

Webinar: SSDI Webinar Series, Webinar 3, School-Police Partnerships

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Moderator:

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Host:

Emily Morgan, Ed.M, Senior Policy Analyst, Council of State Governments (CSG), Justice Center

Presenters:

Lisa H. Thurau, Executive Director, Strategies for Youth

Michael Eaton, Chief of Safety and Security, Denver Public Schools (DPS)

Daniel Kim, Director of Youth Organizing, Padres Y Jovenes Unidos

William "Bill" Nagle, District 4 Commander, Denver Police Department (DPD)

Welcome From OJJDP

Callie Long Murray: Good afternoon, everyone. On behalf of the Center for Coordinated Assistance to States (CCAS), I would like to welcome you to today's Webinar: *School-Police Partnerships*, the third Webinar in the Supportive School Discipline (SSD) series. My name is Callie Murray and I am with OJJDP's National Training and Technical Assistance Center.

Adobe Platform Information

Callie Long Murray: As your technical host, I would like to take a couple of minutes to discuss a few features of Adobe Connect, which will help you maximize your opportunity to participate in today's Webinar. To download a copy of the PowerPoint slides and other important documents, locate the handouts pod directly above the chat area. Click on the name of the file, then click the download button. To send a chat message, type your message into the chat box, click "enter" or click the message bubble icon to send.

Help Us Count!

Callie Long Murray: For those of you participating in today's Webinar as a group, please take a minute and help us count. Go to the chat window and type in the total number of additional people in the room with you today. This will help us with our final count. Again, if you are viewing with a larger group, please type in the number of additional people joining you today. If you are watching by yourself, there is no need to type anything at this time.

Callie Long Murray: At the conclusion of today's Webinar, you will be provided with a link to take a 5-minute online survey about today's presentation. We appreciate your feedback regarding this Webinar. This information is used to assist in future planning and training. You will be able to access the evaluation link on the last slide of the PowerPoint.

Webinars on OJJDP's Online University

Callie Long Murray: Finally, this event will be archived in OJJDP's Online University in approximately 2 weeks. You can also check out past Webinars by CCAS that have been archived on the Online University. Again, thank you for joining us today. I will now turn it over to Cynthia Pappas.

Welcome

Cynthia Pappas: Thank you, Callie. Good afternoon to all. Looks like it is going to be over 900 professionals who are joining us today, which is fantastic. We appreciate you all taking your time. My name is Cynthia Pappas, I am the Senior Policy Advisor with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. And it is my pleasure to welcome you all to the first Supportive School Discipline Webinar of 2015, with a focus on *School-Police Partnerships*.

SSD Webinar Series

Cynthia Pappas: The Supportive School Discipline Webinar series is hosted by the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education, and facilitated by three federally-funded technical assistance centers, started in 2013, and is designed to increase awareness and understanding of the collateral consequences that can result from exclusionary school discipline practices; to provide practical examples and approaches that can help maintain school safety while ensuring academic engagement and success for all students; and to promote the use of fair and equitable administration of school discipline.

Cynthia Pappas: Today, we will assess how school and police agencies can work collaboratively to provide safe and nurturing environments that promote students' academic success and reduce behaviors that put them at risk for juvenile justice involvement.

Cynthia Pappas: Again, we thank you for taking the time to join us for this important conversation focused on creating safe and supportive school environments for all of our Nation's students.

Today's Host

Cynthia Pappas: Now, it is my pleasure to introduce you to today's host, Ms. Emily Morgan, Senior Policy Analyst with the Council of State Governments, Justice Center. Good afternoon, Emily.

Emily Morgan: Thanks, Cindy. I am thrilled to be here on the Webinar today and look forward to a really thoughtful discussion on school-police partnerships and the role they can play in keeping students in school and out of the juvenile justice system.

Learning Objectives for Today's Event

Emily Morgan: As a first step, I want to quickly run through the learning objectives for today's event. First, we want folks to walk away with valuable information about determining whether a school-police partnership is necessary in your jurisdiction, and define the intended objectives of that partnership.

Emily Morgan: Second, identify the data points schools, communities, law enforcement should consider to measure whether your school-police partnership is meeting its intended objectives.

Emily Morgan: Third, establish or refine the appropriate role for school resource officers (SROs) in your jurisdiction's schools.

Emily Morgan: Fourth, determine the criteria or process jurisdictions and schools should employ to recruit officers who have the desired qualities and experiences for working with youth in school settings.

Emily Morgan: And finally, determining the specialized training that should be provided to school resource officers beyond that required of peace officers in your jurisdiction.

Q & A and Event Feedback

Emily Morgan: Callie provided some information about the functionality of the Webinar. There is a pod where you can provide questions to presenters throughout the discussion today. In addition, the Consensus Report along with a PDF of this presentation and some other documents will be available in the handout pod. And at the conclusion of today's event, you will be directed to a short series of questions to get your feedback on this Webinar, and we hope that you will take a few minutes to fill them out and let us know how to better provide resources you need.

Emily Morgan: We will try to get through as many questions as we can throughout the Webinar, both through the Q & A chat function as well as through the presenters' comments.

Polling Question #1

Emily Morgan: So, to better understand who has joined this event, and help presenters know what points to emphasize, we are going to kick off this Webinar with two polling questions.

Emily Morgan: First, could you please answer which of the following best describes your role? Please take a moment to answer that question.

[silence]

Emily Morgan: So we will just take a couple more seconds and see who we have here on the Webinar. Looks like a fair distribution between school staff and also law enforcement staff, both school resource officers, probation, and parole, as well as general law enforcement personnel. And I think you will find that our discussion today targets both of those entities in talking about really effective partnerships from the school side, as well as the law enforcement and community side.

Polling Question #2

Emily Morgan: Our second polling question, we would like to answer this question. Are school resource officers or school security used in the schools in your jurisdictions? We know that there has been an increase in presence over the past couple of years, and so curious to see if that is reflected in your communities.

[silence]

Emily Morgan: So it seems like the bulk of responses are either yes, in all schools, or primarily in middle and high schools, which is a trend that we have actually seen across the country.

Agenda

Emily Morgan: So, to review today's agenda, I will start things off with an overview of the School Discipline Consensus Report, with an emphasis on the School-Police Partnerships chapter.

Emily Morgan: Following that overview, Lisa Thureau will discuss the latest research on effective school-police partnerships and key considerations for determining appropriate law enforcement presence on campus.

Emily Morgan: And then, we will hear from three folks in Denver, Colorado: Michael Eaton from Denver Public Schools, Bill Nagle, Commander at Denver Police Department, and Daniel Kim from Padres Y Jovenes Unidos who will discuss the work that has been done there to reduce the number of youth removed from schools for non-violent offenses.

Today's Guests

Emily Morgan: And here are our presenters.

