

THE BROWARD COUNTY LEAGUE OF CITIES'
SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PUBLIC SAFETY
TASK FORCE

INITIAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

June 4, 2018

Exhibit #27

THE BROWARD COUNTY LEAGUE OF CITIES'
JOINT SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS
TASK FORCE

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Education Committee of the Broward League of Cities
Public Safety Committee of the Broward League of Cities

January 30, 2013

Task Force Members:

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Co-Chair Councilmember Susan Starkey, Davie
Commissioner Pamela Bushnell, Tamarac
Mr. Chris Carney, Broward Schools Elementary Chair
Mr. Shawn Cerra, Broward Schools High School Chair
Mr. Donald Cottrell, Broward Schools Center Chair
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Ms. Karen Swartzbaugh Ghezzi, Children Services Council
Chief David Golt, Broward District Schools Police Department
Sheriff Scott Israel, BSO
Former Sheriff Al Lamberti, BSO
City Manager Bruce Loucks, BCCMA
President Linda Nestor, BCCPTA
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School Board Member Nora Rupert, Broward County Schools
Commissioner Jed Shank, Oakland Park
Mr. David Wallace, United Way of Broward County

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For over 25 years, the School Resource Officer ("SRO") program in Broward County has been a community oriented policing model for our schools and neighborhoods. Utilizing certified law enforcement officers employed by municipalities but assigned to public schools, the SRO program has grown in both popularity and numbers. However, with economic challenges and municipalities shouldering a large portion of the costs, the SRO program in Broward County has become unstable and coverage amongst schools has been inconsistent and reduced countywide.

The Broward League of Cities ("BLOC") established a School Resource Officer Task Force, jointly populated by members of the Education Committee and the Public Safety Committee. The Task Force was tasked to evaluate the current SRO program, funding challenges and inequities, and make recommendations. With representatives of the BLOC, law enforcement, community organizations, and School Board of Broward County ("SBBC") representatives, the Task Force gathered data and evaluated SRO models, examined funding challenges and root causes for funding inequities, and considered proposed funding models and ideas for achieving the goal of full-time SROs in every public school in Broward County.

The Task Force conducted thirteen (13) meetings beginning in January 2012. Along the way, the tragic mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut brought the issue of SROs into the national dialogue regarding protecting children in schools. In fact, as of the date of this report being issued, efforts to increase funding for SROs in our schools has been the subject of state and Federal proposals, as well as the subject of advocacy from both gun rights organizations and those in favor of increased gun regulations.

Importantly, the Task Force achieved consensus on what an SRO is in the community policing oriented model. See Section VI. These certified law enforcement officers are specially trained above and beyond their police certification to work in the educational environment. They serve as deterrence and rapid response in times of crisis, as well as a seamless link to the municipal police departments. However, they are, as intended, also mentors, confidants, role models and educators on the dangers of gangs, drugs, and negative influences in the lives of students. As intended, utilizing SROs from Kindergarten to High School Graduation also reinforces positive images of law enforcement officers. Unlike a school-based police force, because the SROs are members of the municipal law enforcement command structure, they are linked to address matters in neighborhoods as well as schools; the interrelationship of neighborhoods and schools is well-known. During school breaks, in the full-time police officer model, the SROs also serve in the community, reinforcing the relationships developed and their knowledge of the neighborhood dynamics.

The Task Force reached consensus on the principles and facts regarding the community policing model established in Broward County. See page Section V. In addition, the Task Force reached consensus on the aspirations of what the SRO model should represent for Broward County. See page Section VI. In the end, the Task Force agreed that the type of SRO model most desirable for the long-term safety and security of children, families and neighborhoods is one that begins in kindergarten and proceeds seamlessly through high school graduation, with full-time certified law enforcement officers in every traditional public school.

In Broward County, since 2006, there are 10 fewer traditional public schools but 30 fewer SROs. The financial commitment of the SBBC has increased to an annual cap of \$46,252 per SRO. However, the costs for the municipality are substantially more than the reimbursement by the

SBBC. Facing financial challenges, some municipalities have eliminated SROs in the elementary schools. The Task Force reached consensus that establishing full-time SROs in elementary schools was a desirable goal.

One challenge beyond the financial commitment of the municipality was the inequity in funding throughout the county. Municipalities neither choose where schools are located nor which students are designated to attend schools within their municipality.

Some municipalities have a greater number of students who attend schools within their geographic border but who do not reside in the municipality where the school is located. Therefore, some residents shoulder additional or greater financial burdens through municipality-based costs to implement an SRO program in schools within the borders of their municipality.

Conversely, where schools have a number or even greater number of students who do not reside within the geographic border of the municipality where the school is located, residents from the neighboring municipalities do not shoulder any of the municipality-based financial burdens of an SRO program. However, their children attend school in municipalities where residents of the municipality where the school is located are shouldering a greater financial burden to implement an SRO program.

