusionary and exclusionary school security measures” (page 347). Their results suggest that not only is more data needed on the issue of race and school policing, but that SRO programs should be careful to consider the community they serve in the planning and training phases of the SRO program.

National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (2014). Sharing Ideas &

Resources to Keep Our Nation’s Schools Safe! Retrieved from

<https://justnet.org/pdf/00-Sharing%20Ideas_Vol2-JUSTNET%20508%200715.pdf>.

This report from the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center suggests a number of ways SROs can be used to advance school safety. Specifically, this document makes several recommendations around active shooter events.

The document encourages SROs to take up Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events Training and put those principles to work in their school's safety plan. Also describes NASRO's active shooter training and urges programs to emphasize SROs as, "the immediate first responder" in these crisis situations. Document also provides a number of useful tips on anti-bullying effort, cyber safety, and emergency communications.

Lambert, R. D., & McGinty, D. (2002). Law enforcement officers in schools: setting priorities.

Journal of Educational Administration, 40(3), 257-273.

This document describes how differences in the perception of the role of the SRO between the SROs themselves and school administrators can lead to conflict. They urge that SROs wisely divide time between law enforcement activities and counseling and teaching in order to achieve the best results.

Lovell, R., Pope, C., & Canevit, S. (2005). Integration of Law Enforcement into School Safety:

The Milwaukee Initiative. Washington, DC: Unpublished report submitted to the US

Department of Justice. Retrieved from:

<<https://www.ncjrs.gov/app/abstractdb/AbstractDBDetails.aspx?id=209266>>

Documents and assesses efforts initiated by the Milwaukee Public Schools to enhance integration of law enforcement into school safety. Describes several successes of the Milwaukee partnership between MPD and Milwaukee Public schools. Also provides several key lessons learned from the undertaking, namely:

- It is possible to establish effective collaboration and partnerships to enhance the role of law enforcement in dealing with school safety issues.
- Enhanced police presence during times of transition, before and after the school day, is important in ensuring school safety.
- It is possible to increase the level of communication between school and police administrators.
- Law enforcement, school administrators and community agencies will participate together in efforts to increase school safety as evidenced by the creation of the MPS School Safety Council.
- Targeting specific problem behaviors in areas surrounding schools, in this case gang activity and drug use/distribution, is a sound and effective strategy.
- Efforts to enhance school safety should not only focus on the schools themselves but also the surrounding areas in which they are located.

Lyle, S., & Hendley, D. (2007). Can portfolios support critical reflection? Assessing the

portfolios of Schools Liaison Police Officers. *Journal of In-Service Education, 33(2), 189-*

207. Retrieved from

< <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13674580701293028>>

Examines whether individualized portfolios and monitoring of SROs can improve performance. Finds that assessment of portfolios can lead to better policing outcomes and hope that analysis of portfolios can be used to identify individuals who will be successful trainers (people who transition from presenters of an education program to professional educators).

Lynch, C. G., Lynch, C. G., Gainey, R. R., Gainey, R. R., Chappell, A. T., & Chappell, A. T. (2016).

The effects of social and educational disadvantage on the roles and functions of school resource officers. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 39(3), 521-535. Retrieved from

< <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/PIJPSM-02-2016-0021>>

Examines link between social and educational disadvantage and the roles of SROs. Findings suggest that SROs assigned to schools with greater levels of social and educational disadvantage perform more law enforcement related functions, while other SROs perform more education-related functions.

Maddox, L. A. (2015). His Wrists Were Too Small: School Resource Officers and the over-

Criminalization of America's Students. *University of Miami Race & Social Justice Law Review*, 6, 193.

Retrieved from

<http://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/umrsj6&div=11&g_sent=1&casa_token=&collection=journals>

Reviews the ways in which “police presence in schools contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline and the over criminalization of students, especially black students.” Examines zero tolerance policies in this context and asks how school resource officer training can be altered to better the racial divide in arrests. Urges the use of extensive training in sensitivity to issues of race, sex, and disability for incoming SROs.

Maskaly, J., Donner, C. M., Lanterman, J., & Jennings, W. G. (2011). On the association between

SROs, private security guards, use-of-force capabilities, and violent crime in schools.

Journal of police crisis negotiations, 11(2), 159-176.r

Asks whether there is a significant relationship between the type of security personnel employed in a school and a reduction in crime rates. Finds that there is considerable variability in the effect of school characteristics on school crime across SRO schools versus private security schools. Also finds a relationship between force capabilities of SROs and school crime. Mid-level capabilities are positively associated with school crime.

May, D. C., Barranco, R., Stokes, E., Robertson, A. A., & Haynes, S. H. (2015). Do school

resource officers really refer juveniles to the juvenile justice system for less serious

offenses? *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 0887403415610167. Retrieved from

< <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0887403415610167>>

The findings suggest that schools, not just SROs, make a significant contribution to sending youths to the juvenile justice system for less serious offenses. The findings also suggest that although schools need to carefully consider the use of an SRO, they should not be afraid of an inordinate number of arrests or referrals to the juvenile justice system. Rather, schools should evaluate their own student referral policy to determine its appropriateness in referring students to the juvenile justice system for incorrigible behavior, using it only as a last resort.

May, D., et al. (2016). *Do Rural School Resource Officers Contribute to Net-Widening?*

Evidence from a Southern State. *Journal of Rural Social Sciences*, 31(2): 62-85.

May et al. investigates whether SRO programs contribute to a “school-to-prison pipeline.” Also asks whether SROs can increase minor offense incidence in a school setting. Data collected suggest that SROs do not refer youths to the justice system who would not have been referred had the officer not been assigned to the school. Authors note “if status offenses are removed from consideration, referrals from SROs look remarkably like referrals from schools where LE officers are not assigned. Another key finding from the article states that SROs are actually less likely to refer juveniles to the system for minor offenses than their counterparts working outside of school. This article breaks with other literature in that it provides evidence *that SROs do not contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline.*

McDevitt, J., & Panniello, J. (2005). National Assessment of School Resource Officer Programs:

Survey of Students in Three Large New SRO Programs. Document Number 209270. US

Department of Justice.

