City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

Approved as to Form
Assistant City Attorney
Travis MacRae
06.25.2024

DATE: JUNE 21, 2024

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR, VICE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL and THE HONORABLE MICHELLE RIEF, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

THROUGH: JAMES F. PARAJON, CITY MANAGER AND DR. MELANIE KAY-WYATT, SUPERINTENDENT

FROM: DR. ALICIA HART, PMP, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, ACPS and YON LAMBERT, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: FINAL REPORT: JOINT CITY COUNCIL/SCHOOL BOARD SCHOOL-LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE

BACKGROUND: The City Council and Alexandria School Board adopted resolutions in 2023 to establish a Joint/City Council/School Board Law Enforcement Partnership (SLEP) Subcommittee. Membership included two members of the City Council (Vice Mayor Amy Jackson and Councilmember Sarah Bagley) and two members of the School Board (Jacinta Green and Abdel-Rahman Elnoubi), one City staff member (Yon Lambert) and one ACPS staff member (Dr. Alicia Hart). The committee was often supported by Assistant Police Chief Easton McDonald during the meeting discussions as well.

The purpose of the Subcommittee was to promote continuous improvement and collaboration on the responsibilities of School Resource Officers (SROs). The Subcommittee's specific charge was to: (1) review common structures of SRO programs and best practices for policing in K-12 schools, including the roles and responsibilities of SROs; (2) review empirical research on student outcomes associated with SRO programs, including program evaluation options that measure quantifiable impacts on school climate and safety; and (3) develop recommendations for 2025 MOU revisions for future consideration by the City Council and School Board.

The Subcommittee began meeting on an ad hoc basis beginning in September 2023, and held five total meetings culminating in a work session on March 19, 2024, at which it developed recommendations. The Joint City/Schools SLEP committee process was assisted by Hanover Research. Hanover provided data, presentations and supported in facilitating the SLEP 2.0 meetings.

DISCUSSION: The Subcommittee began by reviewing research findings from the initial SLEP committee. Among the key findings of the SLEP efforts thus far are that SROs fulfill education and counseling functions in addition to providing law enforcement services. This is known as the "Triad Model" in which SROs serve as law enforcers, teachers, and informal counselors. An

additional key research finding is that SROs should not support day-to-day discipline for non-criminal behavior.

Following its initial discussion, the Subcommittee reviewed best practices in SRO programming, with specific focus on localities (both in Virginia and elsewhere) that are documenting positive outcomes from programs aligned to the Triad model, and with MOUs that clearly explain the responsibilities of law enforcement agencies and school divisions under the Triad model. In subsequent meetings, the Subcommittee reviewed methods of program evaluation for the SRO program if aligned to the Triad model. Finally, the Subcommittee focused on its desired short, medium, and long-term outcomes for the SRO program.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Subcommittee ultimately recommended the following three policy approaches:

1. The partner organizations should continue to incrementally update the MOU between ACPS and the APD to better align with the Triad model, which conceptualizes the School Resource Officer (SRO) role as having three components: law enforcer (primary), educator and informal counselor.
2. The partners should conduct qualitative research to benchmark the SRO program with other leading school districts. The Subcommittee recommends a 'pulse' survey to be conducted in the 2024-25 school year, followed by a new survey once the MOU has been adopted and implemented (2025 to 2027).
3. Nine specific recommendations to MOU itself all of which contribute to improved ongoing evaluation of the School Law Enforcement Partnership with the goal of creating an SRO program data dashboard that reflects indicators for these short, medium and long-term outcomes:

The Subcommittee's specific recommendations to the MOU are included in the table below. Significantly, however, they are tied to the Subcommittee's key desired outcomes:

SLEP Subcommittee Recommended SRO Program Outcomes

1. SRO's should understand responsibilities within the Triad model.
2. Teachers and other school staff should become familiar with the Triad model and SRO responsibilities.
3. Disruptions (i.e. documented safety incidents within school) decrease
4. Arrests or referrals, safety-related incidents and truancy all decrease
5. Reduction in valid complaints about SROs
6. Increase in positive perceptions of safety among students and staff
7. Improved collaboration between law enforcement and school security officers; and improved relationships with students
8. Improvement in teacher retention (as a result of a decrease in safety incidents/disruptions)
9. Improved student academic achievement

To encourage these outcomes over the short, medium, and long-term implementation of the SRO program, the Subcommittee recommends changes (see Table 1) to the next MOU which would also be aligned to specific indicators posted in a SRO program dashboard on the SLEP website.

All the indicators are being consolidated from existing initiatives such as the Quarterly SRO Reports, ACPS School Safety Reports, Equity for All 2025 Dashboard and the Annual School Climate Survey.