The full-time SRO program countywide is unstable and represents a patchwork of SRO coverage. Some municipalities have no SROs in their elementary schools. Others use a model of sharing or dividing SROs amongst multiple schools. One model newly developed utilizes seasonal or retired law enforcement personnel to provide coverage during school hours only.

The Task Force created a Sub-Committee to develop a funding model to provide equity across the county and ensure stability and predictability of funding. The Sub-Committee focused on a per-pupil cost factor with all municipalities contributing based upon the student population. However, after multiple attempts to develop a model which could achieve the goals of stability, predictability and equity, the Sub-Committee concluded that such a model generated mathematical challenges and would not provide stability as required.

As a result, the Task Force set forth funding alternatives: (1) increased funding commitment and initiatives by the SBBC; (2) re-initiation of funding from the Federal government, with potential cooperation from the State government; (3) funding through the Children's Services Council; and/or (4) the creation of a special taxing district to provide funding for full-time SROs in all schools. Each of these proposals has benefits and limitations. However, that which ensures a stable, equitable and predictable funding source is most desirable to achieve the goal of having a full-time School Resource Officer in every traditional public school in Broward County.

II. SRO Task Force Mission Statement:

To examine the current School Resource Officer Program in Broward County, Florida and determine what changes can or should be recommended to provide a more comprehensive full-time SRO program to all students in Broward County Public Schools, while maintaining the current strengths of the program, establishing an equitable and stable funding stream, and promoting the collective commitment to the primary goal of educating Broward County students in a safe, secure and supportive educational environment.¹

III. What is a School Resource Officer

The federal definition of School Resource Officer (SRO) is defined by part Q of Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended in 1998, 20 SECTION 1790: "a school resource officer means a career law enforcement officer, with sworn authority, deployed in community-oriented policing, and assigned by the employing police department or agency to work in collaboration with school and community-based organizations." (See Appendix 1 or click on link <https://www.ncjrs.gov/txtfiles1/nij/sl000394.txt>).

IV. Historical Overview of Broward County School Resource Officer Program

The Broward County School Resource Officer Pilot Program began in 1985 with six Deputies assigned as School Resource Officers (SRO) at six middle schools.² The pilot program was coordinated by Carole L. Andrews an employee of the Broward Sheriff's Office and Broward County School Board member. Carole Andrews is considered to be the "founder" of the Broward County School Resource Officers Program. The middle schools and original SROs are listed below.

Crystal Lake Middle School	Deputy Carlos Farina
Everglades Middle School	Deputy Nate Brown
Lauderhill Middle School	Deputy Mary Kay Seith
Lauderdale Lakes Middle School	Deputy Steve Spicer
New River Middle School	Deputy Scotty McDaniel
Parkway Middle School	Deputy Bobby Dinkel

The Broward Sheriff's Office was the first law enforcement agency to provide SROs. Based on the diligent efforts of Carole Andrews, the six SROs and Lt. Ron Banta their first supervisor, the program quickly expanded. As the program proved to be successful, other law enforcement agencies joined into this partnership. Currently there are 14 law enforcement agencies represented in the SRO program.

From the original SRO program with six Deputies assigned to middle schools, the program has expanded to the 135 SROs in 2011-2012: 56 in elementary schools, 39 in middle schools, 34 in high schools and 6 SROs in alternative educational centers.

¹ Throughout this report, reference to Broward County Public Schools refers to traditional public schools and does not include charter and private schools.

² Within the Broward Sheriff's Office, the School Resource Officers have been termed "School Resource Deputies" because the law enforcement personnel assigned are "deputies". For the purposes of this report, and with the agreement of the Sheriff, the Task Force has utilized the term "School Resource Officer" to include "School Resource Deputies".

As the program grew, it was determined by the School Board of Broward County that a Coordinator for the SRO program should be assigned. This Coordinator's position would be housed in the Districts Special Investigative Unit. The first Coordinator was the late Samuel E. Gregg, who laid the foundation for this multiple agency partnership. The next Coordinator was Annie M. Gillespie, who carried on and expanded this partnership. The current Coordinator is Robert A. Dinkel, Jr., who was one of the original SRO's.

Over the years, Federal funding provided a resource for additional police officers in certain municipalities, and certain SRO programs for some municipalities were expanded as a result. Once the Federal funding was eliminated, approximately ten years ago, many municipalities continued funding the majority of SROs costs.

In Broward County, the current SRO program is a collaborative effort between the individual municipalities and the School Board of Broward County. Under the current Broward County program, all SROs are certified law enforcement officers hired by and within the command structure of the respective municipalities or the Broward County Sheriff's Office through contract. In recent years, based upon advocacy of the municipalities and members of the School Board of Broward County, there has been an increase in the financial commitment by the School Board of Broward County in support of the SRO program to offset the costs of the municipalities.