McDevitt and Panniello find that, “the most important and easily modifiable variable [to increase likelihood students report crime to SROs is creating a positive opinion of the SRO among the student body. These results suggest that it is important to determine the best method for the SROs to create a positive image.” Trainings and the selections of SROs should reflect this fact and focus on student engagement.

McKenna, J. M., Martinez-Prather, K., & Bowman, S. W. (2016). The roles of school-based law

enforcement officers and how these roles are established: A qualitative study. *Criminal*

justice policy review, 27(4), 420-443. Retrieved from

< <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0887403414551001>>

McKenna et al. utilizes interviews with SROS to explore how LE officers define their actual roles and perceived roles in schools. Authors identify law enforcer, mentor/ role model, educator, and surrogate parent as the four primary roles SBLE takes on in a school setting.

McKenna, J. M., & Pollock, J. M. (2014). Law Enforcement Officers in Schools: An Analysis of Ethical Issues. *Criminal Justice Ethics*, 33(3), 163-184.

McKenna and Pollock observe that expanded officer roles need to be accepted by SROs in the field. They note that many officers, “start their career with a service orientation that shifts to a cynical, world-weary ‘do the minimum orientation.’” Re-trainings and consultation with law enforcement officers is therefore necessary throughout their placement.

McKenna, J. M., & White, S. R. (2017). Examining the Use of Police in Schools: How Roles may Impact Responses to Student Misconduct. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 1-23.

McKenna and White (2017) suggest that, “an officer’s role may influence how they respond to student misconduct” and that “Specifically, as an officer takes on more of a law enforcer role, the use of legal means (i.e., arrest and ticketing) increases.” The authors also discuss how the use of counseling and school-based responses increased as officers took on more of a mentor role and mentors were more likely to use a counseling response than those in a law enforcer role. However, the authors see that elements of both a crime fighter and public servant can be considered “good policing,” the key is striking a balance.

Merkwae, A. (2015). "Schooling the Police: Race, Disability, and the Conduct of School Resource Officers." *Michigan Journal of Race and Law*, 21(1): 147-181.

Merkwae concludes that there is, “overwhelming evidence that students of color and students with disabilities are funneled into the justice system due to the disparate impact of exclusionary discipline policies and discretionary arrests in schools.” Merkwae urges that schools carefully examine the role SROs play in the discipline of students with disabilities and that SROs be held in compliance with federal special education laws and comply with all of the obligations that come along with the title of Officer.

Morgan, E., Salomon, N., Plotkin, M., and Cohen, R. (2015). The School Discipline Consensus Report: Strategies from the Field to Keep Students Engaged in School and Out of the Juvenile Justice System. New York: The Council of State Governments Justice Center.

Report tries to determine what actions can be taken to reduce the number of suspension, expulsions and other disciplinary actions going on in schools. The biggest need they identify is clear data on school disciplinary actions and ongoing efforts to “understand and track how disciplinary practices are related to school safety, the learning environment and other school conditions” (page 365). Key takeaways (page 364);

- States must standardize disciplinary data definitions to be able to aggregate and compare data across districts and campuses and between states. States should use the

U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights Data Collection data definitions as a baseline.

- At a minimum, states should collect and annually report information to the public on student offenses, frequency of suspensions, expulsions, arrests, and referrals to the juvenile justice system. All reported data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, age, offense type, gender, and disability and ELL status.
- States, districts, and schools should create efficiencies in collecting data and conducting needs assessments/surveys to make these processes less burdensome for staff, families, and students.
- In addition to reporting school discipline data, districts should track and report school safety, climate, and academic measures in a single report to allow key stakeholders to identify relationships and track progress across multiple indicators.

Nance, J. P. (2016). "Rethinking Law Enforcement Officers in Schools." *George Washington Law Review*.

Arguendo 84: 152-160.

This paper states SROs should be limited in their ability to become involved in disciplinary matters unless school staff or students are in immediate physical danger. It is imperative that SROs learn a range of non-punitive methods to employ when working with students.

The paper also recommends school trainings should include instruction on adolescent behavior, how to work effectively with children including racial and ethnic minorities, students with disabilities and LGBTQ youth, mental health, and the use of force.

Additionally, it emphatically states, "it is not the police, the metal detectors and the bulletproof glass that keep our student safe. Rather it is having supportive, caring relationships with school communities." Nance suggests positive behavioral interventions and supports and social emotional learning as methods to achieve school safety.

Peak, B. J. (2015). "Militarization of School Police: One Route on the School-to-Prison Pipeline."

Arkansas Law Review (1968-present) 68(1): 195-229.

Focuses on the intersection of school violence in the wake of the events of Ferguson, Missouri. Article asks whether militarization of police in schools has any impact. As possible reforms listed at the end of the article, Peak notes that adequate trainings to deal with unruly student behavior and training SROs in cultural sensitivity to break down the lack of cultural understanding as a potential way to reduce the scope of the school-to-prison pipeline.

Pinard, M. (2003). "From the Classroom to the Courtroom: Reassessing Fourth Amendment

Standards in Public School Searches Involving Law Enforcement Authorities." *Arizona*

Law Review, 45(4): 1067-1126. Retrieved from:

<https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/arz45&div=45&g_sent=1&casa_token=&collection=journals>

Tracks evolving standards in student's fourth amendment rights since *NJ v TLO*.

Price, P. (2009). When is a police officer an officer of the law?: The status of police officers in schools. *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 541-570.

Posits that SROs should be treated legally as police officers, even when operating in schools, implying that officers would be required to follow commonly accepted standards of police conduct. Price argues this will lead to better outcomes for all players. Price claims that treating police interaction with students uniformly, within an outside of schools will create a bright line that has the benefit of clarity for all involved in the school disciplinary process.