Overview of School Discipline Consensus Report

Emily Morgan: All right, so to provide some context for the Webinar, I want to start by presenting an overview of the School Discipline Consensus Report released by the Council of State Governments, Justice Center. The Justice Center is a national, nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that works with state policymakers from all three branches of government. And we provide practical advice and consensus-driven strategies to increase public safety and strengthen communities.

Overview

Emily Morgan: There are three parts of the presentation today. First, I want to discuss how school discipline is becoming a hot topic nationally. Second, I want to walk through the recommendations in the Consensus Report. And third, really narrow in on that School-Police Partnerships chapter of the report.

Overview: School Discipline is a Hot Topic Nationally

Groundbreaking Texas Study Pushed States to Scrutinize Approaches to School Discipline

Emily Morgan: So, we know that suspensions have become commonplace across the country. Millions of students are suspended out of school, most often for minor misbehavior. We know that this increases the likelihood of falling behind, dropping out, and becoming involved in the juvenile justice system.

Emily Morgan: In 2001, the Justice Center issues a groundbreaking study in Texas where we looked at all seventh grade students, nearly a million students, and followed them through their projected graduation date. And what we found really took our breath away. We found that 60 percent of all students were suspended at least one time during the study period, and that this was not a one-time event for a lot of students. Fifteen percent of students were suspended 11 or more times. And this really raised the question on the effectiveness of this disciplinary strategy. So if suspensions were not working on the second or third time, what made us think that the behavior would change on the eleventh or twelfth time?

Emily Morgan: We also found that students of color were disproportionately suspended, particularly African American students and Latino students.

Realizing Top Goals Requires a Strategy to Improve School Discipline

Emily Morgan: At the same time, we know that schools are facing more and more pressures. Budgets are shrinking and schools are being asked to do more with less, and this may feel like just another topic that needs to be tackled. But we really need to recognize that school discipline is connected to a lot of top priorities that we have for youth, including ensuring students are safe and supported, closing the achievement gap between white students and students of color, improving high school graduation rates, and reducing the number of youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

School Districts and States Taking Action

Emily Morgan: And the good news is that there is growing momentum across the country on this issue. Several states, counties, and big city school districts are amending their policies and practices to improve their approach to school discipline. And these are just a few examples of the national groundswell of activity in this area.

Overview: School Discipline Consensus Report Provides Valuable Resource for the Field

Emily Morgan: So, it is clear that school discipline is gaining national attention. And, in June, we released a report that reflects consensus on the types of strategies that could make additional headway in this area. We feel this is a really valuable report, but also recognize that a lot of other publications have been coming out in recent weeks and months and years. So what makes this report different?

Field-Driven and Practical, Consensus-Based, Comprehensive

Emily Morgan: First of all, it is field-driven and practical. It comes from people at the front lines of this issue from the fields of education and juvenile justice, health, law enforcement, students and parents, and provides a lot of practical examples of how communities are making progress.

Emily Morgan: Second, it is consensus-based, so it is something that people across the political spectrum can agree on, and reflects consensus among a broad range of stakeholders.

Emily Morgan: And finally, it is comprehensive. It does not just focus on one particular aspect of the issue of school discipline, like conditions for learning or behavioral health, but really looks at the full spectrum of issues related to the topic. And so, for these reasons, we think it is unlike anything that has been put forward to date.

Partners and Funders

Emily Morgan: The report was supported through a public-private partnership with the Departments of Justice and Education and private philanthropy.

Consensus Project Participants

Emily Morgan: And included a diverse group of individuals from education, health, law enforcement, juvenile justice, researchers, advocates, policymakers, as well as youth and families.

Conditions for Learning

Emily Morgan: So, I want to highlight the four main chapters of the report. Our first chapter focuses on Conditions for Learning, and that is really what you feel when you enter the school building. Is it welcoming? Is it nurturing? Does it feel like adults care about students and want them to succeed? And we know that conditions for learning, also known as school climate, is critical to creating an environment where teachers are not relying on suspensions to manage student behavior.

Targeted Behavioral Interventions

Emily Morgan: Our next chapter looks at Targeted Behavioral Interventions. Recognizing that there will be some students for whom the right conditions for learning and a positive school climate are not sufficient to keep them in class. These are students who often experience suspension multiple times, and often have unmet behavioral health needs. So, we talk about a host of strategies to better support these individuals. We talk about earning warning systems to identify and target students who would benefit from additional supports. Student support teams to interact with students and coordinate services. As well as a systems of care approach to leverage school and community resources and provide wraparound support. And, finally, if students must be suspended, we talk about the importance of ensuring that they have access to high quality alternative education services.

School-Police Partnerships

Emily Morgan: The third chapter of the report focuses on School-Police Partnerships, and is the topic of the Webinar today. In recent years, particularly following the Newtown tragedy, there has been a focus on increasing school safety, and sometimes this has meant increasing police presence on campus. So, this chapter focuses on effective school-police collaboration, and I will discuss the specific recommendations in just a minute.

Courts and Juvenile Justice

Emily Morgan: And, finally, our last chapter focuses on Courts and Juvenile Justice, and what we need to do to keep students in school and out of the juvenile justice system.

Emily Morgan: So, we believe the Consensus Report is a tremendous resource to the field, with 60-plus recommendations and hundreds of pages of ideas.

Overview: Spotlight: School-Police Partnerships

Emily Morgan: So, now I want to take a moment and center in on the specific recommendations in the School-Police Partnerships chapter.

Determine Most Appropriate Partnership

Emily Morgan: So, in this chapter we do not take a position on whether police should or should not be on campus, but rather that schools, police, parents, and students and community members need to go through a data-driven process to determine the most appropriate partnership.

Emily Morgan: As a first step, we recommend schools and police agencies examine the breadth of different partnership models that are available, and identify potential funding sources to support the partnership.

Emily Morgan: Then we articulate a process for determining the best partnership by examining data and reflecting on shared priorities and goals.

Collaborative Decision-Making Tool

Emily Morgan: So, here you can see a screenshot, starting on page 205 of the report. We provide a comprehensive tool that guides decision making, following a four-step process that looks at collecting and examining school safety data, examining perceptions of school safety using focus groups and other forums to better understand – and surveys – to better understand how students, parents, staff feel about law enforcement in schools and overall safety. How to use this data and information to develop specific goals for the partnership. And then take all of this information together and determine what the most appropriate partnership would be to achieve those safety and crime-prevention goals.

Emily Morgan: And when doing this, it is really important to look at past experience of partnerships between the school and police, the capacity of school and police, the appropriate and desired levels of police involvement, and levels of commitment. Because we know this cannot be a one-way street. And as we will hear from Denver a bit later, true partnership really requires buy-in, commitment, and active involvement from both parties, as well as the community at large.