Presently, each High School and Middle School has at least one full-time SRO assigned to those schools. However, the circumstances in elementary schools are different. Some municipalities have the financial ability to deploy a full-time SRO to each elementary school in their jurisdiction. Some municipalities have chosen not to deploy any SROs to elementary schools, either as a matter of finances or philosophy. Other municipalities deploy a single SRO amongst multiple elementary schools in a shared fashion. The current deployment of SROs reimbursed through the SBBC is as follows:

Full-time SROs in All Schools, including Elementary Schools: Coconut Creek (also has 2 SROs in a high school), Cooper City, Margate, Miramar (also has 2 in each High School), Parkland, Sunrise;

Part-time SROs in Elementary Schools: Coral Springs, Dania Beach, Deerfield Beach, Pembroke Pines, Plantation, Pompano Beach (1 covering 3 schools), Tamarac, Weston (1 covering 3 schools), Wilton Manors (SRO has road patrol duties and not reimbursed by SBBC);

No SROs in Elementary Schools: Davie, Fort Lauderdale, Hallandale (none in Elementary or Middle School), Hollywood, Lauderdale Lakes, Lauderhill, North Lauderdale, Oakland Park.

Since the tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut at Sandy Hook Elementary, a number of municipalities who previously did not have full-time SROs deployed in their elementary schools, have now deployed police officers to these elementary schools. These additional police officers have not been funded by the SBBC through the SRO reimbursement program at this time. In addition, these officers may not be permanently deployed, but rather may have been assigned on a temporary basis.

Between 2006 and 2012-2013 school years, there were 10 fewer traditional public schools, but 30 fewer SROs; the reduction of SROs has been in elementary schools.

V. History of Broward League of Cities' School Resource Officer Task Force

The School Resource Officer (SRO) Task Force is the collaborative effort of the Education and Public Safety Committees of the Broward League of Cities (BLOC). Historically, the issue of SROs has been addressed through various committees and individual advocacy of municipalities and the SBBC.

Throughout the years, the issue of funding has been a substantial factor in either expanding or reducing the SRO program. Over the past decade, a number of elected officials have stood out as advocates for protecting and expanding the SRO program and have focused on the benefits to students, schools and communities. Through the Broward League of Cities, Coconut Creek Commissioner Marilyn Gerber, a former teacher, stands out as a strong advocate. Additionally, Broward Sheriffs over the years have sought to find solutions to county-wide funding gaps, develop a stable funding stream that would ensure predictability in the program, and maintain comprehensive coverage plan which would secure SROs throughout the varying budget cycles, while ensuring every student has the benefit of an SRO whether in a BSO contract city or not.

Whether or not a school located within the geographical boundaries of a particular municipality has an SRO depends heavily upon the funding of the program by that particular municipality. Over the years, municipalities with a large number of schools who take in students from outside their geographical boundaries have noted the lack of financial support from surrounding municipalities to provide an SRO for the benefit of their residents and students. In addition, some municipalities have no schools located within their geographical boundaries and therefore are not required to support the SRO program through municipal taxes even though their residents may benefit from the SRO program.³ Finally, the patchwork of SRO deployment in elementary schools was of concern for consistency of the program.

In 2011, both the Education and Public Safety Committees had placed the issue of SRO's on their respective agendas. The BLOC recognized the mutual interest of these Committees with respect to this issue and requested a Task Force be developed, with membership drawn mainly from interested individuals who also were on these individual committees. Additional members were added from the various stakeholders in the community.

On January 10, 2012, the SRO Task Force conducted their first meeting establishing goals, issues for consideration, and a timetable for generating recommendations. The SRO Task Force held thirteen (13) meetings (through January 30, 2013) to address data gathering, request presentations from those involved in SRO issues, request attendance and input from interested stakeholders, and analyze financial impact of the SRO program, and develop this Report. The minutes of these meetings and the data/information gathered are maintained in the Appendix to this Report.

The SRO Task Force included elected municipal officials, elected members of the Broward County School Board, the Broward Sheriff's Office, Chief of the Broward District Schools Police

³ Based upon 2011-2012 numbers, there are six (6) municipalities who have no SBBC schools within their jurisdiction but whose residents provide students to BCSB Hillsboro Beach (10 students); Lighthouse Point (479 students); Lauderdale-By-The-Sea (157 students) Sea Ranch Lakes (4 students); Southwest Ranches (1,120 students); West Park (2,639 students). These numbers are *de minimus* in the scope of the number of students within the BCSB system. A more realistic issue is the number of non-resident students assigned into geographical municipal boundaries, where those non-residents do not bear the municipality costs of the SROs assigned to the schools.

Department, a representative of the Broward County Chiefs of Police Association, President of the Broward County Council of PTA's, representative educators from elementary, middle and high schools levels, a representative from the Children Services Council and the United Way; a representative of the business community and the President of the Broward City County Management Association. Additional attendees were helpful as well, including non-appointed members of the School Board and BSO.

Throughout the course of meetings, the SRO Task Force received data and information from the Broward Sheriff's Office, the School Board of Broward County, the National Association of School Resource Officers, the Florida Association of School Resource Officers, the Broward County Board of Commissioners, the Children's Services Council, The School Board of Miami-Dade County, and comparative data and information from school board districts throughout the State of Florida.

