



Superintendent's Recommendations for School Resource Officers

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



June 3, 2021



Current Roles and Responsibilities of SROs

SROs assist with the development of crisis, emergency management and response plans.

Law Enforcement Officer:

- Primary Role: Prevent crime and promote safety

Law-Related Educator:

- Substance Abuse
- Cyber Safety
- Personal Safety
- Driver Safety
- Update Staff on Law-related topics

Informal Mentor and Role Model:

- Set positive example
- Coaching after school
- After school activities (extended day, clubs, as requested)
- Sporting events



Superintendent's Recommendations



Primary Recommendation

Based on the input from the community and the SRO Work Group, the Superintendent's primary recommendation regarding School Resource Officers is to no longer have a daily presence in schools and the relationship with ACPD will be reimagined to ensure school safety.

The reasoning for this recommendation is the following:

- The non-enforcement support duties performed by SROs in schools will be performed by APS staff, especially since SROs perform a lot of duties that are outside of their law enforcement duties while stationed inside the schools.
- The goal is to ensure APS students, staff, and families continue to feel and remain safe by utilizing established mechanisms for ACPD to assist with creating safe school practices for any threat that may arise, and that requires police support and presence in the schools, either by statute or by activities that would require a police response.



Additional Recommendations

The following additional recommendations are being proposed:

- Develop a standardized process to collaborate with ACPD to provide educational programming and to serve as liaisons in line with Virginia statutes and best practices.
- Develop a standardized training program for APS staff and administrators to reinforce how to effectively intervene in incidents as school administrators and to use SROs only as needed.
- Develop a training program in collaboration with ACPD and other community partners that will enhance and inform the important aspects of working with students, and some emotional, cultural, and community supports and interventions.
- Create a regular, transparent mechanism for collecting and sharing data regarding law-enforcement engagement in schools and reporting progress toward the agreed upon goals annually.
- Consider creating a community advisory group to annually review and provide input on the relationship with ACPD and youth referrals to law enforcement.



Benefits of the Recommendations

- Safety and security will continue to be maintained in our schools using normal ACPD response procedures and school personnel will be used to secure school buildings as needed.
- Additional social-emotional interventions will be implemented to address student behavioral issues in a systematic and supportive way.
- Restorative justice programs will be implemented to transition the focus of discipline from punishment to making amends and restoring the school community.
- School staff will receive training that reinforces the non-enforcement duties SROs performed in schools, so that they are empowered and ready to implement them.



Student Resources and Supports

The following are additional resources that align with some of the recommendations of the SRO Work Group and are currently in place that are available for students, as listed in the full report:

- School Counselor Ratios
- Substance Abuse Counselors
- Student Discipline & Rights

The report can be found on the APS website at:

apsva.us/engage/schoolresourceofficer/



Superintendent's Recommendations

1. APS will continue its longstanding relationship with ACPD.
2. APS and ACPD will collaborate to determine the best method of providing law-enforcement services to schools, but officers will not be located in school buildings.
3. In the event of an emergency or for law-enforcement needs, ACPD will provide police services as needed.
4. The services of SROs will be reimagined to meet the needs of students, staff, and the APS community.
5. ACPD will continue to provide training to students and staff as needed with the hope of implementing the recommendations of the SRO Work Group.
6. The name of the SRO program will be changed to reflect the new support role they will be providing to students and staff. (e.g. Juvenile Response Group or Youth Resource Officer).



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