

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 64
Minutes of the School Resource Officer (SRO) Board Committee Meeting
at 5:30 p.m. on October 30, 2018
Roosevelt School - LRC
1001 S. Fairview Ave, Park Ridge, IL 60068**

Board of Education member and committee Co-Chair Rick Biagi called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Other committee members in attendance were: Board of Education member and committee Co-Chair Tom Sotos, Superintendent Laurie Heinz (*ex officio*), Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning Lori Lopez, Lincoln Middle School Principal Tony Murray, Lincoln Middle School Assistant Principal Tim Gleason, Lincoln Middle School teacher Andy Duerkop, Emerson Middle School Principal Jim Morrison, Assistant Director of Student Services Sue Waughon, and resident Sal Galati. Committee member Matt Tobias was absent. Board President Anthony Borrelli and approximately 30 members of the public were in the audience.

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began with introductions. Co-Chair Biagi stated that the Open Meetings Act (OMA) overview listed on the agenda will be moved to the next meeting due to legal counsel Tony Loizzi's schedule. He also reminded the committee that the SRO Board Committee is a committee of the Board and not a Superintendent Committee. Therefore, its operations are subject to the OMA.

Board Committees and Scope of Work

Co-Chair Biagi discussed what type of committee this is to be. He stated that it is the understanding of the Board that this committee will disband after its work is done and that it has no legal authority. Its job will be to address the issues identified for the committee by the Board of Education, and to bring recommendations to the Board to act upon.

Co-Chair Biagi noted the work of the committee fits within 3 areas:

1. Mission Statement – goals and purpose of SRO pilot
2. Alignment to Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) with the City of Park Ridge and Village of Niles
3. Metrics for how best to assess a pilot SRO program

Co-Chair Sotos talked about how the community can give input. Dr. Heinz noted that while there are designated committee members, other individuals will be called upon to provide consultative feedback and share insights surrounding certain aspects of committee work. It was discussed that this committee will bring information back to the Board, and that the committee is not tasked

with determining whether or not to have an SRO program.

Co-Chair Biagi noted that the meeting would have a hard stop at 7:30 p.m. to allow for public comment.

Review District 64 SRO Presentation

Dr. Heinz reviewed the [SRO Presentation](#) from September 2017. The committee then discussed the role that an SRO would play in the event of a discipline scenario at school. Dr. Heinz clarified that the school district is required to call the police under three circumstances: physical threat to a staff member, weapon on site, and possession of drugs. In other circumstances, the police may be called at the discretion of administration.

Member Galati shared that he is less concerned about police intervening inappropriately than having police on site in the event of a serious incident. Dr. Morrison shared that SROs play more of an educational role than an enforcement role. Dr. Heinz referred to the slide deck that outlines the proposed SRO role noting, again, that a disciplinary role is explicitly *excluded*. Dr. Morrison restated that building strong relationships is a key piece and that, in his past experience in other school settings in which he has worked, students often consult with SROs for guidance. Lincoln administrators Murray and Gleason supported this statement and added that having an additional trusted adult within the building is important. Member Duerkop added that knowing individual students is a benefit that an SRO would provide.

Co-Chair Sotos encouraged the group to consider how the SRO role overlaps/intersects with student service roles (psychologist, social work and guidance counselors) and to include this in the IGA. Dr. Heinz and Dr. Morrison identified the roles of multiple teams in the building, including: a CPI Team called for students in crisis; a Crisis Team that plans for emergency response; and the Behavior Team that reviews data and provides support for individual students and school initiatives.

Co-Chair Sotos recommended that the SRO be privy to some background information about students so that the SRO has the “big picture” of student needs. Dr. Heinz and Dr. Lopez suggested that perhaps this could happen through conversation with the principal rather than as a member of the behavior team. Member Duerkop added that behavior conversations happen organically at team meetings and the SRO’s limited schedule could be a time constraint.

Ekl, Williams & Provenzale Report and IGAs

Dr. Heinz stated that at a future meeting, the attorneys will walk the committee through both the Niles and Park Ridge IGAs. Dr. Heinz stated that Co-Chair Biagi recommended that Ekl,

Williams & Provenzale be contacted to review the IGA, because of its role in a recent high school case involving an SRO.

Co-Chair Biagi stated that one public concern is that the mission statement was not written prior to the creation of the IGA. Member Duerkop clarified that the IGAs that we have are in “draft form” and not binding. Member Galati clarified that the IGAs were developed after the Ekl report was submitted. Co-Chair Biagi reminded the committee that District 207 has had an IGA in place for a long time, and that there are political implications related to finding shortcomings with current IGAs drafted by other firms. Dr. Heinz affirmed that our attorney is committed to giving us a quality product and one that is not enforcement-based, as the D207 IGA was crafted to be.