VI. Summary of Consensus Principles and Facts Regarding the Existing School Resource Officer Program in Traditional Public Schools within Broward County.

A. The historic and current principles of the Broward County School Resource Officer program:

- (1) SROs in Broward County are certified law enforcement officers who are specially trained to work with students, teachers, administrators and families;
- (2) The SRO program in Broward County has been and is an integrated component of a community policing model, where efforts in schools are combined with efforts in neighborhoods and the community at large;
- (3) SROs teach and reinforce education on dangers of drugs, gangs, bullying and peer-pressure from the youngest age;
- (4) Developing positive SRO relationships at the earliest age possible is more desirable than beginning later in middle school years;
- (5) A seamless SRO program from Kindergarten to High School Graduation is necessary, rather than beginning in Middle School or interrupted as students progress through elementary, middle and high school;
- (6) An SRO program where SROs are employed by their respective municipalities is necessary from a community policing perspective rather than a model where the SROs are employed by a school board;
- (7) The SBBC provides integrated training and meetings with municipal SROs throughout the year;
- (8) All tax-paying residents contribute some financial resources to the Broward County School Board's partial reimbursement of SRO programs in participating municipalities;
- (9) Some municipalities have a greater number of students who attend schools within their geographic border but who do not reside in the municipality where the school is located. Therefore, some residents shoulder additional a greater

financial burdens through municipality-based costs to implement an SRO program in schools within the borders of their municipality;

- (10) Conversely, where schools have a number of students who do not reside within the geographic border of the municipality where the school is located, residents from the neighboring municipalities do not shoulder any of the municipality-based financial burdens of an SRO program. However, their children attend school in municipalities where residents of the municipality where the school is located are shouldering a greater financial burden to implement an SRO program;
- (11) SROs and police from neighboring municipalities should communicate and share information since many students traverse municipal borders;
- (12) Funding instability threatens stability of SRO programs;
- (13) Boundary issues challenge the stability of a seamless SRO program (Kindergarten to High School Graduation), because different municipalities have different financial capacity or philosophies related to SROs. This results in a patchwork of SRO coverage during the educational life of a student;
- (14) Municipalities choose whether or not to staff full-time SRO in schools within their municipality;
- (15) "Home rule" prerogative to choose to staff SROs can be maintained, but could significantly undermine the integrity and stability of the SRO program;
- (16) Since 2006, countywide there are 10 less schools, but 30 fewer SROs. The reduction has been almost exclusively in elementary schools;
- (17) There is a recognized need to ensure these principles are consistently applied across all public schools in the District.

B. School Resource Officers Should Represent:

The consensus of the Task Force was to issue some broad guidelines on what SROs should be and should represent within the system:

- (1) SROs must be certified law enforcement officers as defined by Florida Statutes.
- (2) SROs must successfully complete the 40-hour state approved School Resource Officer Training Course within the first school year of their assignment.
- (3) SROs should be assigned to all traditional public schools in Broward County and report to an assigned SRO supervisor.
- (4) SROs must work cooperatively with the school's principal and staff.
- (5) SROs do not function as school disciplinarians or security officers, will not intervene in the normal disciplinary actions of the school system, and will not be used to witness any disciplinary procedures in the school.

- (6) SROs provide preventative patrol on the school premises and surrounding residential and business areas to reduce loitering, drug and alcohol use, assaults, and other anti-social behavior.
- (7) SROs investigate criminal offenses that occur in school complexes and take appropriate action when necessary, including potential utilization of available diversionary programs.
- (8) SROs develop and maintain rapport with members of the business community and residents, and offer assistance when problems arise due to their proximity to a school.
- (9) SROs interact with students on an informal basis using an empathetic approach in dealing with their problems. SROs attend and participate in school activities to develop and maintain a close rapport with all students.
- (10) SROs provide law enforcement resource assistance to students, school staff, and parents. SROs will attend and participate in faculty meetings and parent associations and organizations.
- (11) SROs identify and counsel students who display delinquent or abnormal behavior and provide referral information to the parents of students who need professional counseling or other assistance. SROs seek to identify and assist youth prior to their involvement in delinquent activities. Those youth who were previously arrested should receive counseling and referral services in an attempt to reduce further involvement in the juvenile justice system.
- (12) SROs work in conjunction with school staff (i.e., guidance counselors, specialists, and social workers) in making appropriate referrals to community agencies. SROs also provide adequate follow up concerning diversion issues.
- (13) SROs are encouraged to develop partnerships with varied disciplines and organizations, including schools, law enforcement, juvenile justice and mental health agencies.
- (14) SROs provide classroom presentations and conduct group discussions with students in areas of mutual concern.
- (15) SROs organize and conduct field trips to commission meetings, criminal and county courts, police or jail facilities, and other governmental agencies in order that students develop a better understanding of their local government.
- (16) SROs provide seminars in conjunction with specific social studies units in government or legal studies. SROs may also be assisted by additional staff such as law enforcement officers, lawyers, and judges.
- (17) SROs develop and foster regular communication with patrol officers in regards to those incidents that occur in the community and cross over to the school, or may originate in the school and have an effect on the community.
- (18) SROs organize a Youth Crime Watch Program to meet the needs of students.