Rabinowitz, J. (2006). "Leaving Homeroom in Handcuffs: Why an over-Reliance on Law

Enforcement to Ensure School Safety Is Detrimental to Children." *Cardozo Public Law, Policy & Ethics Journal*, 4: 153.

Encourages policy makers to consider different approaches to fighting crime in schools and says law enforcement should consider diversionary options from the justice system. Proposes Functional Family Therapy and Multi-systemic therapy as alternatives to consider.

Raymond, B. (2010). What We Know About the Effectiveness of Assigning Police Officers to

Schools. *Assigning Police Officers to Schools* Washington, DC, Center for Problem-Oriented Policing/COPS. Retrieved from:

<http://www.popcenter.org/responses/school_police/3>

Notes that school administrators should focus on gaining outcome-focused measures that can tell them whether and SRO has allowed for:

- Increased safety in and around the schools.
- Increased perceptions of safety.
- Improved police call response times.
- Reductions in truancy.
- Fewer distractions from their teachers' teaching and class preparation duties.

Rhodes, T. N. (2015). Officers and school settings: Examining the influence of the school

environment on officer roles and job satisfaction. *Police Quarterly*, 18(2), 134-162.

Retrieved from < <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1098611114559038>>

Rhodes examines SRO satisfaction to reach several conclusions about proper roles and tasks for SRO. The article shows that ambiguity of SRO roles and perceived conflict with school administration are significantly predictors of SRO job satisfaction levels. When SROs have clear roles to fill and remain engaged with school administration productively, SRO satisfaction (and likely performance) can increase. Rhodes also claims that SRO roles are similar to their counterparts outside of school in terms

of the level of service tasks performed but perform significantly fewer law enforcement and order tasks.

Robles-Piña, R. A. and M. A. Denham (2012). "School Resource Officers for Bullying

Interventions: A Mixed-Methods Analysis." *Journal of School Violence*, 11(1): 38-55.

Robles-Pina and Denham urge that SROs need to be aware of school bullying plans. They also claim SROs need more social skills training, knowledge of existing school policies regarding bullying intervention strategies, and awareness of conflict resolution strategies.

Rollison, J., Banks, D., Martin, A. J., Owens, C., Thomas, N., Dressler, K. J., & Wells, M. (2013).

Improving School-Justice Partnerships: Lessons Learned from the Safe Schools/Healthy

Students Initiative. *Family Court Review*, 51(3), 445-451.

Rollison et al. observes, "Schools alone do not have the capacity to plan and implement the wide range of interventions needed to ensure a safe school environment for students. A collaborative approach among education and other community systems can best address the intersecting factors that contribute to antisocial behaviors." The abstract notes several key points from the article including: "Comprehensive efforts contribute to minimizing duplication of services, preserving scarce resources and better identifying and serving students at risk for or already affected by violence, substance use, and mental health issues. "

Rosiak, J. (2017a). "Tools SROs Use to Document their Activities." *Journal of School*

Safety, Winter 2017. Retrieved from <

<https://issuu.com/johnrosiak/docs/joss_sum_spr_17_rosiak_sro_tools_pa>

Rosiak notes that documenting SRO activities is important because it allows the program to assess how SROs spend their time and whether they carry out their roles appropriately. Proper documentation is also necessary for transparency and accountability to the school community. Finally, documenting SROs demonstrates the value an SRO program can have.

Rosiak, J. (2017b). "Learning Lessons from Averted Acts of Violence in Schools." *Journal of School*

Safety, Winter 2017. Retrieved from

<https://issuu.com/johnrosiak/docs/joss_win_2017_averting_school_viole>

This article relays findings from the Police Foundation's preliminary analysis of 41 averted school violence incident reports. They found things like peers often hear of an incident of violence first, parents have an important role to play in staying alert for threats of violence, and importantly for SRO best practices, SROs should try to build and maintain good relationship with students so they are approachable. The article also details the importance of gathering data by submitting averted school violence reports.

Rosiak, J. (2017c). "5 Things to Consider Before Posting Cops in Schools." *Education Week*. Retrieved

from < <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/10/11/5-things-to-consider-before-posting-cops.html?qs=rosiak>>

This article lays out how officers need to clearly define roles by ensuring officers uphold civil law, not enforce school rules. Article also points to how SROs need to be selected so appropriate officers work in the school. They should be viewed as partners for school safety, not administrators' personal 9-1-1 officers. SROs should be adequately prepared with training in areas relevant to working with adolescents like mental health, de-escalation, or understanding special needs. Strong policy in the form of an MOU should outline the role an SRO can play. Finally, engagement with community partners who care about safe schools should be a priority. This can include parents and those in the school network but may also include local mental-healthcare providers who may be able to offer support for families in need.

Rosiak, J. (2016). "Action Steps to Strengthen your School-Law Enforcement Partnership." *Journal of School Safety*, Winter 2016, 26-27. Retrieved from

<https://issuu.com/johnrosiak/docs/joss_win_16_rosiak_action_steps_to_>

This article seeks to clarify effective means by which a school-law enforcement partnership can grow. The article notes that gathering data, and identifying problems or challenges is often an immediate need for most programs. Subsequently, programs should clarify SRO roles within the "triad" approach of educator, informal counselor/mentor, and law enforcer, and provide training accordingly. Administrators and school personnel are also encouraged to refine MOUs and ensure all stakeholders have access. The article discusses choosing the right SRO by outlining a five-step process involving buy-in from stakeholders, attraction of candidates, and collaborative interview process. School staff are encouraged to train with SROs through "cross training." The school community is also emphasized as an important audience for communications about the activities of SROs. Finally, communication to school administrators is stressed as important to being able to demonstrate the value of an SRO.

Rosiak, J. (2016b). "The Pillars of 21st Century Youth-focused Policing." *COPS Dispatch*, Volume 9, Issue 4.

