

# Public Meeting #3 of the School Law Enforcement Partnership (SLEP) Advisory Group

Meeting date: Sep 12, 2022

## Attendees

Dr. Alicia Hart (virtual), SI Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Carlton Gerald, Chris Lewis, Dr. John Baker (virtual), Elizabeth McCoy, Emily Milton, Gabriel Elias, Jim Paige, John Contreras, Kate Tagert, Keisha Culbrith-Brooks, Kennetra Wood (virtual), Kevin Harris, Laurie Tasharski, Lois Nicole Vargas Perez, Lt. Michael May, Matthew McLaughin, Michael Diggins (virtual), Paula Gormley, Pete Balas, Phylis Lawrence, Sergeant Ian Torrance, Pierro Hill (SRO), Richard Sandoval (SRO), Courtney Ballantine, Elisabeth Stanley, Farhan Mahmud, Abdel Elnoubi, Danielle Robinson, Simma Reingold, Jossalyn Wilson, Namratha Bharadwaj

## Introduction

The objective of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for committee members to gain first-hand experience of how school leaders and law enforcement currently work together to build safety and security within a school building.

The external facilitators kicked-off the meeting with a check-in question, and a review of the meeting objectives, group mission and timeline of SLEP Committee milestones and deliverables.

Dr. Alicia Hart joined the meeting virtually to emphasize on the importance of the SLEP committee's work, and introduced ACPS Superintendent Dr. Melanie Kay-Wyatt. Dr. Kay-Wyatt stated her passion for safety and security, and her support of the SLEP committee. Providing this team with all the resources and assistance needed is one of her top priorities, and she is looking forward to the group's recommendations..

## Subcommittee Updates

Each of the 3 ACPS SLEP subcommittees met prior to the meeting, and the leads from each of the subcommittees provided an update of the key takeaways from their respective meetings.

### MOU Subcommittee Updates:

- Team has been conducting literature reviews, and have been listing key areas of decision-making.
- Discussions have led to a good understanding of day-to-day interactions with SROs and school admins within the group.
- Next steps include zooming into each section of the MOU, and considering how we can reimagine it to keep our students more safe. Team plans to use the MOU visualization document developed by Thru Consulting to help with this task.

### Research Subcommittee Meeting Key Takeaways:

- Team has spent significant time and effort (has met 6 times since the last SLEP meeting) researching best practices, training and other data.
- Team has started developing a white paper with their key research takeaways and recommendations, which will be delivered to the SLEP Committee on October 10th.
- One of the key areas of focus is the data - ongoing research around what data ACPS collects, how it is interpreted, where gaps exist and how it helps us reimagine the relationship between ACPS and law enforcement.

- Other areas of focus are equity, SRO training and restorative engagement.

### **Communication and Community Relations Subcommittee Meeting Key Takeaways:**

- Team has begun the process of identifying what we value most in our communications to our community, and plans to use the Community Engagement Toolkit developed by the Thru Consulting team to help make critical decisions and recommendations.
- Some next steps for the team are to identify and reach out to our stakeholders, including key community leaders.

### **A Day in the Life of an SRO**

Two ACPS SROs (Officer Richard Sandoval and Officer Pierro Hill) introduced themselves, and listed the various responsibilities they have on a daily basis, some of which are: assisting with student arrival in the morning, participating in safety presentations (such as safe streets, safe social media use), patrolling the exterior of the school, looking for safety violations, addressing parent concerns, providing school administration with guidance regarding legal issues and Virginia code, etc.

### **Safety Scenarios**

The SLEP Committee members were split into 4 small groups to discuss [3 safety scenarios](#) at ACPS schools. The overall guiding question for the activity was: *“How might we give more support to the people responsible for ensuring a positive, safe and equitable school experience?”*

After 1 hour of small group discussions, the groups came back together for a debrief. Some of the key takeaways from the discussion are listed below:

- Definition of safety: We do not have an agreed upon definition of safety at ACPS, and we need to develop one as a team.
- Data: We need to determine what data we want to capture, share, report on and discuss within the community at ACPS.
- Discretion: Discretion when properly bound can prevent arbitrary decisions, but can be a dangerous thing in untrained hands. Discretion helps to define behavior and reactions by the police, but often operates in gray areas. We need to consider who should have the authority to have discretion, so that we can have accountability around equity and still reap the benefits of discretion.
- Restorative options: There is significant discussion on the topics of prevention and processes during an incident. We also need to consider the aftermath of an incident, and incorporate restorative options into our work.
- Community: This is an entire ecosystem. MOU covers school administration, the perpetrator and the APD/SRO, but there are so many more players (such as the victim, the families etc.).

### **Next Steps**

The next steps for the attendees are as follows: (i) review survey results, forthcoming in October from Hanover Research, (ii) meet as a subcommittee at least once to identify key decisions/areas of recommendations for your subcommittee, and to (iii) keep an eye out for a virtual leader forum in October.

The external facilitator and research teams will (i) administer the survey and focus groups, (ii) develop survey and focus group reports, (iii) follow up with ACPS leads subcommittee members on open-questions, (iv) continue to assist subcommittees to develop their recommendations reports, (v) plan and execute the virtual leaders forum and (vi) organize meeting #4 to be held on 11/14/2022.