- (19) SROs are members of the School Safety Team and should be consulted on all school safety concerns commensurate with the responsibility of the SRO.

C. Training, Protocols and Operating Policies

Standardized training and consistent operating policies ensure uniform and equitable service delivery throughout the County. It is the recommendation of the Task Force that consistent training and performance protocols be developed to ensure uniform and equitable service throughout the County.

The consensus of the Task Force is also to implement a consistent mission statement. The following is the mission statement utilized by the SBBC:

Mission Statement: The SRO Program focuses on enhancing the relationship between law enforcement officers and youth by preventing juvenile delinquency through frequent contacts with students, coupled with programs specifically designed to respond to those factors and conditions which give rise to delinquency. The program also provides for the recognition of pre-delinquent behavior in students, and subsequently for the appropriate referrals to school staff for assistance when it becomes apparent that these students have social, economic, and/or psychological problems which might result in dependency, delinquency, and/or violent behavior.

VII. Data Reviewed/Presentations Held:

The Task Force gathered data and requested presentations from various interested and/or knowledgeable sources. A summary of that information gathered and available in the Appendix is as follows:

- Number of Elementary/Middle/High/Adult & Centers/Virtual/Charter Schools in Broward County;
- Analysis of All Broward County Schools SRO Coverage;
- SRO Projected Payments (2011-2012);
- Municipality Enrollment by School (2011-2012);
- Student Count by School and Student Address;
- School Board SIU SRO Survey of Other Florida Counties;
- School Board SRO Expenditures;
- State of Florida County School Board SRO Survey (City Manager Dodge);
- MESC BSO Subcommittee Recommendations;
- Broward Sheriff's Office Regional Funding Proposal for SRO Program;
- Discussion with Miami-Dade Schools Police Department Chief Charles J. Hurley;
- Coconut Creek Survey/Program Analysis (Gerber);
- BCCPTA President Nestor "School Resource Officer For a Day" and Miscellaneous PTA Comments;
- "Sustaining the SRO Position in Tough Financial Times" (Barber);
- "School Resource Officers: What We Know, What we Think We Know, What We Need to Know" (Center for the Prevention of School Violence);
- "School Resource Officer Programs – Finding the Funding, Reaping the Benefits" (Barber);

In addition, several members of the committee shadowed SROs to become better informed and to maximize their participation in the committee. In each instance, the feedback from all involved stressed the invaluable importance of the SRO program as evidenced by their interaction with students, teachers, administrators and parents.

VIII. Broward County SRO Program Facts:

The School Board of Broward County's School Resource Officer Program (SRO) is a community policing oriented program aimed at enhancing the relationship between law enforcement and the students and families in the Broward County School District.

The program emphasis focuses on developing rapport with students, presenting information to students on various crime prevention subjects, providing law enforcement resource assistance to school personnel, parents, and students, and identifying and counseling youths thereby diverting them from the juvenile justice system. Through these activities the SRO program helps students, parents, and educators to develop a better understanding of the role of the law enforcement officer and to create a more positive concept of our legal and judicial system.

The counseling component of the SRO Program is intended primarily for students who are having some minor problems with law enforcement at school or at home. The SRO may act as a role model and a confidant, and in many cases just "listening" to the students may be all that is required. Other situations may require counseling of both parents and the youth. In cases where problems are more severe, the SRO when applicable may refer the individuals to appropriate guidance personnel in the school system or to other agencies in the community. The SRO also seeks to identify and assist youths that have been previously arrested, with a goal of reducing the youth's further involvement with the juvenile justice system.

The prevailing philosophy in the referral component of the SRO program is tied to the fact that the SRO is assigned to a school on a full-time basis and is in a position to become well acquainted with the students. When a student exhibits delinquent behavior or experiences other minor problems, the officer is able to identify some of the contributing factors and assist in bringing about a meaningful resolution to the problem. In each case where a minor law violation has occurred, the SRO will utilize a considerable amount of individual discretion in determining the best way to handle the incident. In short, the goal of the program in these cases is to resolve each problem in the best interest of both the victim and the offending juvenile. An informal diversion from the formal juvenile justice system may be the most desirable action.

In addition to counseling and referral services, the SRO provides additional resource assistance to students, parents and the school system. This assistance includes explaining the law enforcement functions and responsibilities with regard to both the investigation of reported crimes and the apprehension of offenders. It also includes:

- Describing procedures and responsibilities for reporting crimes and filing other complaints.
- Identifying the general responsibilities of criminal justice agencies such as the State Attorney's Offices and the Public Defender's Offices and the Court.
- Describing the elements of specific crimes and the associated criminal penalties.
- Clarifying other aspects of the law, especially as related to juveniles and juvenile justice procedures.

The SRO does not provide legal advice. However, the SRO may provide assistance in seeking out publicly supported legal services and other community services where appropriate.