Discussion of Proposed SRO Mission Statement

Each member discussed support for the draft SRO mission statement included within the IGAs. Member Waughon talked about the need to balance information-sharing and confidentiality for students with identified special needs. Member Galati talked about the need to balance confidentiality with the SRO being a full team member and expressed that an effective SRO would be trustworthy. Co-Chair Biagi shared that the SRO idea emerged in response to disciplinary issues at the middle school level, but that this perspective has shifted to a very different role. He reminded the committee that the cost of the pilot is approximately \$35,000 and a full-time SRO at one school would cost approximately \$100,000 - \$120,000 all in. He recommended waiting to see the impact of the recent staffing additions in the student services areas before moving forward. Dr. Heinz clarified that, from her perspective, the SRO recommendation was a Board initiative and that discipline was not a driving factor in the SRO initiative. Co-Chair Sotos suggested a goal of balancing the desire for SROs with the need for staffing in other areas that would bring value to the middle school programs (e.g., social workers and counselors). He added that the mission statement must clearly define the SRO’s role and that the committee must clarify what a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is and would contain. Co-Chair Biagi clarified that he does not believe we have a discipline problem in our middle schools, but feels that we need to determine what need, if anything, an SRO would address. Co-Chair Sotos shared that he believes that we do have a discipline problem and are reluctant to be transparent about it. Member Duerkop, a teacher in District 64, stated that his perception is different based on his teaching career at Lincoln Middle School. He has found that the vast majority of students demonstrate positive behaviors at school.

Public Comments

Co-Chair Biagi invited public comments, which were received as follows:

1. Miki Tesija asked the committee to identify what an SRO should be doing, for the committee to identify the problem, and determine if the SRO is the best response or an inappropriate response.
2. Debbie Lovett spoke to an Ekl recommendation focusing on special *training* for special education students. She spoke about special education students being arrested by police, restrained and put in seclusion. She wants the committee to look to Director of Student Services Lea Anne Frost for guidance. She wants to ensure training is provided to SROs so they know how to interact with students with Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPS) and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
3. Jane Stazek, representing *Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America*, shared that the group works for gun safe policies and laws. She stated her concerns about bringing guns into schools, and addressing security fears through education and not SROs. She asked if security is a reason this is being considered.
4. Lauren Hall was concerned that we had unsafe schools. She asked for data on: How many times a month do middle schools have to call the police? What are the real issues in our schools? Are administrators currently lacking education or support to discipline students themselves? And, how often is physical violence occurring with students?
5. Megan Flischel encouraged the Board to educate students, build relationships with children, and increase social emotional learning. She stated she thought SROs were being considered for safety.
6. Andrea Kline thought the purpose of the committee was to allow for community input, and questioned why only one person from the community is on the committee. She requested that meetings begin later than 5:30 p.m. She stated that if SROs are not a “must have” and we are a fiscally conservative District, why was the SRO pilot proposed. She asked for clarification on what a pilot program means and if it will roll to grades K-5. She urged that the Ekl recommendations be discussed and a decision made whether to include or not, and have agreements mirror one another as best as we can. She stated that she felt all students need to be treated the same way regardless of regular or special education status.
7. Ginger Pennington read a statement by Ursula, a former St. Paul of the Cross (SPC) parent, who left SPC because they put armed parent volunteers within the schools.
8. Ms. Pennington then discussed school shootings and asked whether an SRO is being introduced for safety reasons. She reported that a new group has formed to address safety without introducing guns into the schools.
9. Melissa Carlson expressed her belief that an SRO will bring an extra layer of protection to D64 students as they are specifically trained to react in the case of an emergency.
10. Anita Winey inquired how many committee members have children in D64. She expressed concern that no women were selected to be on the committee, but attend Board meetings and are in the audience tonight. She requested research to be posted on why an

SRO program was proposed. She asked the Board to talk about the liability and safety of firearm storage. She volunteered to participate because she wants to be included in the work.

11. Emily Velositch shared concerns regarding only two members of the community on the committee and that no women are represented here. She spoke about hearing comments from the committee about the need for an SRO not being “mission critical” and called attention to risks brought up within the Ekl report and by community members about adding an SRO to the middle school environment.
12. Melissa Galbadores stated she wants to be educated and understand this decision. She asked what is the objective, and noted it is not a mission statement. An objective identifies why are we doing this. She asked if the SRO is disciplinary, and wants to ensure training is in place.
13. Member Galati, speaking as a citizen, talked about St. Paul of the Cross volunteers and his support of them. He stated the goal is safety and security.
14. Carol Sales said she echoes the sentiments of many who spoke earlier and also shared her concern about the composition of the committee. She mentioned she had not received a school climate survey. (In response, she was informed that this was a K-2 survey at Field and she should speak to Field Principal Jason Bednar.)
15. Carlos Panizo stated he is encouraged by the idea and the mission statement, and wants to potentially serve as the SRO at Lincoln. He feels he could teach class, mentor students and be used as a sounding board. He reminded everyone that we all want what is best for our kids. He shared that the Park Ridge Police Department is 100% crisis trained in de-escalation, and said they are well-trained in dealing with such issues.
16. Stacy Kelly inquired where the recommendation had emanated. She also encouraged that the voice of women be included on this committee. She noted that research is important, and asked what are the pros and cons of SRO programs.

Adjournment

At 8:02 p.m., it was moved by Co-Chair Biagi and seconded by Co-Chair Sotos to adjourn, which was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Submitted by Dr. Laurie Heinz and Dr. Lori Lopez, minute takers for the meeting