Retrieved from: <https://cops.usdoj.gov/html/dispatch/04-2016/plliars_of_21st_century.asp>

This article applies the six pillars framework used by the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing to youth focused efforts. The article points out the officers need to find a variety of ways to build trust with youth. Policy should be used to clarify the roles an SRO should and should not play. Smart use of technology and social media has potential to both improve connections to students and communications with the broader community. Finally, the article stresses how proper training and officer preparedness are key to successful youth-focused law enforcement

Rosiak, J. (2015). "How SROs Can Divert Students from the Justice System." *Journal of*

School Safety, Spring 2015. Retrieved from < https://cops.usdoj.gov/html/dispatch/05-2015/sros_and_students.asp>

This article focuses on the ability of an SRO program to divert students from the justice system using proven methods of school-based law enforcement including an appreciation of adolescent

development, and awareness of the importance of the impact of mental illness and trauma on youth, and a clearer understanding of the relationship the SRO has to school discipline. This article also states that the four keys to successful diversions of students from involvement with the justice system are:

1. Has your school and law enforcement community defined the roles the SRO will play?
2. Was there a thorough process to choose the SRO?
3. Are the SROs well trained?
4. Does the school have strong and clear policies related to supportive school discipline and diversion?

The article also advocates for use of the triad model of SRO role development and stresses the importance of a fully fleshed out interview process. Adequate training for crisis situations, mental health and adolescent development, cultural diversity, implicit bias, and de-escalation techniques are all highlighted as keys to success. Finally, the inclusion of language in policy documents like MOUs that govern many SRO programs should support diversion.

Rosiak, J. (2014). "School Resource Officers: Benefits and Challenges." *Forum on Public Policy*.

Retrieved from < https://issuu.com/johnrosiak/docs/fpp_sros_benefits_and_challenges_ro>

Best practices outlined in this article include having an MOU that addresses the mission, goals and objectives, roles and responsibilities, level and type of commitment from partners, governance structure, process for selecting SROS, minimum training requirements, information exchange, program and SRO evaluation, student rights, integrating the SRO, transparency and accountability, and SOPs. SROs are also encouraged to consider their role within the triad formula. This includes educating students in the classroom, teachers and staff on emergency preparedness or crime prevention, and parents about the relevant legal issues and community specific concerns like substance abuse or gang involvement. Article details how SRO program needs qualified officers who are motivated, able to work collaboratively, skilled in de-escalation, or possessing of relevant experience working with students. Finally, trainings on mental health, adolescent development, implicit bias, trauma-informed care, de-escalation techniques, and cultural competence should be valued.

Rosiak, J. (2014b). "Governing Your SRO Program." *Journal on School Safety*, Winter 2014, page 29-32.

Retrieved from <https://issuu.com/johnrosiak/docs/joss_win_14_rosiak_governing_sro_pr>

This article discusses a few key components to effective standard operating procedures. This includes delineating school discipline versus officer legal proceeding, establishing a clear chain of command, creating guidelines on student arrest and use of force, encouraging ongoing communication and collaboration, outlining SRO uniform requirements, and stating when officers can search and question students.

Rosiak, J. (2009). "Developing Safe Schools Partnerships with Law Enforcement." *Forum on Public Policy*.

Retrieved from <<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ864815?>>

Rosiak discusses the many challenges facing effective implementation for save schools and then explains several evidence-based strategies communities can employ. The article discusses the need for proper hiring/training/evaluating when it comes to law enforcement officers in schools. For SROs to be effective, they need to be able to effectively carry out the roles expected of them. This includes mentoring and playing a positive role model, teaching, counseling, and law enforcement.

Shaver, E. A. and J. R. Decker (2017). "Handcuffing a Third Grader? Interactions Between School Resource Officers and Students with Disabilities." *Utah Law Review*, 2017(2): 229-282.

Shaver and Decker are motivated by community backlash against a case where an SRO handcuffed a third-grade student with special needs as a disciplinary action to determine how schools can better equip SROs to deal with special needs students. Authors stress the necessity of SROs to recognize the unique needs and legal protections of students with disabilities. SROs need to be more aware of using functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans in partnership with school administration to work with students with disabilities.

Schlosser, M. D. (2014). "Multiple Roles and Potential Role Conflict of a School Resource Officer: A Case Study of the Midwest Police Department's School Resource Officer Program in the United States." *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences*, 9(1): 131-42.

Schlosser makes the important point that the various roles of the SRO can conflict with one another and that the role of law enforcer tends to dominate the other roles which could contribute to troubling practices in schools. SROs need to strike a balance between education, counseling, and law enforcement to become more effective actors in school settings.

Schools, R., McKay, M. D., Covell, K., & McNeil, J. (2006). An Evaluation of Cape Breton Regional Police Service's Children's Right Centre, Cape Breton University

In an evaluation of Cape Breton programs Schools, McKay and Covell (2006) recommend that programs ensure that routine discipline matters are handled by educators, not officers. They recommend the following approaches:

- allow for job shadowing for new officers.
- schedule regular meetings among officers.
- provide more structure, training and program manuals.
- establish student advisory committees to work with the officers.

Stinson Sr, P. M., & Watkins, A. M. (2014). The nature of crime by school resource officers: Implications for SRO programs. *Sage Open*, 4(1), 2158244014521821.

Stinson and Watkins (2014) review incidences of crime among SROs. They find that SROs are rarely arrested for criminal misconduct, however when SROs were arrested, they are most often arrested for a sex-related offense involving a female adolescent. Stinson and Watkins urge school administrations

to work with law enforcement agencies to take proactive steps to implement comprehensive personnel assessment systems that collect data on sworn officers operating within schools.

Theriot, M. T., & Cuellar, M. J. (2016). School resource officers and students' rights.