Clarify When to Engage School-Based Officers

Emily Morgan: Once a decision has been made to have a law enforcement presence on campus, steps should be taken to ensure officers are not called on to respond to minor student misbehavior that can more appropriately be addressed through the school's disciplinary process. Officers should also be advised to use their discretion to minimize arrests for these offenses whenever possible, and provide guidance on what alternatives to arrest are available, such as restorative justice. So we talk about what policies need to be developed to clearly articulate these roles, and how to ensure they are being properly followed.

Behavior Response Matrix: Buffalo Public Schools

Emily Morgan: Here is an example from Buffalo School District Code of Conduct, which was revised to include a matrix of graduated responses to misbehavior, and specifies when police may or must be notified, based on the severity of the offense.

School Based Diversion Initiative: Connecticut

Emily Morgan: Here is another example from Hartford, Connecticut, where through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Police Department and schools, they increased the force's

awareness of school-based arrests, trained officers on the availability of local diversion opportunities and alternatives to arrest, and, as a result, saw a decrease in school-based arrests from 40 percent to 5 percent over 1 year.

Recruit, Select, and Train Appropriate Officers

Emily Morgan: Creating the conditions for successful school-police partnerships also relies on the effective recruitment, selection, and training of officers. And having the right officers is one of the most important, if not the most important, elements of a successful and thorough program. Officers should have the specific skills, experience, and temperament needed for working in a school environment.

Emily Morgan: And, further, since they are entering a role where they may not have all of the information and skills necessary to work with youth, they should be provided with extensive training on issues related to working with schools and working with youth. And this chapter includes a lot of information and examples of training for SROs, as well as suggestions for supervision and engagement with the law enforcement agency to ensure the goals of the partnership are being met, support officers' growth, keep them connected to the police agencies, and help identify any problems that may exist.

Colorado POST Training for SROs

Emily Morgan: And here is an example from the SRO Training Program in Colorado that developed a 40-hour training that focuses on the elements of crime prevention, intervention, and enforcement.

Formalize Partnership in a Written Agreement

Emily Morgan: And in the final section of the partnership chapter of the report, we discuss how to bring all of these previous sections together and formalize the partnership through written Memorandum of Understanding or agreement.

Emily Morgan: Most jurisdictions have some sort of agreement between schools and law enforcement. However, these vary considerably. So after reviewing model MOUs and describing – looking at effective school-police partnerships and appropriate roles and goals, and speaking with experts from the field, we identified these eight characteristics. I will not go through them, but just take a look.

School-Police Collaborative Agreement: Broward County, FL

Emily Morgan: And here is a practical example from Broward County, Florida, where the school district collaborated with local law enforcement, as well as juvenile justice and community partners, to develop a Collaborative Agreement on School Discipline that limits the involvement of law enforcement in minor misbehavior, encourages the use of graduated sanctions, and encourages officers to use discretion whenever possible.

Emily Morgan: And a bit later on, we will hear from folks in Denver about the landmark Intergovernmental Agreement developed there between the public schools and the Denver Police Department.

Thank You

Emily Morgan: So that is just a quick overview of the Consensus Report, and I encourage you to visit our Web site to view the report in its entirety, and we will provide a direct link later on in the Webinar.

Polling Question #3

Emily Morgan: So to start off our next section of the Webinar, we will start with a polling question. How do you think students see the role of an SRO in a public school? As a parental figure, a law enforcement agent, teacher, mentor, some of the above, all of the above.

[silence]

Emily Morgan: Great, so looks like the bulk of folks believe that students see SROs as law enforcement agencies – agents. Great.

Considerations for Effective School-Police Partnerships

Emily Morgan: So, now I would like to introduce Lisa Thureau, Executive Director of Strategies for Youth, who will speak about some of the research on school-police partnerships and some key issues influencing this topic at the national level. And be sure to type any questions you have throughout the presentation into the Q & A box.

Lisa Thureau: Thank you very much for inviting me to speak today, and I am thrilled to hear so many people are interested in this topic and are joining us today. The Council of State Governments report is a wonderful analysis and summary of critical points in the way to keep schools safe, and I would like to elaborate just a little bit more on the School-Police Partnerships chapters in that study, and suggest some additional points.

Overview

Lisa Thureau: What I will do today very quickly is give you a snapshot of the status of research in 2015 on school-police partnerships, suggest some factors that determine how these interactions are going to be affected today, and finally, issues that are key to school-police partnerships that minimize arrest.

Status of Research on SROs in Schools in 2015

Lisa Thureau: School research, I mean research on school resource officers and the presence of police in schools has quintupled, I think it is fair to say. And as of 2015, I think we can say that it is very rare to find a school research document that looks at the complexity of merging two systems with an ever-changing dynamic group of people, not just the kids, but the adults.

Researching Complexity

Lisa Thureau: So, the best studies look at interaction of systems and put those systems and research in the context of the neighborhoods and communities in which children are being served. They are either looking at things in snapshots or long term, and the vast majority of research is snapshots. We are not seeing many longitudinal studies at all.

Lisa Thureau: The variables considered in the research vary considerably, and we see most of the research focusing on variables regarding kids, not adult conduct. And there is very little focus on the role of cultural difference, for instance, between the SROs and the youth, or between the school staff and the SROs, or all three groups.

Lisa Thureau: Finally, the method of data collection has generally focused on arrest data as a primary means of analyzing impacts, and there is a move towards more ethnographic collection of data and understanding how people perceive these different aspects of the school-police relationship.

Research Findings

Lisa Thureau: I think it would be fair to show this graphic as saying some of the research findings show that the involvement of police in a school-police partnership shows a reduction in arrests for serious offenses, for minor offenses, for school misbehavior, for all kinds of safety threats. And then other research shows just the opposite, that with police on campus you will see an increased number of arrests for minor offenses and more serious offenses, and that school safety is not perceived to be improved.

Lisa Thureau: The problem with all of these research findings is just how applicable they are to other situations in other localities, because one thing we know for sure about the United States is it is very complex and there are huge differences by community, by regions, by states, and certainly by school districts, which within a school district can have a huge variation.

Research Findings in a Nutshell

Lisa Thureau: The positive impacts of SROs we are seeing are, because the vast majority of police are males, very positive male role models and positive authority figures more generally. We see, as I said, some information on reduction of arrests and minor offenses, and an increased sense of student safety. But for every study that shows students feeling more safe with police in schools, I can show you another one which shows the opposite. And the one that that we are seeing all over is that the involvement of parents and communities and advocates is much more likely to make the adoption of a school-police partnership accepted. When parents and communities are excluded, it is a much harder road to hoe.

Lisa Thureau: The negative impacts of SROs are that youth report being harassed or targeted or provoked, and that the mere presence of officers can cause fear. There are some states where we are seeing over-arrest and citations of children as well as older students. For some youth, the presence of police increases a sense of fear and heightens a lack of youth safety, which can then lead to some of the things we really do not want to see, which is truancy and youth dropping out. In some cases where there has been use of force in schools, we see kids feeling that it is a very traumatizing aspect of the involvement of police, and something that makes them rethink just how safe they are. And, finally, in some systems you are seeing increased arrests.