In most cases, these services and resource assistance will be provided as a result of informal contacts with individuals during school hours and at school sponsored activities. In other cases, these services may be provided to delinquent youths, victims, witnesses, or family members who were contacted in the course of a related investigation.

One of the functions of the SRO is the presentation of crime prevention information. Most presentations are made to students in the regular school environment. Additional presentations are made to student clubs and to other school related groups. Presentations are also made to school personnel at faculty meetings, and to others within the school community through parent advisory, and P.T.O. meetings. Group meetings such as these are a medium through which previously mentioned resource assistance will also be provided and critical safety information and education in the modern age of technology.

Various methods of presenting crime prevention programs are coordinated through the SRO, including lectures with immediate follow-up discussion, or follow-up discussions later in the day or on subsequent days. Another method of presenting material is through a series of seminars. These seminars may be organized and coordinated with the school's peer counselor and/or social studies department in conjunction with a social studies and business law educational series on government, law enforcement and/or the law.

IX. Additional SRO Models Researched:

The current model for Broward County has the Sheriff's Office and municipal law enforcement agencies providing SROs to certain schools in certain municipalities. The SROs under this model are certified officers, most often taken and trained from the existing police force, including road patrol. The individual law enforcement agency decides how many SROs they will provide and to which school sites they will be assigned.

The School Board of Broward County pays a set amount for each full time officer assigned to a school as an SRO. In 2007-2008, the reimbursement level provided by the School Board of Broward County was \$12,000 per SRO. Through a cooperative agreement, the funding by the School Board incrementally increased \$8,563 per SRO each year until a cap of \$46,252 per SRO was achieved in 2011-2012. The remainder of the costs of the officer are borne by the individual municipalities which are "home" to the individual schools, irrespective of which municipality the students themselves call home. As a result, the SRO coverage across schools is subject to the varying and inconsistent budgetary uncertainties and concerns of the individual municipalities staffing the SRO program. This has resulted in varying levels of coverage across the county, and in some case the complete elimination in elementary schools.

Alternative models to utilizing existing law enforcement personnel include use of a "seasonal" SRO or a Reserve Deputy. The "seasonal" model is being used by the City of Pembroke Pines and there are six BSO Reserve Deputies serving as SRO's. In these models the law enforcement agency or the Sheriff's Office or municipal law enforcement hires specific officers to serve as SRO's. These officers are often retirees, so there are reported cost savings for the municipalities. They work only when school is in session and times required for mandatory training. There are costs for the municipalities above and beyond the reimbursement provided the SBBC, such as uniforms, equipment and vehicles that the agency still must pay for and provide. Reticence about these types of models centers around the perception of the community regarding perceived or real policing benefits of having existing law enforcement officers

integrated into the daily police functions throughout the community, even when school is not in session or the SRO is assigned off-campus.

Another available alternative currently not being utilized in Broward County is the "Task Force" style model, similar to the drug task forces used throughout all levels of law enforcement. This model would have the local law enforcement agencies provide officers/deputies to be assigned as SROs. While they would still remain an employee of their agency they would be working under the supervision and direction of the Broward District Schools Police. On a day-to-day basis they would follow consistent policies and be directly supervised as if they were employees of the Broward Districts Schools Police.

However, the current organizational structure of the Broward District Schools Police does not presently have the supervisory staff or structure to support this model. In addition, the potential for conflicting demands on the officers, particularly where SROs need to be re-deployed quickly to community issues as well as increased challenges integrating into the broader community policing model remain a concern and must be sufficiently addressed to encourage maximum participation.

In contrast to these models, in Miami-Dade County, the SROs are employees of the School Board, supervised by the School Board, and part of a broader School Board based law enforcement effort. In this circumstance, there is an increased need for effective communications between the "outside" police force and the individual municipality officers/command structure. Additionally, there is no availability to re-deploy for community needs and there is reduced availability for coverage within the community when school is not in session or off-campus. Importantly, the Task Force highlighted that even under this model, Miami-Dade is unable to provide SRO staffing at every public school. This model, by consensus of the Task Force, was seen as the least desirable, though better than no law enforcement presence in the schools.

X. Benefits of an SRO program Integrated into a Community Policing Model:

The SRO Task Force identified numerous benefits of SROs assigned to individual schools and whose duties are expanded beyond a certified police officer deployed within the community.