Contemporary justice review, 19(3), 363-379. Retrieved from <
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10282580.2016.1181978>>

Theriot and Cuellar identify issues that must be tread when placing police officers in school settings including the complex issues around students' rights, unreasonable search and seizure, the inappropriate sharing of confidential information, and students' decreased feelings of safety. Authors recommend several concrete steps towards helping protect students' rights. These include extensive training for SROs and school administrators, formal governance documents and MOUs, frequent and transparent communication, recognition of the potential to violate students' rights and respectful interactions between students, SROs, teachers, and school staff.

Thomas, B., Towvim, L., Rosiak, J., & Anderson, K. (2013). School resource officers: Steps to

effective school-based law enforcement. National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 7.

The National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention emphasizes that SROS need to understand their roles as educators, informal counselors, and law enforcers. Role as educator includes teaching school staff/parents/community, educating students, advising on emergency preparedness and crisis incident management, and promoting crime prevention through environmental design. They emphasize that the kind of relationships police make with students is just as important as number of arrests in explaining their role as informal counselor. Law enforcement duties are also described.

The authors urge that specialized trainings can increase an officer's effectiveness like trainings in mental health, adolescent development and communication, implicit bias, trauma-informed care, de-escalation techniques, school-specific topics, cultural competence.

This article explains that MOUs need to include descriptions of mission, goals and objectives, roles and responsibilities, level and type of commitment from patterns, governance structure, SRO selection process, minimum training requirements, information exchange, program and SRO evaluation, student rights, integrating the SRO, and transparency and accountability. They also note that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) can be incorporated directly into MOUs and made available to the public. SOPs can touch on issues of school discipline versus legal processing, chain of command, arresting students and use of force, communication and collaboration, uniform, and search and questioning students.

Finally, the article states that, in addition to motivated officers, experience may provide added value to a school. Veteran patrol officers who bring experience working in the community often work well.

Thurau, L. H., & Wald, J. (2009). Controlling partners: When law enforcement meets discipline

in public schools. *New York Law School Review*, 54, 977.

Thurau and Wald identify two main mindsets for SRO programs, the “extended-beat approach” where SROs are viewed as a tool for the administration to use, and the “caseworker approach” where officers are expected to educate and establish relationships with students. The report also delineates the several qualities as important to SRO success: Must like youth and be someone youth find approachable, have good judgment, possess police maturity, be authoritative but not authoritarian, be able to listen to youth and understand key aspects of adolescent behavior, and be flexible and agile in approach. Further, they note that SRO programs need to provide community oversight, “A major weakness that we identified in the SRO program through this study is the lack of oversight of the use of police in school generally and officers’ actions specifically.”

In a discussion of deployment strategies, the article states “four factors are key to understanding the role for SROs: 1) structure of deployment, 2) availability of an officer to be with students when there is no incident as well as when there is a request for officer intervention, 3) officers’ approach to use of referrals to the juvenile justice system, and 4) the ultimate decision maker- officer or administrator- whose characterization of an incident controls the outcome.”

Authors also note four main types of arrangements between the SROs and the schools:

1) School-based SROs where officers are assigned on daily basis to a public school and are “on call” constantly. 2) Multi-school SRO assignment where one officer may be assigned to each high school but another group of officers is assigned to several elementary and middle schools each. 3) SROs by day, patrol officers by night. Officers become the go-to individuals in the event of an emergency and interact with youth in non-incident stations during the day and then switch to evening shifts. 4) Dedicated School Liaison officers (dedicated call for services): Officers operate from patrol cars where they preform daily check-ins at their assigned schools.

Toronto Police, Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board (October,

2009). *School Resource Officer Program: 2008/2009 Evaluation*. Retrieved from <.

https://torontopolice.on.ca/publications/files/reports/2008,2009-sro_evaluation_program.pdf>

Data suggests that SROs have an overall positive impact on school, and a particularly positive impact on the students who have interacted with the SRO. Recommendations include (page 33):

1. Officers recruited and assigned to SRO positions must possess a skill level that reflects the duties and importance of the position, be committed to the goals of the program, be able to work on their own initiative with little supervision, and firmly believe in the program and its potential benefits.
2. Officers assigned to SRO positions must be trained to maximize their effect in the schools. In particular, School Resource Officers must be trained in youth engagement; training for other practical skills including positive interaction with youth, presentation techniques specific to youth, etc. is also required.
3. An SRO tool kit must be developed to take advantage of the students’ stated interest in presentations by SROs. A series of structured and consistent presentations, workshops and activities must be made available to SROs; the toolkit must not, however, limit the SRO’s ability to respond to the unique needs of their school.
4. SRO shift schedules must allow officers to participate in all school activities. The schedule must be sufficiently flexible to allow officers to be available for before- and after- school programs/activities and when students are not in class.

5. The importance of the SRO position to community safety must be made clear and supported by the Unit Commander; this position should be incorporated into the divisional training program.
6. To increase divisional support for, and recognition of the SRO program, provide information to divisional officers on the SRO program and its goals.
7. A review of the equipment and resource needs of SRO officers is necessary (i.e. vehicles, computer equipment, etc.); identified needs must be met in accordance with the importance of the position.
8. The SRO program must continue to be mutually supported by the Toronto Police Service and the School Boards; a trusting and respectful relationship is critical.
9. All school administrators and teachers must be well informed of the program and its goals. The Service must provide information to school administrators and teachers outlining the purpose of SRO program, the role of the SROs, and expectations of school staff.
10. Additional staff/resources will be necessary for the coordination of the SRO program if the program is to continue on a permanent basis and the above recommendations are to be implemented.

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, Schuiteman, J. G. (2001). *Second Annual*

Evaluation of DCJS Funded School Resource Officer Programs. Report of the Department of Criminal

Justice Services, Fiscal Year 1999-

2000.

Second annual report detailing ability of SROs to reduce violence in schools based on data from 78 local SRO programs. Indicates that SROs have a mitigating effect on school crime. From abstract: "The report maintains that Virginia's state-assisted SRO programs are reducing school violence and increasing the feeling of safety among school staff and students. State-funded SROs have succeeded in their roles as law enforcers, instructors, crime prevention specialists, and community liaisons and are viewed as effective agents of change."

