

Response to Questions on the FY 2012 Budget

Request By: Supervisor McKay

Question: When a school resource officer (SRO) is out for more than two days, the police are required to replace the SRO with a patrol officer. Why can't the school security force provide the temporary replacement?

Response: The following response was prepared by Fairfax County Public Schools:

The absence of a school resource officer (SRO) for more than two days triggers a requirement for a replacement police officer pursuant to the existing Memorandum of Understanding between the School Board and the Fairfax County Police Department (included as a link below). FCPS appreciates the commitment inherent in this practice, as the role of the SRO cannot be replaced by FCPS staff. The school security officers (SSO), both uniformed central office and school-based security staff, lack several key attributes that SROs have. The SSOs do not have the training, equipment, or resources that the SROs possess. Additionally, they are not sworn law enforcement and cannot make arrests or take other actions reserved for law enforcement. Staffing is also a consideration, as there are typically four to five uniformed central office SSOs working the entire county at a time, providing service to over two hundred sites. The uniformed central office SSOs mission focuses on patrolling elementary schools (who have no SROs) and responding to calls for security services at all FCPS properties.

The link to the existing MOU between the School Board and the Fairfax County Police Department concerning *School Liaison Commander (SLC), School Resource Officer (SRO) and Procedures for the Exchange of Information* can be found at <http://www.fcps.edu/fts/safety-security/publications/index.htm> by scrolling down to "Miscellaneous Documents" and then going to the second bullet.