Benefits identified include, but are not limited to:

- Serving as a positive role model as students' lives are being shaped;
- Creating a close working relationship with school administrators, which foster a stronger sense of community with the municipality and the school. This allows for addressing the needs of the student as a whole;
- Providing a means to identify community resources to aid the student and the student's family to better provide for their integrated needs;
- Attending most after-hours/parent-based school activities to maintain schools as a seamless part of the community. This also allows SRO's to communicate to the community programs available to the parents, develop individual relationships with parents and students, and support the broader community policing efforts of the departments;

- Reinforcing positive relationships within the schools and the community, meant to alter pre-conceived notions of the police officers and develop long-term positive views of police for future encounters, whether or not that encounter occurs within the individual municipality or elsewhere;
- Using the integrated community policing model to ensure information and intelligence learned by the SRO is immediately available to non-SRO Officers in the field to address potential community issues. What happens in schools after dismissal often into the community, and conversely what happens in the community often impact the educational environment;
- Fostering a safer environment not only for the students but also for educators, volunteers, administrators, families and the community.
- Enhancing the public confidence in school and community safety through a consistent integrated countywide plan for SRO coverage;
- SRO's being well trained to understand the difference between enforcement action and alternative mechanisms meant to minimize the number of youth or young adults being exposed to the criminal justice system. SROs are trained to understand that enforcement action taken most likely will remain with the individual for the remainder of their life. When necessary, enforcement action often is coupled with the use of deferred prosecution to afford every opportunity to ensure a student's future is preserved while providing a safe and secure learning environment for other students.
- Ensuring urgent issues, such as lock downs and evacuations, are more seamlessly and rapidly coordinated and communicated because the officers have direct and immediate contact with the community and public safety resources. The relationship with law enforcement and other emergency services (fire and EMS) allows for continued communication leading up to and during emergencies;
- Working work with authorities to affect probation checks and court-monitored programs to encourage/assure compliance with rehabilitation opportunities;
- During school breaks, SROs are often assigned to maximize the relationships developed throughout the school year, including patrols in the same neighborhoods where students reside and congregate.

XI. Components The Current SRO Program Lacks:

Currently the SBBC provides a stipend to municipalities of \$46,252 for each SRO. However, the actual cost for the municipalities is significantly greater in the full-time SRO community policing model.

Overwhelmingly, students, teachers, parents, residents, administrators, law enforcement, and elected officials have expressed the need for SRO's in our schools. Municipalities have traditionally paid the cost above the SBBC funding. These revenues come from various sources within municipal budgets but none through a continuing dedicated source. The revenue sources are finite and the SRO program is consistently at the risk of revenue availability.

School boundaries do not follow municipal boundaries. Students living in one city may attend school in another city. This creates the circumstance whereby taxpayers from one city provide a service to families who do not contribute toward the service they receive.

Some municipalities are a net "provider" of students to public schools in surrounding municipalities; some municipalities are a net "receiver" of students to the schools in their municipality.

The Task Force has recognized two significant deficiencies in the current program. The first is the lack of a permanent, predictable and fully funded revenue source. The second is the inequity caused by in some taxpayers paying the additional municipal cost of SRO's without contribution from taxpayers those located outside municipal boundaries. The previous inability to address these known funding inequities and a stable source of funding has led to reduction in SRO coverage, particularly in elementary schools. In some circumstances, SROs in elementary schools have been eliminated entirely; in other circumstances, municipalities have been chosen to have SROs shared amongst multiple schools rather than being permanently and consistently assigned to an individual school.

XII. Suggestions/Recommendations:

The Task Force reached a consensus on the following suggestions and recommendations:

A. The Need For A Permanent, Dedicated And Stable Funding Source for Full Time SROs:

In this environment of ongoing budgetary challenges, it is more important than ever that dwindling resources be managed as efficaciously as possible. Implementing a regional approach, one that expands upon inter-agency collaborations, would both maximize existing resources while at the same time providing a more equitable service delivery.

With this concept in mind, it is our recommendation that the SRO program in Broward County be established as a *regional service*, one in which the funding is primarily administered. The funding of that regional service was an issue for discussion.

The SBBC currently reimburses participating municipalities \$46,252 reimbursement per SRO.

The Task Force delegated the work of developing a model which would achieve a stable and predictable funding source to a Funding Sub-Committee, while maintaining fairness amongst the municipalities. BSO provided an outline of a funding model to the Management and Efficiency Study Committee which would utilize a per student funding concept in order to address the imbalance amongst municipalities for funding. The Sub-Committee reviewed this model and attempted to generate a more specific model based upon the actual student population numbers in each municipality.

There were 135 SROs for 2011/2012. The following assumptions are based on current (contractual) figures and current levels of service:

- Total estimated cost (salary and benefits) per SRO position⁴: \$139,666
- Overall program cost: \$ 18,854,910 (135 SROs x \$139,666 per)
- SBBC contribution per position: \$46,252
- SBBC total contribution: \$6,244,020 (135 x \$46,252)
- Remaining program costs to participating jurisdictions: \$12,610,890
- Total district-wide public school student population⁵: 233,598
- Per student cost factor: \$53.99 (\$12,610, 890 ÷ 233,595)

The model tested was where every municipality in the County contributed a per student cost factor into an "SRO Fund" based upon the number of public school students who reside in that municipality and then accept/draw money from the "SRO Fund" in an amount equal the total to the number SRO's who currently service schools within their municipality.

The Sub-Committee applied a series of scenarios utilizing assumptions related to whether or not a municipality was a "receiving" municipality of students, a "sending" municipality (where resident students were sent to other municipalities for their education), or a municipality with no schools. However, a number of problems were identified as the scenarios were implemented.