Wisconsin Department of Justice, and Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2016).

Guidelines for Best Practices. Retrieved from < <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/safe->

[schools/school-resource-officers](https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/safe-schools/school-resource-officers)>

The Wisconsin DOJ and DPI collaborated to create a webpage for SRO guidelines. This includes a document with clear best practices and model MOU instructions. The best practices identified in the document include defining clear roles for SROs by using root cause analysis to identify needs, clarifying skills and criteria for SRO candidates, continuing discussions of SRO roles, and other methods. This document also notes the importance of identifying what specific training will be needed by a particular SRO program. This means considering who will receive training and to what extent as well as including relevant content in the training to each SROs unique situation. Accountability is encouraged through regular communication and through nurturing of contacts between law enforcement and school administrators. Finally, an SRO program is encouraged to keep good records of relevant data and follow the model MOU for clear communication from the outset.

Selected Literature Highlighted by Category

In reviewing the literature of best practices for SROs to improve management, training, policy, and interagency collaboration, many key findings emerge. This review sorts these findings into a variety of categories pertinent to this evaluation, including: SRO roles; selection process; training; policy; engagement with the community; documenting SRO activities; and information relevant to Milwaukee and urban communities. In the list below are references to key articles related to the particular categories mentioned. The full citation for each article can be found in the Literature Review: Annotated List found in the Appendix to this report.

Literature below is related to SRO best practices in these selected areas:

- ***Roles and expectations of the SROs.***
- ***Selection process for choosing SROs.***
- ***Training for SROs.***
- ***Policy documents that underpin the SRO program.***
- ***Engagement with the community.***
- ***Documenting SRO activities.***
- ***Information relevant to Milwaukee.***
- ***Large urban schools, minority students, and special needs student.***
- ***Other.***

Roles and expectations of the SROs. This category includes defining the roles as educator, mentor, and public safety officer. This also includes clarifying the roles that are NOT the purview of the SRO, namely to enforce school discipline. That is the role of school administrators.

A 2009 whitepaper by the ACLU noted that one of the ***biggest hurdles to respecting students' rights, transparency, and accountability is a failure to define the role of the SRO*** in the context of the educational mission in school (Kim, 2010). The paper goes on to delineate necessary minimum training requirements and encourages non-punitive techniques to improve school safety and climate.

The National Assessment of School Resource Officer programs (Commissioned by the DOJ and the National Institute of Justice) states that successful programs follow several steps in developing a list of SRO roles and responsibilities (Finn and McDevitt, 2005). Specifically, they note SRO programs should,

- identify roles and responsibilities ***in writing***;
- ***avoid relying on a personal relationship, easy access, and a handshake*** between police and school administrators for establishing SRO roles;
- ***involve the schools*** in developing the SRO roles and responsibilities;
- ***distribute*** the roles and responsibilities, and periodically review them; and
- ***provide a mechanism*** for resolving disagreements between school administrators and SROs about the officers' responsibilities (Finn and McDevitt, et al, 2005).

The report also notes: In developing the written description of SRO roles and responsibilities:

- narrow the considerable leeway of ***what it means for SROs to engage in "law enforcement"***;
- make clear whether and how SROs will be responsible ***for enforcing discipline***; and

- be specific about the SRO's **teaching and counseling and mentoring responsibilities** (Finn and McDevitt, 2005).

In an evaluation of Cape Breton programs Schools, McKay and Covell (2006) recommend that programs **ensure that routine discipline matters are handled by educators, not officers.**

Rhodes (2015) examines SRO satisfaction to reach several conclusions about proper roles and tasks for SRO. The article shows that **ambiguity of SRO roles and perceived conflict with school administration are significantly predictors of SRO job satisfaction levels.** When SROs have clear roles to fill and remain engaged with school administration productively, SRO satisfaction (and likely performance) can increase. Rhodes also claims that SRO roles are similar to their counterparts outside of school in terms of the level of service tasks performed but perform significantly fewer law enforcement and order tasks.

McKenna et al. (2016) utilizes interviews with SROs to explore how law enforcement officers define their actual roles and perceived roles in schools. **Authors identify law enforcer, mentor/ role model, educator, and surrogate parent as the four primary roles SBLE takes on in a school setting.**

McKenna and Pollock (2014) observes that expanded officer roles need to be accepted by SROs in the field. They note that **many officers, "start their career with a service orientation that shifts to a cynical, world-weary 'do the minimum orientation.'"** Re-trainings and consultation with law enforcement officers is therefore necessary throughout their placement.

McKenna and White (2017) suggest that, **"an officer's role may influence how they respond to student misconduct"** and that "Specifically, as an officer takes on more of a law enforcer role, the use of legal means (i.e., arrest and ticketing) increases." The authors also discuss how the use of counseling and school-based responses increased as officers took on more of a mentor role and mentors were more likely to use a counseling response than those in a law enforcer role. However, the authors see that elements of both a crime fighter and public servant can be considered "good policing," the key is striking a balance.

Nance (2016): **SROs should be limited in their ability to become involved in disciplinary matters unless school staff or students are in immediate physical danger.** It is imperative that SROs learn a range of non-punitive methods to employ when working with students.

Price (2009) posits that SROs should be treated legally as police officers, even when operating in schools, implying that officers would be required to follow commonly accepted standards of police conduct. Price argues this will lead to better outcomes for all players. Price claims that **treating police interaction with students uniformly, within and outside of schools will create a bright line that has the benefit of clarity for all involved in the school disciplinary process.**

Schlosser (2014) makes the important point that ***the various roles of the SRO can conflict with one another and that the role of law enforcer tends to dominate the other roles*** which could contribute to troubling practices in schools. SROs need to strike a balance between education, counseling, and law enforcement to become more effective actors in school settings.

Selection process for choosing SROs. The selection process is important because it helps determine whether the program will have the best officer for the SRO job.