Factors Determining School/Police Interactions in Today's Context Current

Lisa Thureau: What I think is key to remember, and I hope research continues to move ahead and considers some of the factors I mentioned at the beginning, is that there are some external structural factors that determine how school/police interactions are going to occur. And I would like to review those very quickly.

Six Determinative Contextual Factors

Lisa Tharau: I have identified six of them and I am going to start ahead with post-Newtown responses.

Post-Newtown Responses

Lisa Tharau: Now, in about 2003, we saw the lowest number of funding from the feds for school resource officers. And yet, we see the number of school resource officers growing, and we do not know how many they are. Maybe 10,000. Maybe 17,000. It is hard to estimate it, and it is always in flux due to some financial issues. But, certainly, after Newtown there was a tremendous array of legislative issues going on across the country, which were intending to increase the number of SROs and armed guards in schools. And those are two distinct categories that we have to not conflate. And much of this legislation also affected expectations and directives for school resource officers.

Resources

Lisa Tharau: Another category of legal changes, too, were increasing mandated school-based arrests. The resources available have been problematic. I think since the crash of 2008, existing resource inadequacies were simply made more clear. We see municipal police departments across the United States trying to send police into schools, but not always having the resources to allocate and deploy officers there. We see school districts' priorities often in conflict with localities' interest in having schools with police officers. So who do you hire? How do you pay for the school resource officer? Do you take the money for guidance counselors and psychologists to pay for the school resource officer? And, this makes the whole question much more complicated, especially when you are looking at school districts that are paying municipal departments for the provision of SROs. And all these decisions and the extent of resources available have huge impacts on the availability of resources available for student support. Because one thing that is clear across the United States is the vast majority of public school students are poorer and in need of more support than perhaps ever before that has been counted.

Accountability

Lisa Tharau: Another issue, this is our fourth, is the accountability expectations have grown tremendously. The U.S. DOE (Department of Energy) expects data to be collected, data will be reviewed at state and federal levels now, and the oversight of SROs by police departments and state and federal agencies is likely to increase.

Systems' Commitment to Best Practices

Lisa Tharau: Finally, the system's commitment to best practices is another factor that will determine whether or not the partnership goes along certain tracks or not. And one of the kinds of best practices are positive behavioral intervention supports, trauma-informed practices, and too often I go to places where everyone has been trained in trauma practices except the SROs. So sufficient resources to implement effective responses also becomes a big issue in many districts.

Community Perception of Law Enforcement Agency's Legitimacy

Lisa Tharau: Finally, community perceptions of law enforcement agency's legitimacy are key here, and some communities will fear law enforcement, and no community is a monolith. So while some sections

of a community may be fearful, others may want it. Often those segments of the community are in conflict, but this will also determine whether or not police are involved in the schools and how.

Lisa Thureau: So there are some key partner issues in all school-police partnerships that we have seen over the years. But I just want to reiterate that we go to places where we see no police in the schools. At best, the police are called in intermittently when there is a really serious offense. And without SROs, schools are able to remain a safe environment that is conducive to learning and a feeling of safety for everyone.

Key Issues in all School/Police Partnerships

Goal/Philosophy

Lisa Thureau: I think the key thing to do here is, as a school partnership team, get everyone at the table and devise some kind of agreement on, "What is your goal or philosophy?" I heard a Department of Corrections commissioner from Mississippi say that he went to the legislature and he said, "Who are we mad at and who do we want to punish?" And my question to folks who are starting out on this is, "What is your goal? What is your understanding of why a young person misbehaves in the classroom, and how do you want to align that? Do you want to make it a corrective or a punishment approach? What is it, and can you be clear on it, and can you all be clear on it?" And this is key because philosophy or theory guides practice, and your philosophy and goal will affect who you select, how you train them, what resources you allocate for this, what accountability you demand, and the kind of data you collect.

Selection of Officers

Lisa Thureau: The selection of officers, as CSG's report noted, is key here, and all officers I speak to recognize this and they really understand that some people are not made to be in schools. Patrol officers typically answer calls from a vehicle. An SRO is constantly in motion talking to people all day, having hundreds of contacts. Not every police officer wants to do that. The key question here is, "How much is this a partnership? Are officers being chosen by the schools and the police department, or just one or the other?"

Lisa Thureau: There are structural challenges in some places – seniority of police unions and unions can also determine deployment of officers. So sometimes this can be problematic and schools can help police departments when the selection process occurs to make sure that the best manner of choice is made. In other words, that some of these structural hindrances do not affect who is the best person to be in the school.

Lisa Thureau: And then schools must ask police departments to ensure consistency in assignment and deployment of officers, because it is key to have enduring relationships. Changes are not helpful.

SRO and Team Roles

Lisa Thureau: And then, as everyone knows, it is a big issue to figure out how are you going to draw a line in the sand. What is the SRO's role and responsibility? When does an SRO need to step back? When can they help but not arrest? And defining those limits is highly problematic. It is very easy to do at a table, but very difficult to do in practice. And I think people should recognize it as a work in progress that needs constant revision and review and discussion. And I think folks will see that their perceptions of

this evolve over time. And it is all the more important to keep data on how these team roles are played out so that you can evaluate whether or not your approach is working.

Team Approach

Lisa Thureau: I also want to make it very clear that in our interviews with school staff we often hear school staff asking officers to do things that officers are not supposed to do. Because school staff do not understand criminal law or juvenile law, they often ask police to do things that are not legally possible, and they often want the police to play the role of “the heavies.” And this is not a good way of either socializing youth about police authority or using school resource officers.

Lisa Thureau: The team approach is key here, and we are always disturbed when we see that security guards or SROs are not communicating routinely with school administrators, that they are left out of the loop, and that there seems to be no connection between the two. Because this is a loss of information, but it also suggests that the two roles are completely disconnected, and that this is very confusing for kids to understand who is in the power of authority here. Who has the power of authority?

Lisa Thureau: And so frequent, regular check-ins as a team for joint accountability is critical, and everyone’s input should be valued. And, you know, not to insult cafeteria ladies, in fact to extol them, it is important to have all adults being able to be heard about how kids are doing. Everybody has a different point of view. Kids talk to all members of the school system. And those perspectives should be considered, at the very least.

Code of Conduct

Lisa Thureau: A code of conduct is a wonderful thing until people think it makes no sense and you have the equivalent of jury nullification with parents saying, “I do not care what the school code of conduct says,” as we saw in one district. “I do not care why you are arresting my kid, this is not logical, this makes no sense to me. You deal with it.”

Lisa Thureau: And so, not only does a school code of conduct have to involve community and parents and students in its formulation, it must go back to your original philosophy and goal of how the school is going to correct behavior it does not like.

