

Special Policing Subcommittee: District Recommendation Follow Up

January 10, 2022

Recap: Steps Taken to Date

Previous Actions

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May 2021	Somerville School Committee voted to pause school police programs (i.e., STEPS Program and SRO at the high school)
January 2022	School Committee formed the Special Policing Subcommittee
April 2022	Reviewed SPS Social Emotional and Mental Health Supports
October 2022	Reviewed feedback from student focus groups and staff survey
Nov 14, 2022	Special Policing Subcommittee hosted a Public Forum
Nov 30, 2022	SPS Recommendation Presented to Subcommittee
Dec 12, 2022	Special Policing Subcommittee reviewed SPS Recommendation and identified questions that require response to assist with deliberation

Meeting notes and presentations available at somerville.k12.ma.us/district-leadership/somerville-school-committee



Key Updates Since Last Meeting

- SPD has identified two specially trained officers who work on youth and family matters, who can serve as the high school liaisons.
 - These officers were selected per police Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) requirements and based on their expertise and familiarity working with Somerville youth and families.
- These officers will not be stationed at SHS.
- They will only be called into SHS for emergency situations, until there is a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place between the District and police.

SLO Implementation will wait on MOU

- The District, SPD, and Mayor's Office have been meeting regularly about the elements of a new MOU agreement.
 - The draft MOU builds on state MOU model, but makes targeted improvements based on local stakeholder feedback.
 - Further work is needed to adapt the outdated MOU (Middlesex DA model) from an SRO position to the **SLO program model**.
- Until an update model MOU is signed, SPD officers will only respond on an emergency basis. Adoption of the SLO model will be contingent upon an updated MOU.

SLO Proposed Model (*on hold pending MOU*)

- Recognizes, incorporates needs + opinions of both students and staff
 - Model 2 (no SPS-SPD relationship) was least desirable across all stakeholders
- Includes 2 part-time, specially trained officers who work on youth and family matters, and who would be dedicated high school liaisons
- SLOs work with + build relationships with stakeholders in a structured way
- Annual review process, including feedback from all stakeholders
- SLOs not involved in enforcing disciplinary violations; will respond first in case of emergency (via 911) + primarily work to de-escalate incidents
- Draft MOU builds on state MOU model, makes targeted improvements based on local stakeholder feedback. Further edits are needed to adapt the MOU from an SRO position to the **SLO program model**.

Questions?

Addressing Subcommittee Questions

The Special Policing Subcommittee shared with the district a list of outstanding questions, which fall into 4 categories:

- **Selection & Assessment**
- **Responsibilities**
- **Data & Reporting**
- **Training**

District Liaison Officer Program

Selection & Assessment

1. **Officer selection** is dictated by the SPD's Collective Bargaining Agreement. SLOs are detectives who receive additional, specialized training related to youth. Two officers have been identified.
2. SPS recommendations have focused/will continue to focus on building positive relationships and de-escalating incidents. Ongoing discussions and decisions will continue to incorporate feedback from:
 - a. Students
 - b. Families
 - c. Educators
 - d. High school principals
 - e. Superintendent
 - f. Chief of Police / supervisor

District Liaison Officer Program

Responsibilities

1. State mandates + legal requirements

- a. SPD General Order 124 (signed in 2020): "Firearms to be carried while on duty. Officers shall carry the department issued firearm and ammunition whenever on duty or when working any assignment including a detail assignment."
- b. All officers need to be ready to intervene at any moment for imminent threats to public safety.

2. Roles inside + outside of school:

- a. Will be formalized as part of MOU development
- b. Until any MOU is formalized OR an SLO program is enacted, officers will only respond on an emergency basis. If on duty and available, the two juvenile officers will respond first.

3. Arrest policy: Will be part of MOU development. Goal is to limit arrests to circumstances that present an imminent threat to public safety and/or bodily harm.

Data & Reporting

Mandated Reports (DESE):

- a. suspension rates (in school and out of school)
- b. number of students disciplined
- c. expulsion rate
- d. students moved to alternate settings
- e. rate of non arrest law enforcement referrals

District Liaison Officer Program

Training*

1. Training for SLOs:

- De-escalation tactics
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Anti-bias
- Behavioral health
- Child and adolescent development
- Conflict resolution and diversion strategies
- Trauma informed practices

1. **Training for School Personnel:** de-escalation, restorative justice training

2. **Identify areas for cross-training**

****this slide reflects our conversations and goals for a possible SLO model.***