

# **Procedure for Review of Resource Officer Role in CCS Safety & Security**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this process is to provide the Board with information needed to accept or reject a proposed MOU to reincorporate School Resource Officers (SROs) as part of the Charlottesville City Schools (CCS) safety & security model. In preparation for the Board's decision-making on this issue, the Board directed a comprehensive review of the Charlottesville City Schools (CCS) current safety and security model. This review is one part of assessing how a potential partnership with the Charlottesville Police Department (CPD) incorporating youth-focused resource officers could optimize school safety and security systems, and improve youth outcomes for the City.

## **Background**

The process originated from Board requests at an October 2023 Board work session and the January 2024 Board meeting. In response, CCS staff started conversations with CPD to look at current best practices for SRO programs. In addition, a survey was conducted to gather feedback from stakeholders (students, parents, staff, and community members) to understand perspectives on school safety and interest in exploring a safety model that includes resource officers.

At the May 18, 2024 board work session, CCS staff and CPD Chief Kochis presented their evaluation and recommendations. Subsequent to the May 30, 2024 board meeting, the School Board directed the superintendent to conduct a formal safety audit. This audit is intended to provide a data-driven assessment of current safety practices and identify gaps. The findings of the safety audit inform potential revisions to the CCS safety and security model. In summary, the audit recommends revisiting the collaboration with CPD and inclusion of resource officers in the school safety model unless the local data shows there has been substantive improvements in outcomes since officers were removed. The overarching goal is to ensure a balanced approach that prioritizes the safety and well-being of all students, while fostering a supportive and inclusive school environment.

## **Process**

As a result of the findings from the safety audit and in alignment with the School Board's directive (12/07/2024) to evaluate whether School Resource Officers should be included in the safety model, the following process has been developed:

Step 1:	<b>Staff Working Group to identify best practices for officers working with youth:</b> Based on direction from the Superintendent, the Chief Operations Officer will organize a staff and CPD working group to collect best practices for officers working with youth in schools and in the community.
Step 2:	<b>Staff Working Group to determine budget implications:</b> The working group will determine what the cost would be to implement youth focused (resource) officers.
Step 3:	<b>Staff Working Group to draft a proposed MOU for School Board review &amp; discussion in September:</b> Staff work group will present a draft MOU to incorporate youth-focused resource officers for Charlottesville City to determine if further discussion is desired during the first joint budget work session with Council in December.
Step 4	<b>School Board Vote on MOU October 2025:</b> The Board accepts or rejects the recommendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If the Board <b>DOES NOT</b> approve, the process stops</li> <li>● If the Board approves the MOU, go to Step 5</li> </ul>
Step 5 (if needed):	<b>Community Engagement for Informing &amp; Implementing:</b> Joint (CCS, CPD, City) public work session(s) regarding MOU and implementation recommendations
Step 6 (if needed):	<b>Hiring and Onboarding:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Work with the Charlottesville Police Department to facilitate the hiring process.</li> <li>● Focused training to develop the Youth Resource Officers</li> <li>● School specific professional development to understand the youth resource officer role.</li> </ul>
Step 7 (if needed):	<b>Ongoing Evaluation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Periodic review &amp; evaluation of the resource officer program (City &amp; CCS impact)</li> <li>● The COO and Coordinator will continue to compile and analyze data, engage with stakeholders, and proactively address safety concerns to make continuous improvements in providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students.</li> </ul>

## Data and Information Sources

The **Chief Operations Officer (COO)**, working closely with the **Coordinator of School Safety & Security**, plays a critical role in overseeing and enhancing the safety and security framework for Charlottesville City Schools. Working together with the **Mental Wellness Coordinator** and **First Responder Agencies**, a broad range of data and information is compiled and analyzed to inform decision-making and continuous improvement.

1. **Incidents of Particular Concern in Schools:** The COO and Coordinator review and analyze significant safety-related incidents occurring within schools and outside of school involving CCS students. These incidents may include fights, possession of prohibited items, bullying, or other events that have implications for school or individual safety.
2. **Threat Assessments:** These assessments are conducted to evaluate potential risks posed by individuals or groups. Threat assessments identify, assess, and address behaviors that could lead to violence or disruptions, ensuring a proactive approach to maintaining a safe school environment.
3. **E911 Responses to Schools:** The team evaluates emergency response data using calls made to the E911 system to respond to school locations. This data helps identify patterns or trends in emergencies requiring law enforcement, fire and/or medical intervention and informs adjustments to protocols or resources.
4. **Charlottesville Police Department (CPD):** Collaboration with CPD provides insights into broader community safety concerns that may impact schools. It is important for schools to be aware of local incidents or community crime trends to better align school safety measures with citywide efforts. The COO and Coordinator specifically evaluate CPD data pertaining to youth involvement with law enforcement during school hours at school locations.
5. **Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS):** They incorporate guidance, standards, and data from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, ensuring alignment with state regulations and best practices for school safety and security.
6. **Safety Audits:** Comprehensive safety audits assess the physical, procedural, and cultural aspects of school safety. These audits highlight strengths and areas for improvement, such as building security, access control, and crisis response protocols.