The National Assessment of School Resource Officer Programs stresses the importance of recruiting SROs. In their report, they note: It ***is especially important to develop written criteria for who can qualify as an SRO***, including:

- likes and cares about kids;
- has the temperament to work with school administrators;
- has the capacity to work independently;
- is not a rookie; and
- knows the community in which he or she will be working.

Other keys to successful screening and recruitment include:

- assigning officers with the right personality—someone, as one principal put it, with “***an outgoing, caring, but no-nonsense personality***”;
 - when there is a lack of qualified applicants, using incentives, such as take-home cruisers and a percent salary increment to help attract qualified candidates; and
 - ***involving school district and school-level administrators*** in the screening process to increase acceptance of the SROs among school personnel (Finn and McDevitt, 2005).
-

Clark (2011) cautions administrators to involve SROs only when appropriate and to avoid having an SRO act as an agent of the administration. For example, Clark writes, “Ordinary cases of bullying that do not result in serious physical injury to anyone are usually handled by the school administration and counseling staff. If the act of bullying also involved a serious criminal act, such as robbery, extortion, or physical injury to a victim, then the SRO would become involved.” Finally, ***Clark cautions for careful selection of SRO officers to create a successful program.***

Training for SROs. Training of SROs, because of the multi-disciplinary nature of school safety, should often be conducted along WITH school administrators, as well as other school and community partners.

The National Assessment of School Resource Officer programs stresses that “any delay in training can be a serious problem because **SROs may then have to learn their jobs by ‘sinking or swimming’**” (Finn and McDevitt, 2005).

McDevitt and Panniello (2005) find that, “the most important and easily modifiable variable [to increase the likelihood that students will report crime to SROs] is **creating a positive opinion of the SRO among the student body**. These results suggest that it is important to determine the best method for the SROs to create a positive image.” Trainings and the selections of SROS should reflect this fact and focus on student engagement.

In an evaluation of Cape Breton programs Schools, McKay and Covell (2006) include the following policy recommend programs:

- **allow for job shadowing for new officers**
 - **schedule regular meetings among officers**
 - **provide more structure, training and program manuals**
 - **establish student advisory committees to work with the officers**
-

Nance (2016): **School trainings should include instruction on adolescent behavior, how to work effectively with children including racial and ethnic minorities, students with disabilities and LGBTQ youth, mental health, and the use of force.**

Robles-Pina and Denham (2012) urge that SROs need to be aware of school bullying plans. They also claim **SROs need more social skills training, knowledge of existing school policies regarding bullying intervention strategies, and awareness of conflict resolution strategies.**

Policy documents that underpin the SRO program. The policy documents governing the SRO program are key. Responsibilities and expectations are also clarified by an effective Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The agreement should include language clarifying roles and expectations, input into the SRO recruitment/selection process, training recommendations.

Planning is key to SRO program success, several scholarly articles identified improvement in planning and documentation to improve SRO success.

Cray and Weiler (2011) attempt to understand practices, procedures, and other methods that can increase the effectiveness of SROs in promoting a safe learning environment. The article arrives at several findings about how to **proactively work to improve SRO performance**. Authors discuss SRO assignment patterns.

The authors also discuss the important role the MOU plays in promoting a safe learning environment. The article emphasizes the need for policy references regarding the role of officers. The study found that many programs today lack **basic planning MOUs and action plans to make a well-defined SRO role that will be conducive to success**. Finally, the authors observe that, “full transparency of the policies and expectations should be understood by both parties, namely school officials and the SRO” (Cray and Weiler 2011, 169).

Clark (2011) suggests that **detailed memoranda of understanding (MOUs) are vital to SRO success. All parties need to have a clear vision of the SRO’s role on campus**. Clark gives this example, “it is generally considered poor police procedure to assign an officer to the same location at the same time each school day. . . however, many school administrators wish the SRO to be stationed at a particular problem area for a specified time each day. With a clear MOU. . . suitable compromises can be found.”

Engagement with the community. Partnership activities with community members outside of the school can be critical opportunities for SRO program success.

The National Assessment of School Resource Officer Programs observes that “Some parents become concerned that an SRO’s presence in the schools suggests their children’s schools must be unsafe. Programs that used PTAs, other community meetings, newsletters, letters, and newspaper articles to inform parents about the program reported few or no objections from parents. In turn, **parents who support the program often encourage their children to seek out the SRO for help and, in three different sites, have helped pressure city officials to reverse their plans to drop their SRO programs.**” (Finn and McDevitt, 2005).

Clark (2011) recommends using two recognized effective law enforcement strategies: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and community-oriented policing. **SROs are encouraged to capitalize on opportunities to interact inside and outside of the classroom.** Clark notes many effective SROs have volunteered as athletic coaches or tutors to increase interaction outside law enforcement role. Parent interaction is highlighted as a key to success. The article recommends that **SROs carefully document ongoing interactions with students. SROs should also be able to act as resident expert in crisis response.**

Nance (2016) emphatically states, **“it is not the police, the metal detectors and the bulletproof glass that keep our student safe. Rather it is having supportive, caring relationships with school communities.”** Nance suggests positive behavioral interventions and supports and social emotional learning as methods to achieve school safety.

Rollison et al. (2013) observes, **“Schools alone do not have the capacity to plan and implement the wide range of interventions needed to ensure a safe school environment for students.** A collaborative approach among education and other community systems can best address the intersecting factors that contribute to antisocial behaviors.” Several points from the article include: **“Comprehensive efforts contribute to minimizing duplication of services,** preserving scarce resources and better identifying and serving students at risk for or already affected by violence, substance use, and mental health issues. “

Documenting SRO activities. Include measures that promote diversion from justice involvement. These measures can include referrals of students to mental health and other service providers, mentoring, training in de-escalation, etc.

Regular review and assessment of SRO activities jointly by law enforcement agencies and school administration is highlighted as a key to success in the National Assessment of School Resource Officer Programs (Fin and McDevitt, 2005).