Lisa Thureau: And I want to say that one of the constant themes we hear from school resource officers is that the heavy use of suspension, the heavy use of arrests are game changers for many, many kids. The other thing I want to say is that when we play our school code of conduct version of our juvenile justice Jeopardy game where we teach kids affirmatively what the code of conduct says, they are astonished that those rules are in place. I think it is fair to say no one reads the code of conduct until they have violated it. It is critical that schools take affirmative steps, perhaps with the SROs, perhaps with upper-level students, to teach the code of conduct in a way young people will remember and reinforce amongst each other.

Training

Lisa Thureau: Finally, training. We feel that, in view of all the data on the lack of training officers get in the academy and in service – most states have, at best, 6 hours of training on juvenile justice for police officers in the academy and none required in service – officers need to be grounded in these elements

listed on this slide. And this is key for them. When we do SRO trainings, we try and do it in 2 or 3 days and we cannot cover all the issues that officers in schools are seeing with kids, and they are very hungry to learn more. This must occur.

Lisa Thureau: And the other thing that must occur is the way it is done ought to include cross-training with school team members. The officers are part of that team now. They need to be with the school team members. You need to involve experts on child and adolescent development, and the training should be repeated at least annual, and it should focus on legal issues – and this includes special education protections for youth – and it should include disproportionate minority contact obligations of the federal government to local law enforcement agencies. We find that too often SROs are plopped into schools without any kind of information about this, and they are forced to rely on others for this. That is not fair to them and it is not necessarily good for students if you look at the number of youth who are arrested and are also experiencing learning disabilities or emotional behavioral disabilities.

Lisa Thureau: We also have to identify sources of disparate treatment of children and train to those subjects in each school. And this, again, makes the case for the importance of excellent data collection.

Jaimie: Lisa, this is your colleague, Jaimie, just reminding you that folks have lots to say about your great presentation in the comments, so we are asking that you move quickly so we can move on.

Lisa Thureau: Okay, I am almost done here.

Oversight and Accountability

Lisa Thureau: Also here about oversight and accountability. Well, as you select an SRO you should also develop parameters for their evaluation. And when we talk I will say next about accountability, I suggest we shift the folks onto how adults are responding to youth, and count referrals by teachers and administrators to SROs, and analyze the data routinely by different team members. A juncture analysis, like how does a referral to an SRO occur? And at what juncture could a different choice have been made?

The Law

Lisa Thureau: Finally, the law. Legislatures' response to these events is changing very quickly, and it is important to understand how all that is affecting all of us in the school environment.

Resources: The Teen Brain

Lisa Thureau: I have added some resources here on how to understand the teen brain, which is wonderful to understand and difficult to deal with, and some information on positive youth justice approaches. And, finally, some interesting articles on how to create safety in a school environment. We are also available to talk later, and if you look at our Web site, www.strategiesforyouth.org, you will see some information about teacher training officers that can be useful on issues of trauma.

Emily Morgan: Great, thank you so much, Lisa. We really appreciate it, and we recognize that there is a lot of content to get through. We are so pleased to have you on this Webinar and our other three presenters, so appreciate you kind of trying to condense as much of this information into a brief amount of time.

Questions?

Emily Morgan: We want to try to pause for a couple of questions in between each presenter. Given that we are tight on time, I have one question for you. Can you talk about your experiences seeing police in schools engaged in a dialogue about what their partnership should look like? And, most especially, we know that there are many places where they have determined that...[background noise]...a need for an active law enforcement presence in schools. So what brief takeaways would you share with the Webinar audience about what a healthy relationship looks like between police and schools [overlapping comments] those places?

Lisa Thureau: A healthy relationship looks like SROs who understand the importance of keeping youth in school, and that arrests should be an absolutely last resort and go in with that presumption, that there is also healthy communication lines open, and that everyone agrees that everyone is subject to review and to be held accountable, not just one of the team members. The team approach is key, and those would be the key things I would say for a healthy partnership.

Emily Morgan: Great, thank you. And also recognizing, you know, that schools and police and law enforcement partners may decide that there really is not a need for a presence on the school campus, and may develop other relationships beyond that formal presence of officers on campus.

Lisa Thureau: That is absolutely true, and we see that in many places. If you are going to have the partnership, one of the first things you might want to establish is whether or not you have a need, and whether or not the placement of officers there is going to create issues that you did not have before. I just saw from NASRO's (National Association of School Resource Officers) Journal that Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, until it put twice as many SROs in the schools, had less than half the number of arrests that it now has with twice as many SROs. So sometimes you can truly create problems by putting SROs in the school in arrest positions that so escalates the number of arrests that you are actually losing kids out of the school system, which may not be in anyone's interest. I would argue is it not.

Emily Morgan: Exactly. So it is really, you know, a local decision to make. So thank you again, Lisa, really appreciate it.

Polling Question #4

Emily Morgan: We are going to move on now to our next polling question, if attendees could answer this question for us. Who has supervision or on-site responsibility of the law enforcement in your schools? Local or regional law enforcement, school district or school building administrator, or other.

[silence]

Emily Morgan: So, from the quick responses that we have gotten so far, it looks like the local or regional law enforcement agency is the primary supervision entity, which is what we saw in our research for the School Discipline Consensus Report, so it is interesting that it is consistent there.

Voice From the Field: Michael Eaton, Chief of Safety and Security, Denver Public Schools

Emily Morgan: Next, we are going to move on to hear from Michael Eaton, Chief of Safety and Security at Denver Public Schools (DPS). Michael?

Michael Eaton: Great, thank you. Thanks for the opportunity to join this important training today. I want to talk a little bit about process today. I want to talk about – when we took on this project going on a year and a half, 2 years ago, talked about the process that we used. And I think to set the stage for that, it is important to understand our district.

Patrol Districts

Michael Eaton: I have included a map there that shows the City and County of Denver, and how we are laid out as far as schools go to include different districts. And those districts are how we separate the City from the Safety and Security standpoint, which is also the same exact way the Denver Police Department does. We are very fortunate here in Denver where we have one agency to work with, and that is the Denver Police Department. So I do know that a lot of folks on this call, specifically from the school level, may be working with several different law enforcement agencies. And so that, obviously, can create different challenges. But in our work, we are working strictly with Denver.

Michael Eaton: A little background on DPS. We have over 180 schools across the district and have over 90,000 students. And so we really value the partnership – and I want to really emphasize partnership – that we have with not only our school resource officers, but the officers that serve the DPS schools from the Denver Police Department.

School Resource Officer Program

Michael Eaton: So looking at this, you know, we have a very small number of resource officers compared to, you know, the number of schools that we have. But, as you can see, we – we really look at our law enforcement partnership to – to handle those criminal side – the criminal side of what goes on in our schools, intelligence gathering, sharing that information regarding criminal activity and gang – gang involvement, being a liaison for students between DPS and the criminal justice system, and then developing those partnerships which we would like to call Campus Communities.

