

Police Department

LOB #209:

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

Purpose

The School Resource Officer program provides a safe environment for Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students and staff of each County high school and middle school. School Resource Officers (SROs) have the responsibility of providing traditional law enforcement services to the schools as needed on a daily basis, in addition to conflict mediation/resolution services and mentoring for students and staff. SROs serve to maintain safety, order and discipline throughout the school environment so as to ensure that no student's right to receive an education is abridged by violence or disruption. They also provide relevant safety education programs to FCPS students.

Description

The SRO program is located in the Youth Services Division of Patrol Bureau. The SROs are an integral part of the school staff and foster safer campuses by assisting in investigations and the removal of disruptive students. The SROs' regular contact with the students develops trusting relationships and prevents youth from becoming involved in gangs and criminal activity. These relationships also aid in developing investigative leads and solving juvenile crimes. They are also responsible for coordinating and overseeing programs to provide security and establish partnerships with the FCPS and the Office of Safety and Security (OSS).

Benefits

The presence of SROs greatly enhances the safety of the County's schools. Patrol officers are often busy with school crossings, court appearances or normal calls, so that they may be unable to respond immediately to calls at the schools. SROs are available to investigate suspicious activity, handle disruptive situations and rapidly respond to any serious incident at a school. The SROs also play a crucial role in preparing for critical school incidents by coordinating lock down drills and active shooter training. In addition, SROs play a vital role in the County's gang prevention efforts. SROs, by working within the schools to they are assigned specifically, decrease the workload for patrol officers on the street and greatly improve the Department's response time and effectiveness at dealing with any critical emergencies at a County school.

The SRO program also increases and strengthens the relationship, coordination and cooperation between the FCPS and County, specifically the FCPD. This enhanced partnership serves to more comprehensively achieve the overall County goals of serving the community as a whole while maintaining a safe place to live and providing a world-class education to the youth of the County via safe and secure schools.

Mandates

The SRO Program and its SROs and Supervisors are part of the Patrol Bureau. The Patrol Bureau is responsible for enforcement of selected laws of the Code of Virginia and Fairfax County Code. It is also essential for Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities, Connecting People and Places, Creating a Culture of Engagement, Public Safety, and Gang Prevention.

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Trends and Challenges

The greatest challenge facing the future of the SRO program is the number of SROs and Supervisors who oversee them. As the FCPS enrollment continues to grow so will the responsibilities of the average SRO. The FCPS enrollment projections between 2016-2020* are:

- High school enrollments in 2015-2016 (50,543) to (53,942) in 2019-2020; an increase of 3,399 students
- Middle school enrollment projections in 2015-2016 (24,598) grow to (27,383) in 2019-2020; an increase of 2,785 students

The workload of the average SRO will only increase as will the workload of the three supervisors. Each of the three sergeants must supervise, on average, 17 officers.

*[FCPS Adopted Capital Improvement Plan 2016-2020](#) pp. 20-21

Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
LOB #209: School Resource Officers			
FUNDING			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$4,578,389	\$4,604,440	\$4,834,662
Total Expenditures	\$4,578,389	\$4,604,440	\$4,834,662
General Fund Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund	\$4,578,389	\$4,604,440	\$4,834,662
POSITIONS			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	55 / 55	58 / 58	55 / 55
Total Positions	55 / 55	58 / 58	55 / 55

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Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Estimate	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
IBR Events at High Schools Between 7:00 – 5:59	665	606	636	636	636
IBR Events at Middle Schools Between 7:00 – 5:59	342	323	333	333	333
All SRO Incident Reports	1,791	1,764	1,778	1,778	1,778

Looking at metrics for service in the schools can be problematic in that measures of results of the various and numerous cases handled by SROs will vary considerably based on prosecutions (and their resulting final outcomes), diversions and informal counseling via the SROs as well as and in addition to the school's administration actions, both at the local and the division level. Many interactions between SROs and students or SROs and school administration cannot be measured.

However, the metric to examine is that which indicate the number of events and incidents which occur in and around the school that are relegated to the SRO and diverted from the average patrol officer. These calls are not regularly handled by patrol officers in the course of their normal day. The calls handled by SROs at the school allow street officers to be free to handle the regular calls for service that occur each and every day. This is a benefit to the community because it allows for a more timely responses to calls for service. The SROs tend to have a better level of training and understand the rules of the schools and the intricacies of dealing with students as well as the issues they face during, and sometime after, the school day. This benefit is that each middle and high school will generally have a more immediate response (especially in an emergency situation) because of the presence of an assigned, trained and armed officer who has a level of expertise and knowledge about a particular school that may not be found in the average patrol officer.