Please note that any revision to the MOU has to be included in the formal revision process, with all recommended changes clearly outlined. Before any change becomes a formal part of the MOU, the required public engagement review process must occur. Sharing the below recommendations from the Subcommittee does not mean they will become a formal part of the MOU.

Table 1. MOU Additions/Revisions

Outcome	Timeframe	MOU Additions/Revisions (red text new)	Current Headline Indicator
1. SROs understand responsibilities within the Triad model	Short-Term (to be included in next MOU, which will begin July 1, 2025 and run to June 30, 2027)	4aiv- Police Department Responsibilities: The APD will ensure the SRO receives relevant training prior to any assignment in a school and ongoing joint training with school administrators. The training should be aligned with the MOU and DCJS curriculum and in consultation with ACPS. APD will develop a law-related curriculum for students, faculty and parents. ACPS will support SRO professional development by providing officers access to trainings on working with students with special needs, bullying, mental health issues in adolescence and how to establish effective working relationships with parents Add language to 4a to point to SRO Roles and Responsibilities in Appendix Appendix 1 – Add language specific to triad model	Quarterly SRO reports
2. Teachers and other school staff are familiar with the Triad	Short-Term (to be included in next MOU,	4bv- ACPS will ensure that school administrators with an assigned SRO	Quarterly SRO reports

model and SRO responsibilities	which will begin July 1, 2025 and run to June 30, 2027)	receive relevant training on the role and responsibilities of SROs. Add language to 4bv that tracks training.	
3. Disruptions decrease	Short-Term (to be included in next MOU, which will begin July 1, 2025 and run to June 30, 2027)	3civ- The Office of Safety and Security Services will provide the Superintendent with a summary of findings after each meeting. Add language that data will be posted on a data dashboard. 3d- Furthermore, this information will be prepared in a report to be shared with the School Board and the public on the APD and ACPS respective websites. Add language referring to data dashboard.	ACPS School Safety Report
4. Arrests, violent/aggressive incidents and truancy levels decrease	Medium-Term (Data is tracked now but will be collected and consolidated in a SRO program data dashboard beginning with the 2025-26 school year)	3civ- The Office of Safety and Security Services will provide the Superintendent with a summary of findings after each meeting. Add language that data will be posted on a data dashboard. 3d- Furthermore, this information will be prepared in a report to be shared with the School Board and the public on the APD and ACPS respective websites. Add language referring to data dashboard.	ACPS School Safety Report and Equity for All 2025 Dashboard (Behavioral Outcomes)
5. Reduction in complaints to SROs	Medium-Term (Data is tracked now but will be collected and consolidated in a SRO program data dashboard beginning with the 2025-26 school year)	3civ- The Office of Safety and Security Services will provide the Superintendent with a summary of findings after each meeting. Add language that data will be posted on a data dashboard. 3d- Furthermore, this information will be prepared in a report to be shared with the School Board and the public on the APD and ACPS respective websites. Add language referring to data dashboard.	Quarterly SRO Report
6. Increase in positive perceptions of safety	Long-Term (Data is tracked	3ciii- School climate surveys will be reviewed by the Office of Safety and	Annual School Climate Survey

	now but will be collected and consolidated in a SRO program data dashboard beginning with the 2025-26 school year)	Security Services and analyzed for positive and negative trends versus previous years (annual reviews). Add language referring to data dashboard. 3d- Furthermore, this information will be prepared in a report to be shared with the School Board and the public on the APD and ACPS respective websites. Add language referring to data dashboard.	
7. Improved relationships between law enforcement, school security officers and students	Long-Term (Data is tracked now but will be collected and consolidated in a SRO program data dashboard beginning with the 2025-26 school year)	3civ- The Office of Safety and Security Services will provide the Superintendent with a summary of findings after each meeting. Add language that data will be posted on a data dashboard. 3d- Furthermore, this information will be prepared in a report to be shared with the School Board and the public on the APD and ACPS respective websites. Add language referring to data dashboard.	Quarterly SRO Reports
8. Improvement in teacher retention	Long-Term (Data is tracked now but will be collected and consolidated in a SRO program data dashboard beginning with the 2025-26 school year)	3d- Furthermore, this information will be prepared in a report to be shared with the School Board and the public on the APD and ACPS respective websites. Add language referring to data dashboard.	Equity for all 2025 Dashboard
9. Improved student academic achievement	Long-Term (Data is tracked now but will be collected and consolidated in a SRO program data dashboard beginning with the 2025-26 school year)	3d- Furthermore, this information will be prepared in a report to be shared with the School Board and the public on the APD and ACPS respective websites. Add language referring to data dashboard.	Equity for all 2025 Dashboard (Academic Outcomes)