Michael Eaton: And, as you can see the arrow that goes from the Denver Police to the Denver Public Schools, we really want to emphasize that partnership. And how does the SRO not only represent the Denver Police Department, but represent the Denver Public Schools and that school who is, you know, operating in a – in a community throughout the city?

Process

Michael Eaton: So we looked at, you know, where we wanted to go with this Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) as well as this partnership. We really, as a district, we had to sit down and identify what were our priorities. What was – where did we feel the gaps were? It is easy to sit down with a law enforcement partner and share all the problems that you have or the changes you want to see, but, unfortunately, in DPS we did not have a solidified checklist of items that, you know, we felt were priorities to us.

Michael Eaton: And so, one of the things that we did was we developed a task force within our own district, and I happen to lead that task force. And it was not just safety and security or folks that are part of the discipline process. We really tried to look broadly and we involved our Community Engagement Office, we involved our legal team, we involved our Student Services Department who oversees all of our disciplinary actions and process and stats, and those types of things. Then we also involved

academic leadership, because when these SROs are part of the school communities, and we wanted to hear from our school leaders, our principals, what priorities do they have in that partnership and relationship with their SRO.

Michael Eaton: From there, we conducted a thorough needs assessment and gap analysis. And then we held community meetings. You will hear from a partner of ours with Padres Y Jovenes Unidos, who is the large part of – of the community process in this. And with the community process we wanted to hear: What was important to parents? What was important to community leaders when it came to police involvement with students in schools? What was important regarding police-student interactions? And we needed to ensure that campus culture was a large part of the selection and interaction of the assigned police SROs. As somebody stated earlier, not all police officers make good SROs. And in Denver, what we found was that the 180 schools, we have 180 different campus cultures that exist. And I think it is extremely important, if you do not involve campus culture in your selection process, you are potentially not going to find the right fit.

Michael Eaton: I had the opportunity to – I had the benefit of having a gentleman on my staff. I have a full safety, armed safety and security department, very much like a law enforcement but we are not sworn. But, a gentleman that was one of my patrol officers is actually a former SRO. He is also former member of NASRO, the National Association of School Resource Officers, and a member of CASRO, the Colorado chapter. And he actually was also a teacher, he had done some teaching, and he did a statistical-based analysis for us to really identify what were some of the issues that we wanted to see changed, as well as we wanted to take a data-driven approach to how we assigned school resource officers across our district, knowing that police had a limited number of officers available for this assignment. And, two, that from a budget standpoint, we contribute to those costs, and knowing that all budgets are tight and having to really look at a database approach on investing in that resource.

Michael Eaton: We met with Denver Police Leadership across the City, and I think it is extremely important that when you are – when you are looking at updating your IGA or you are looking at doing this type of approach, that at least in our city, in Denver, it was important for me as the representative from DPS, I had to have that – that relationship, that trust built both at the Chief's level, the Chief of Police, as well as at the individual District Commanders. Because under our IGA, our SROs report into those individual districts.

Michael Eaton: And so you need to look at not just, you know, a one-tiered approach to relationship building and communication, you have to look at a several-tiered approach. And, for me, that is having those relationships at the individual district levels, as well as at the Chief's Office where we work out, you know, the priorities districtwide. And then when it comes to those individual expectations and standards of service, we want to have those relationships built with those individual Commanders.

Michael Eaton: We talked about what was important on both sides, and then the IGA draft process began, and – and we had a really good detailed agreement finalized.

A Statistic Based Analysis of the SRO Partnership and School Safety Needs Assessment

Michael Eaton: So the areas or problems that we had identified in that analysis was there are limited resources available. Also, officers were spending not enough time at their schools engaged in their school communities. You know, traditional law enforcement is you go in for your briefing, you get your

car, you probably network a little bit with your team, and then you go out to your school. Well, we were losing a lot of time where those officers were not engaged with their schools.

Michael Eaton: Lack of participation by school community in the selection process. As I stated before, you have to have involvement from your school community in that selection process because that SRO has to become a member of that leadership team for that school.

Michael Eaton: I think there was an overdependence on the SRO by school leadership causing the officer to engage in non-criminal matters. Being called to, you know, "I want you to talk to this kid because he is acting up, and I want you to scare him." Or, "I want you to, you know, get involved in every little discipline matter." And that really took away the autonomy from the school to be able to engage in the discipline process as an appropriate means to handle the problem. And, really, what they were doing is moving into the officer's purview, who also has a criminal investigation responsibility.

Michael Eaton: There was a lack of consistency in the responsibilities and expectations across the City, and I talked a little bit about that. We are dealing with five different districts and district leadership.

Michael Eaton: I think we talked a little bit about the criminalization of the student code of conduct. And, really, this new legislation that was occurring out here in Colorado, we did not really know what new post requirements were going to be put in place regarding SROs.

Priorities for New IGA

Michael Eaton: So our priorities were really look at an incident-population ratio, size, type, statistical data to determine where we wanted to invest SROs across our district. We wanted to make sure that SROs are spending at least 75 percent of their day, if not more, in schools engaged with students. We moved SRO offices in our schools up to the front in a popular hallway, near the front doors, or in the office space, so that they were seen, they were part of that culture rather than being put back in the corner and nobody knew where they were or they were not visible in our schools.

Michael Eaton: We also – we have a lot of SROs that have a lot of great experience, and let us use them as instructors in law-related and safety topics. Invite them into our classrooms.

Michael Eaton: And then, also have a detailed process for how selection of SROs are going to occur with school involvement, and how that dialogue continues. It is important that there is a mechanism in place where the police leadership that oversee the SRO, and school leadership that works with the SRO on a daily basis, have that ongoing dialogue and that those discussions are part of the SRO's performance evaluation with the Police Department. And how we approached that was really with annual meetings, ongoing communication, and things like that, so we were not just sitting down when a problem occurred.

Michael Eaton: We talked a little about the decriminalization of the code of conduct violations, keeping clear communication which are important factors.

Michael Eaton: I think, finally, as I wrap up here, one of the items that we found – and I know Commander Nagle has a presentation after me – he has been a great resource for us and a great partner. But one of the things we found was that, as we looked at this partnership, the SROs were a promotional rank when – historically we were a promotional rank. So officers would promote into that

rank. Well, as we have talked about, when you have someone that may be in a position for a long time, campus culture changes. You know, when you bring a new school leader in, things evolve. Campus culture changes, and sometimes when somebody has been there a long time, they may not be the best fit or resource as that school grows. And so, when you have somebody fulfilling an SRO role that may not be the right fit any longer, and they are in a promotional rank, it makes it extremely difficult to make that change and it could be extremely difficult for that officer and put them in an unfair position as well. So, the Denver Police Department decided to take that rank structure away and not make it a promotional opportunity so that – and also it opened up a lot more availability of officers that really did fit the role of an SRO. And so that was a huge change that the Police Department took on and committed to, and I commended them for that, and that has also been a very positive impact.