- The ever changing student numbers throughout a year generated an initial requirement to identify a cut-off date for the student population, which could lead to a lack of confidence in the system;
- Certain municipalities may choose not to utilize the SRO program, or may choose a permutation of the SRO program which is less than full-time;
- In circumstances where two (2) SROs were operationally desirable for a school, the calculation became more difficult;
- The municipality SRO Fund model would require unanimity of all municipalities for stability of funding, which will be difficult to achieve particularly for municipalities with no schools;
- Those municipalities who are sending more students out of their geographical borders than receiving may decline participation, since their municipal costs would increase;
- Because municipalities do not choose school boundaries or the feeder patterns, which can be altered, the ability to achieve long-term predictability for funding and budgeting for municipalities would be difficult;
- Should any municipality decline participation, then the remaining municipalities would be shouldering a greater burden, thereby jeopardizing the entire program;
- Identifying the appropriate entity to administer the fund would remain a subject of debate and instability.

As a result, despite multiple meetings and the learned assistance of BSO budgetary staff to generate mathematical formulas, the Sub-Committee could not generate a model which would consistently meet the principles of predictability, stability, and fairness as set forth by the Task Force.

⁴ Source: BSO Budget Office, 6/17/11.

⁵ Source: BCSB/SIU; and excludes the 23,274 charter school students.

B. Funding Scenarios

The Funding Sub-Committee was unable to generate an equitable and stable municipal based funding model predicated upon per-student-contribution to an SRO fund. Therefore, the following funding scenarios are presented for consideration.

1. *Increased SBBC Funding Initiatives*

Currently, the SBBC budget allocated \$6.3 million to reimburse municipal SRO costs as outlined above. Assuming no further increase in contribution per SRO, according to the SBBC, an increase of SRO coverage for all traditional public schools would require an additional \$4.7 million in SBBC costs. This does not account for the municipal based costs necessary to provide coverage for all traditional public schools.

According to the SBBC, in order to fund even this increased level, based upon State imposed restrictions on increasing revenue locally (the State of Florida dictates the level of millage levied for operational costs), the SBBC would have to impose cuts within the educational budget.

Further consideration was given to the SBBC providing additional reimbursement funding to municipalities for each SRO. However, for the same reasons stated above, this does not appear likely.

Nonetheless, the Task Force believes it would be appropriate for the SBBC to play a more substantial role in developing a funding model that utilizes the taxing authority of the SBBC to reimburse municipalities in a method which would not only prevent further erosion of the SRO program by individual municipalities but which would actually motivate municipalities to expand the current SRO program.

2. *Increased State and Federal Funding Initiatives*

In the aftermath of the mass shooting at Newtown, Connecticut and the national dialogue on gun violence, separate State and Federal funding initiatives for SROs are being proposed and discussed. Potential pending legislation meant to increase funding for SROs should be supported by the SBBC, the Broward League of Cities and the local State and Federal delegations.

3. *Children's Services Council*

The Children's Services Council (CSC) is a local independent taxing authority established by voter referendum in 2000 with the legal authority to levy up to .5 mills to provide a dedicated funding stream for prevention programming to support Broward County's children and families. The CSC has developed Priority Service Goals in conjunction with the community's Children's Strategic Plan, that span the full range of prevention programming from prenatal through adolescence and successful transition to adulthood. This continuum of prevention services includes funding for delinquency prevention and delinquency diversion programs to prevent involvement in the juvenile justice system.

According to CSC, since their inception, Council Members have been very conservative in setting the tax rate and, for FY 2012/2013, their millage rate was .4902, nearly reaching their .5 cap. At this point, going to the full .5 mill would generate only \$1.2 million – far short of the money needed to fully fund the SRO

program. Any additional dollars would have to come from reduction or elimination of other critical prevention programs. Over \$9 million or 17 percent of the CSC annual budget is appropriated for delinquency prevention and diversion services. With CSC staff and Council input, the Task Force determined that the CSC's current budget and millage limitations are not sufficient to directly fund the SRO initiative. However, programs and services funded by the CSC would provide critical support for students and families in need, as identified by SRO and School personnel.

The Task Force did note a number of considerations in addressing the funding of any portion of SROs through the CSC. First, pursuant to State legislation, the CSC must be re-authorized through voter referendum no later than 2016. Without re-authorization, all CSC funding would be terminated and programs eliminated. Second, even if the CSC increased the millage to 1.0 mill through the voter referendum when seeking re-authorization, the funding would not be available until 2016 at the earliest and policy decisions would need to be made by the CSC as to the allocation of resources for programs meeting the CSC mission. Consequently, while the CSC theoretically has the power to directly acquire revenue that could be specifically designated for the SRO countywide partnership, the funding is not certain and is far from stable.

4. Special Taxing District

The Task Force discussed the potential option of a Special Tax District to provide a stable funding source for SROs throughout in Broward County. The creation of such would require legislative approval. Importantly, even if approved in this legislative session, funding for such is not likely to occur for at least 2 more budget years.