

Boston Public Schools

Office of Safety Services

Community Equity Roundtable

May 21, 2021

Chief of Safety Services Neva Coakley
Sam DePina, Interim Deputy Superintendent



Agenda

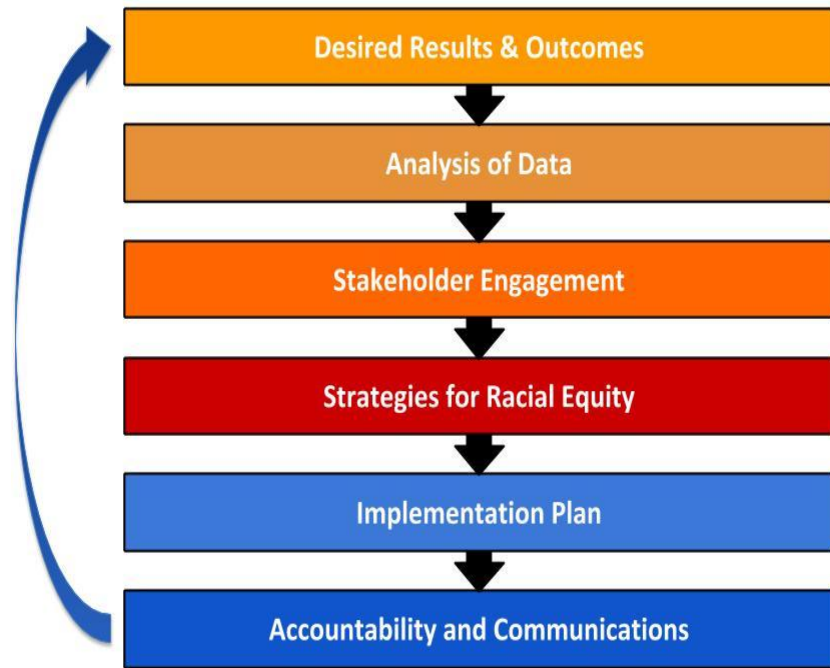
- Department Overview
- Overview of the Office of Safety Services Strategic Plan
- Overview of Police Reform Bill & Impact
- Desired Outcomes
- Feedback from Roundtable





Racial Equity Planning Tool

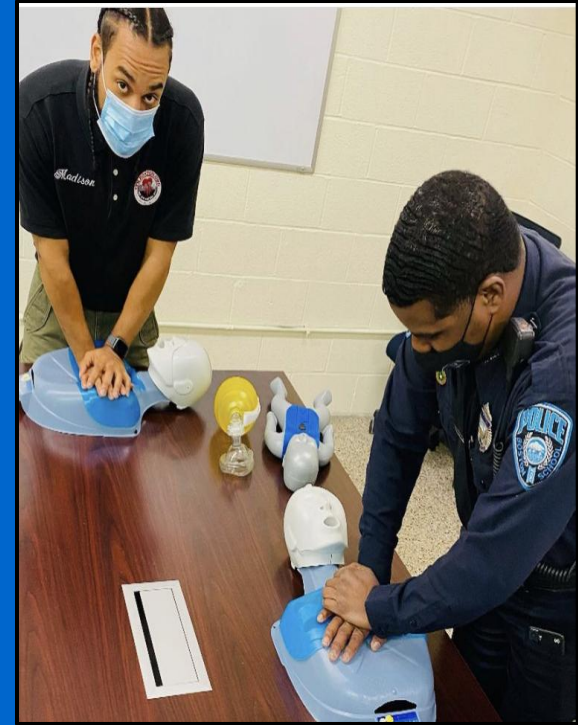
BPS RACIAL EQUITY PLANNING TOOL COMPONENTS



Strategic Engagement & Goals

Mission Statement

Safety Services values include providing a safe learning environment in our city's schools, contributing valuable resources to school staff members, fostering positive relationships with youth, developing strategies to resolve problems affecting youth and protecting all students, so they can reach their fullest potential.



Staff Diversity and Inclusion

38 Patrolmen 17 Superior Officers

- 44% are Black
- 30% are Hispanic
- 26% are White
- 72% are Male
- 28% are Female

Bilingual staff include Haitian Creole, Spanish and Portuguese speakers.