Michael Eaton: So, that is really how we approached it from Denver, and I am happy to take any questions.

Questions?

Emily Morgan: Great, thank you so much, Michael. Really appreciate it, and it is really interesting to hear about the partnership and the development of the IGA from your perspective.

Emily Morgan: We have gotten a couple of questions about training and cross-training. And I was wondering if you could speak a little bit to how the district worked with educators to reduce unnecessary calls for law enforcement. And also, what types of training were provided to educators and law enforcement, SROs, what type of cross-training that might involve kind of special – the needs of – the unique needs of special education youth or youth exposed to trauma in terms of the impacts that they might have on their behavior and their likelihood to potentially be at risk of being removed for disciplinary reasons or arrested?

Michael Eaton: So, as I say, I think it is a two-part question. I think the first part is, one, what type of training was involved to school leaders so that they were not over-depending on the SRO in their day-to-day activities? I think one is sitting down, and what we did is we – we took the Commander, we asked the Commander from Denver Police and the SRO for each school, and we did make some changes in SRO assignments. And sat down and developed what I like to call standards of service, expectations. The Commander was – was able to share with the school leader and their staff, “These are the expectations that we can provide. Here we have it in writing, but also what are some expectations you have as far as SRO involvement?” And, you know, really talking, you know, in more details about, you know, we do not want officers being called to those non – to those small disciplinary issues. And how that takes away some of the autonomy you have as school leaders to go through your discipline process. Because once a police officer gets involved, yes, they have discretion, but also they also have mandates from their own department on – on actions that they need to take that are violations of law.

Michael Eaton: So one is having those conversations. I think, two, from a district level, working with our instructional superintendents which – who oversee principals on, you know, how do we – how do we provide more of a consistent approach to discipline versus criminal? And we really worked with our Student Services Department through their network meetings to have those conversations, hear from our school leaders on what challenges they were experiencing, and why they would involve law enforcement. And, also, a lot of them just did not know. They did not know really what the role of the SRO was. They thought the SRO was there for them to go to and say, “Hey, I am having problems with this kid. I need you to take care of it.” They really did not understand what those expectations were.

Michael Eaton: I think when it comes to special needs populations, it is important that SROs understand who may have special needs or concerns in their schools, and that when a problem arises, that all information is shared with them. This goes with my team as well. If we come on the scene because of an out-of-control child that may be a special needs child, we want to see their IEP (Individualized Education Program), we want to see what are de-escalators that have worked with this kid in the past, and also what escalates them. I think, also, those SROs seeing those kids on a daily basis, they have those relationships built. And so those kids are not just seeing them when there is a problem. They are seeing them in an everyday light, and that SRO knows how those behaviors are different and that relationship is already there.

Emily Morgan: Great, thank you so much. And, again, we have two additional speakers to get through so I apologize for cutting the Q & A a little bit short, but I know we have a really great conversation going on in the chat function, and so maybe we can take some time to address a few of those questions that have been posed there. Thanks again, Michael.

Voice From the Field: William “Bill” Nagle, District 4 Commander, Denver Police Department

Emily Morgan: And now I would like to introduce Bill Nagle, District 4 Commander with the Denver Police Department. Commander Nagle?

Bill Nagle: Hi there. I would kind of like to start out by saying what a great relationship we do have with Mike. And we just met for coffee the other day to talk about different issues, so we do have an ongoing relationship that I think has been very successful.

School Discipline Act of 2012: Colorado House Bill 12-1345

Bill Nagle: Now, one of the things that has really changed the way we do business in Colorado was the School Discipline Act of 2012. You would have a hard time finding it if you tried to look for that on a Google search. It was rolled into a House School Appropriations Bill, so it is House Bill – Colorado House Bill 12-1345, and it begins on Section 21. There is a link to a copy of that at the bottom of that first slide so that you can get it if you need it.

Bill Nagle: Some of the important things in it is it required a Matrix of Discipline from the school system so that people would know, one, what things were going to be considered as disciplinary problems, and also, which of those things mandate a law enforcement response and which ones, you know, you should not be calling the police for. So that was a requirement that was there. Now, because of our relationship with groups like Padres Y Jovenes Unidos, Denver Public Schools already had a School Discipline Matrix at the time this was passed, and it was probably used as the model for that for the entire state. But now that requirement is statewide.

Bill Nagle: Requires notification of school and students on arrest or citation. You have to let the principal know within 24 hours of an arrest, and within 10 days if you do a citation. And that is for a student who is on school grounds, at a school-sanctioned event, or on a school bus, if you do that. And that requires all officers to do that. So if it is a street officer, that requirement still goes, and that is so that we can do the recordkeeping that is also a requirement of this.

Bill Nagle: Someone was talking about the need for ethnographic data, and that is required by this law.

Bill Nagle: It also directs SROs away from involvement in school discipline. But our operations manual, section for “The Duties and Responsibilities of a School Resource Officer,” already had that in the operations manual as far back as I can tell, 2002. So we have been trying to follow that standard for a long time.

Bill Nagle: And it also required that the State POST Board – the Police Officers’ Standards and Training Board – come up with an SRO training module, so that would be a requirement for all officers.

Important Issues

Bill Nagle: Important issues like we want to do – the whole goal is to minimize arrests, expulsions, suspensions. We want to keep kids in school to increase their chance of being academically successful. We want to create a positive learning environment for all students. And sometimes that can be very difficult if you have children acting out.

Bill Nagle: Now, in terms of the selection, we need to recruit and select people who will do a good job. And one of the things that we do at the Denver Police Department is Commander will contact the school and try to get someone from the faculty, someone from the administration, and get them involved in that selection process in with the interviews. Now, the final decision is going to be with the District Commander, but we need to get that particular involvement right from an early stage in the recruitment and in the selection.

Bill Nagle: We have to maintain this partnership, and anyone who is going to take this job has to remember they have to develop a partnership, not only with the school administration, the faculty, all the people who work at the school, the students, the parents, and also with the community that is surrounded by the school. Their job is to run interference and try to make it so that the school, as well as all the students, are considered good citizens from the people who have to live in that area.

Bill Nagle: Now, oversight. You saw the large number saying that it is the law enforcement agency that is in charge of the oversight. Well, and that is true, but in order to do day-to-day oversight and to do evaluations of our officers who are involved as SROs, we need to also contact the school administration, school teachers. I go and walk around the school, I talk with the SROs constantly. We have to get that type of level of input in order to do our oversight job very well. So it includes information from the community, the school, the parents, and the students. So we do take into account all those different factors.

Bill Nagle: Now, deployment – where we are going to put the kids – basically, we have left that to the DPS and they use statistics for doing [blank audio] figure out which schools would best be suited for that.

SRO Duties

Bill Nagle: Now, the next things I want to go through are what we list as the duties and responsibilities for a school resource officer. It says they are going to act as a liaison to the students, the faculty, the school staff, administration, parents, and the school and community. It is right written in their duties and responsibilities.