Raymond (2010) notes that **school administrators should focus on gaining outcome-focused measures** that can tell them whether and SRO has allowed for:

- Increased safety in and around the schools.
 - Increased perceptions of safety.
 - Improved police call response times.
 - Reductions in truancy.
 - Fewer distractions from their teachers' teaching and class preparation duties.
-

Stinson and Watkins (2014) review incidences of crime among SROs. They find that SROs are rarely arrested for criminal misconduct, however when SROs were arrested, they are most often arrested for a sex-related offense involving a female adolescent. **Stinson and Watkins urge school administrations to work with law enforcement agencies to take proactive steps to implement comprehensive personnel assessment systems that collect data on sworn officers operating within schools.**

Information relevant to Milwaukee.

The Wisconsin Department of Justice and the Department of Public Instruction collaborated to create a webpage of SRO guidelines. This includes a document with clear best practices and model MOU instructions (Wisconsin Department of Justice and Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2016). ***The best practices identified in the document include defining clear roles for SROs by using root cause analysis to identify needs, clarifying skills and criteria for SRO candidates, continuing discussions of SRO roles,*** and other methods. This document also notes the importance of identifying what specific training will be needed by a particular SRO program. This means considering who will receive training and to what extent, as well as including relevant content in the training to each SRO's unique situation. Accountability is encouraged through ***regular communication and through nurturing of contacts between law enforcement and school administrators.*** Finally, ***an SRO program is encouraged to keep good records*** of relevant data and follow the model MOU for clear communication from the outset.

Large urban schools, minority students, and special needs student. Some of the literature on SROs focused on how to deal with large urban communities, schools with high proportions of minority students, and the role of SROs in relation to special needs students.

Crawford and Burns (2015) is a quantitative investigation into the effectiveness of law enforcement to operate in schools to address crime and violence. They conduct this research aware of how schools with a large minority attendance often face higher levels of reported violence and have a heavier law enforcement presence. Authors describe the presence of officers in schools as having mixed results. The number of SROs was negatively and significantly associated with lower incidences of attack with weapon and gun possession in grade levels lower than high schools. Authors note that it may be the case high schools may have been feeling pressure to address violence before the implementation of SROs and hired their own security personnel to solve crime related problems. Study also finds that **effectiveness of armed personnel in high schools has mixed results depending on the grade level and the way in which the security officers are armed** (they found statistically significant results for OC spray, and found that Taser carry was negatively associated with both threatened and actual weapon attacks). Authors found including armed police as a portion of law enforcement presence in school may have different effects on reported measures of violence depending on grade level. This demonstrates the need to take a nuanced approach to reducing school violence.

Crawford and Burns (2016) examines the role of school characteristics and SRO programs in reducing violence in schools. Rather than relying on perception surveys of students or administrators, their research examines information on school violence to consider school safety approaches (like SROs) in the future. Results showed that the impact of law enforcement presence was mixed regarding reducing violence on campus. Presence of law enforcement was positively associated with measures of violence indicating counterproductive results. When the racial composition of schools is examined it was revealed that school administrators face very different problems. The authors note that, "In addition to having increased reports of all the measures of violence, predominantly minority schools had more SROs and security guards than white schools" (Crawford and Burns, 2016, 471).

Brady (2011) studied how New York City's Impact School program (a punitive-based school-police partnership that puts police in schools) affected student security and showed that, despite increased police presence, students involved in the program schools continued to see higher than average problems related to criminality.

Merkwae (2015) concludes that there is, "overwhelming evidence that students of color and students with disabilities are funneled into the justice system due to the disparate impact of exclusionary discipline policies and discretionary arrests in schools." Merkwae urges that schools carefully examine the role SROs play in the discipline of students with disabilities and that SROs be held in compliance with Federal special education laws and comply with all of the obligations that come along with the title of officer.

Peak (2015) focuses on the intersection of school violence in the wake of the events of Ferguson, Missouri. Article asks whether militarization of police in schools has any impact. As possible reforms listed at the end of the article, Peak notes that ***adequate trainings to deal with unruly student behavior and training SROs in cultural sensitivity to break down the lack of cultural understanding as a potential way to reduce the scope of the school-to-prison pipeline.***

Shaver and Decker (2017) are motivated by community backlash against a case where an SRO handcuffed a third grad student with special needs as a disciplinary action to determine how schools can better equip SROs to deal with special needs students. Authors stress ***the necessity of SROs to recognize the unique needs and legal protections of students with disabilities.*** SROs need to be more aware of using functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans in partnership with school administration to work with students with disabilities.

Other Items

Clark (2011) says that a significant challenge to SRO programs is the difficulty to prove effectiveness. Clark shows that ***SROs frequently identify uncooperative administrators who refuse to report criminal acts as a hurdle.***

May et al. (2016) investigates whether SRO programs contribute to a “school-to-prison pipeline.” Article also asks whether SROs can increase the incidence of minor offenses in a school setting. Data collected suggest that SROs do *not* refer youths to the justice system who would not have been referred had the officer not been assigned to the school. Authors note “if status offenses are removed from consideration, referrals from SROs look remarkably like referrals from schools where law enforcement officers are not assigned. Another key finding from the article states that ***SROs are actually less likely to refer juveniles to the system for minor offenses than their counterparts working outside of school.*** This article breaks with other literature in that it ***provides evidence that SROs do not contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline***” (May et al, 2016).

Theriot and Cuellar (2016) identify the issues that must be tread when placing police officers in school settings including the complex issues around students’ rights, unreasonable search and seizure, the inappropriate sharing of confidential information, and students’ decreased feelings of safety. Authors recommend several concrete steps towards helping protect students’ rights. ***These include extensive training for SROs and school administrators, formal governance documents and MOUs, frequent and transparent communication, recognition of the potential to violate students’ rights and respectful interactions between students, SROs, teachers, and school staff***