History of School Police

- Existed for three decades, est.1978
- An alternative to Boston Police Department (BPD) response
- Respond to offenses on and around schools
- Uniformed, unarmed & licensed by BPD as Special Police Officers under Rule 400A
- Deployed to high schools & middle schools; provide safety supports to elementary schools
- Engage with school administrators, staff, community partners & students
- Ensure safe school time arrivals, class transitions, dismissals, school-sponsored events, and sporting events

Summary of Engagement from
June 2020 - October 2020:

- 58 school visits across over 11 Boston neighborhood districts
- Engaged over 200 stakeholders
- Attended 100 community meetings
- Input from over 1,000 members of the Boston community
- Received 4,000 social media hits on virtual event platforms

Strategic Plan Engagement

The Chief of Safety Service and the team conducted an extensive process of community engagement to solicit input and ideas for the [Office of Safety Services Strategic Plan](#) from a broad range of stakeholders. The Chief initially visited 80 officers at 38 school sites over the summer months to gather information about school environments. Based on the feedback received, the following goals and actions were established. The Team immediately begun implementing a great deal of the feedback heard from our stakeholders. The plan also draws on a broad range of resources including the Racial Equity Planning Tool, Boston School Committee, Boston City Council, Boston Police Department, BPS Professional Development Planning Team, Student Data Policy and Police Reform Policy Bill.

Goals Developed through Community Feedback:

1. Partnerships, Prevention and Problem Solving
2. Administration Improvements and Adjustments
3. Media engagements that reflect positive interactions
4. Enhance Training that represents trends in Policy Reform and Restorative Justice Practices

Strategic Goals

Goals will serve as the foundation for reform minded changes to administrative practices, training and operational strategies. A plan on innovative approaches that stress community and student engagement through intervention and support lenses, restorative justice model, youth enrichment and flexible training for staff.

Strategic Goals Progress

- Strengthen community relationships by:
 - Create a positive narrative that reflects improving community perception and understanding of reform
 - Restore transparency and accountability by School Police.
 - Update officer uniform to create a more approachable image which will support with community engagement
- Engagement:
 - Safety officers engaged 400 stakeholders during 75 school visits across 11 Boston neighborhoods
 - Attended 100 community meetings and interacted with 1,000 community members
 - Received 4,000 social media hits on virtual events
- Operations improvements:
 - Improved radio communications by installing radio system BAPERN, increased reliability and compliance
 - Dedicated to improving staff training and professional development
- Deployment:
 - 17 (10)superior officers and 42 (38) officers assigned to 23 high schools, 16 middle and K-8 schools who ensure safe school time arrivals, class transitions, and dismissals
 - 4 mobile units proactively visit schools everyday and respond to location request
 - Provide coverage support at 32 food service sites and 130 athletic games



Police Reform Implementation

Police Reform Bill [S.2963](#)

[EOPSS March 26, 2021 Memo Link](#)

Police Reform Bill Implementation key points...

1. An Act relative to justice, equity and accountability in law enforcement in the Commonwealth on December 31, 2020, commonly referred to as “police reform,” the Commonwealth took a major step forward in establishing uniform training standards and accountability for all law enforcement officers in the Commonwealth. A primary goal of police reform is to ensure that every law enforcement officer exercising police powers be trained to the same high standard.
2. The law includes a grandfather provision for current law enforcement officers. Specifically, all law enforcement officers who have completed an MPTC-approved full-time academy or training program, including the state police academy, on or before December 1, 2021, and are appointed as a law enforcement officer as of December 1, 2021, shall be certified as of July 1, 2021. However, “all law enforcement officers who have completed a reserve training program on or before” July 1, 2021, “shall complete additional training as required by the” MPTC prior to the expiration of their certification.
3. Additional training will be required for some current law enforcement officers, the new law also mandates training in several areas. On March 17, 2021, the Committee voted on and approved the following in-service topics for 2021-2022:
 - (1) responding to emergencies involving mentally ill individuals;
 - (2) de-escalation and use-of-force;
 - (3) cultural competency and responding to mass gatherings;
 - (4) human trafficking;
 - (5) law enforcement officer mental wellness;
 - (6) law enforcement officer suicide prevention;
 - (7) critical incident stress management; and,
 - (8) legal updates.

Reform Bill Impact Timeline

Aug/Sept 2020

Office of Safety Services held weekly meetings with BPS School Police Officers (SPO) on Municipal Police Training Council (MPTC) training possibilities

Monthly meeting with advisory group to engage community input (7 community members)

Met and prep training logistics with MPTC course vendor Mr. Lombardi, Chelsea Location before MPTC paused future course scheduling

Sept/Nov 2020

Discussions on School Police Officers uniform and name change January 2021

Late January was made aware of Municipal Police Training Council's hold on future training.

Plans to negotiate with the 2 School Police unions, on a plan to schedule MPTC Reserve Training Academy for officers, was halted. But continued discussion on name and uniform change.

Dec/Jan 2021

Police Reform Enacted December 31, 2021

Continued discussions with MPTC and BPD on impact of Police Reform to Rule 400A City of Boston agencies, including BPS School Police

Reform Bill Impact Timeline

February 2021

Convened School Police Officers working group to continue discussion on SPO reposition (met 3x)

Memo sent to Superintendent outlining recommendations on name and uniform change

March 31, 2021

Received Reform Implementation memo from Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS)

Notified OLA and Labor Relations for guidance on implementation language

Memo sent to BPS leadership of Reform Bill Implementation notification and possible impact

Reached out to Boston Police to begin targeted conversations about the licensing of School Police

April 2021

Spoke with MPTC Executive Director who recommended discussion with BPD

Developed memo outlining actions leading up to proposed meeting with BPD

Agenda prepared for proposed BPD meeting

Finalizing optics for BSP Preparing Impact design options for department

- A: No police powers
- B: Hybrid Model: Small unit of recertified officers w/police powers
- C- If Yes, Present model based on department's updated strategic plan

May 2021

Met with other city agencies impacted; Began further public engagement; Union discussions

Continue to advocate to MPTC and EOPSS for training and licensure of school police

Roles & Responsibilities Under Consideration

Roles and Responsibilities Under Consideration

1. School Security Specialists

Our School Security Specialists work in middle and high schools. They are expected to be visibly patrolling during passing periods and before and after school. They also typically investigate situations at their assigned school that involve camera work or interviews. We recommend that Security Specialists become part of various programs, assist with emergency planning for their schools, and sit on the school's safety committee, depending on the specific school need and specialist's capacity for involvement, but do not mandate which of these they become involved with or to what precise degree.

Our Report Writing Policy/Legal considers very few offenses as mandatorily reportable to police, such as firearms and certain sexual offenses. So, the vast majority of student misbehavior should be handled by school staff. Since our Security Specialists are school employees, this means that we are able to address serious safety issues, including drugs, knives, fights, and so on, without involving police. Most students appreciate this and, on the rare occasion that a student does not cooperate with the Security Specialist in one of these serious matters, the administration typically has the choice of calling 911 or suspending the student for non-compliance. I would say that the Boston Police Department would also appreciate knowing that, if they are called by a school, that it is for a serious police matter and they will not likely have to become involved in something that should have been handled by school staff.

In this model, Security Specialists are not uniformed but will present the initial uniform design previously suggested with logo polo shirts and cargo pants.

While the Security Specialists are managed and supervised by our department management, principal input weighs heavily in their evaluation and they are expected to work out building specific practices with the principal at their building. This balance has been struck based on the need for principals to lead and manage their own buildings with the limited experience and training that many principals have in safety and security matters.

In addition to CPR and First Aid training, the School Security Specialists receive training in de-escalation, RJ practices, legal updates and minimal physical restraint, annually. Overall training will represent engagement practices.

2) Division Lead Specialists

Our Division Lead Specialists are promoted School Security Specialists and are assigned to regions of the district. They typically serve the needs of elementary schools, where there are no Security Specialists assigned, and provide leadership, coaching, and support to School Security Specialists in their region, although they are not actually supervisors. The Division Leads are assigned a district car, encouraged to proactively visit elementary schools and get to know their communities. On a typical day, they may be involved helping with trespassers, lost students or, occasionally, a physical intervention at an elementary school. They receive the same training as the School Security Specialists and work on a similar schedule.

3) Alarm Monitors, Security Response Specialists, and Security Response Specialist Technical Lead

This team works after hours, weekends and holidays, monitoring cameras and alarm systems throughout the district. When alarm signals go off, they will make a determination based on contextual information, including camera observations and their own location in the city, on whether or not they will ask for police assistance when they respond to the situation. They also are able to assist with after hours issues around building safety that may be unrelated to crime (such as a major weather event). Using school staff allows us to provide clearer communications with school principals about what is happening at their building. When students are involved, the police may be able to minimize the student's involvement in the criminal justice system, depending on the seriousness of the issue, and allow our Response Specialist to follow up with the families through the school administrators.

4) Emergency Management Specialist

This individual works with an emergency management focus, but supports other parts of the department's operations as needed. Their typical duties involve managing the School Site Emergency Management Plans and providing training and guidance on emergency management for schools.

5) Management

We currently operate with the Chief and Deputy Chief. The Chief currently reports to Deputy Superintendent and/or School Superintendent. Although, we have had a Director and Executive Director on a level between these roles presently. The one area where our model struggles, somewhat, is effectively supervising the members of the department. Presently the Deputy Chief serves in this role.

Open Roundtable

Stakeholder Engagement Moving Forward

- Establishment of working group for regular discussions and feedback
- Equity Roundtable Partners
- Parent engagement (SPEDPAC; DLAC; CPC)
- Focused group of students (BSAC) (survey being developed)
- Boston Public Schools Student Body
- Schools Leaders
- Boston School Police Patrolmen's Association; Boston Police Superiors Federation (scheduled meetings)
- Additional conversations with BPD

Roundtable Feedback Open Discussion

- What is your feedback on the roles presented?
- What is something that resonates in this plan?
- What could be stronger or is missing in this plan?
- How can we build community support for the needed changes?

Break Out Groups