Bill Nagle: They are to be a liaison between the school and the criminal justice system, including the police department, the courts, and corrections personnel.

Bill Nagle: Now, one of the things that happens is we are trying to keep kids out of jail. When they turn 18, they may have old warrants from when they were a kid. If they get caught with an FTA, failure to appear, or some other warrant, all they do is they call up and get a new court date when they are a juvenile. When they are an adult, they can actually go to jail for their juvenile warrants once they turn as an adult. So, as kids are getting ready to turn 18, the school resource officers try to make sure to check on what their warrants are and to have them cleared up before they turn 18 so they do not inadvertently end up going to jail for something that they could take care of very easily.

Bill Nagle: The other things that we have in here are: they contribute to a positive police, school, community relations effort, especially with students and parents. And a lot of that is just maintaining a positive role model, and we look for that in their demeanor, their attitude, and also their look. So, we try to get shiny pennies for this job.

Bill Nagle: They are to assist in the prevention and control of crime within their district, or within their school, and also within the immediate community around the school. A lot of people complain of graffiti and kids hanging out on the street after school and stuff like that. You get a lot of calls for, you know, gang fight brewing and stuff like that, and it is just kids hanging around. We also have a lot of kids at one of our schools, they go to the McDonald's and they kind of hang out there, but they also kind of interfere with the business there. So I have the school resource officer go there after school. He knows all the kids, and they know and respect him, and they do not want to do anything that he would not like. So they try very hard to, you know, comply with anything that he might say, and the relationship has been very positive and we are getting better relations between the school and the business community next to that school.

Bill Nagle: It says do not intervene in the concerns that are solely a violation of school rules. These have been the types of things that we have had in our operations manual for a long time so that people know that there is that dichotomy.

Bill Nagle: They have to take appropriate law enforcement action when needed. They still have discretion. So there are a lot of things where if the school wants to say, "Hey, we are going to handle this through restorative justice," we can help facilitate that. In fact, we try to promote as much restorative justice as we can because that helps save the whole gamut of things, and it also has proved very successful when kids understand how their behavior hurts the school and hurts the person who they have wronged. I think they understand why they need to modify their behavior. That is a very successful program that we run in our schools.

Bill Nagle: Also, we have the development of emergency management plans. After Columbine, every school, or every police officer and school system has to have emergency operations plan. So we work closely with the school to set those up, especially in the schools where we have an SRO.

Bill Nagle: And, we have to mediate potentially violent conflicts between students and parents and faculty. And sometimes we have irate parents and parent on parent or parent against some other kid or student, and things like that. And having a good relationship, especially with the school faculty, the students, and also with the parents, helps diffuse a lot of those situations.

Bill Nagle: We also have – Mike was talking about getting our officers into the classroom. We do have a requirement that if we could do law-related education, there is a whole thing where we actually work with a teacher and they team teach certain subjects about law enforcement and individual rights. That has been a very successful program. It has kind of fallen by the wayside, so that with Mike's help we might be able to get that restarted again.

Bill Nagle: We also have a charge that they should coordinate resources. We have special events at the schools and sometimes we can bring in things like the police low-rider or a Public Safety Cadet to help tout the Explorer program and the Cadet program. We have a program where you can be a Public Safety Cadet and they will pay for your school, your college tuition, and your books, and give you a job. And you get on-the-job training while you are in that particular job, and you get exposure to the Fire Department, the Sheriff's Department, and the Police Department while you do it. Very successful program. We get a lot of great leaders that come out of that. And the Explorer program is a high school level Scout-oriented program toward law enforcement. So a lot of great programs that we can help students get involved in, and a lot of times that can also help keep them from getting involved in other things that may not be so helpful in the future.

Bill Nagle: So, they also have to keep a District Commander, and that is why they are placed under the Commander is that the Commander has area responsibility. So if there are certain things that are happening, if there is certain gangs or graffiti tagging groups that are forming up in the school, they need to know about that so that they can go get the right resources to try to deal with those issues.

Bill Nagle: And they may be – SROs, too, can also be assigned, with permission from me, to do extracurricular activities. We try to limit the amount of overtime just because of budget reasons, but there are times. To do that, though, it is not to supplant their normal security measures, but it is a lot of times very useful. Like when we had the marches for the protest a few weeks ago, the SROs were there and they know the kids, they know their names, and things like that. And because of the relationship they have, it was a very good calming effect and having them present really helped out a great deal.

Bill Nagle: The other thing that almost everyone has in their assignments is other duties as assigned. So, if the school wants them to do something else, hey, we are open to negotiating that. Also, with the hours, we ask the school administrators, "What are the hours that you most want them there?" And then we try to design their days to fit the needs of the school. So we have tried to address what we feel is the best possible relationship between the schools, the kids, the parents, the community, as we possibly can and to make that a successful program through a partnership of all those elements.

Emily Morgan: Great. Thank you so much, Commander Nagle. Really appreciate learning more about the partnership and the law enforcement presence.

Questions?

Emily Morgan: Recognizing that we are running a little bit short on time, I am going to forego the questions here, but then we are going to have a broader question that is posed to all three folks from Denver in a few minutes.

Bill Nagle: Okay.

Emily Morgan: So, appreciate your patience.

Voice From the Field: Daniel Kim, Director of Youth Organizing, Padres Y Jovenes Unidos

Emily Morgan: So, for now I want to turn it over to Daniel Kim, Director of Youth Organizing with Padres Y Jovenes Unidos. Daniel?

Daniel Kim: Thanks so much for inviting us to be a part of the conversation here. I would like to say as well how much we value our working relationship with the Police Department and with Denver Public Schools. Our relationship has really evolved over the years that we have been working together, and we really look forward to continuing this really important work together.

Grassroots Advocacy in the Denver School-Police Partnership

Daniel Kim: So, my job here I think is to sort of tell a little bit of the story of how grassroots advocacy has played a key role in getting us to a place where both sides could sit down to sort of hammer out a new agreement that really represented a breakthrough for trying to reduce negative law enforcement interactions, reduce the school-to-prison pipeline, and racial disparities in discipline as well as in the criminalization of youth of color.

Overview

Daniel Kim: So, I want to rewind a little bit first just to sort of where the campaign came from in terms of... The community really was a part of initiating the process to bring the two sides together and to bring both sides together. And for the other organizations and institutions out there that are considering trying to take this kind of a step, I mean it is just really important to mark that why – why there is a need to generate political will to get to a place where this kind of agreement can get hammered out. Because what we are really talking about is we are talking about unnecessary law enforcement involvement in situations where, you know, parents and educators and everyone involved is asking, “This is not the best thing for the child.” Or we are looking at data that is telling us that there are racial disparities going on, despite both institutions’ best intentions and policies, that this is still happening, that we are seeing racial disparities for black and brown children in terms of who is being arrested, who is being ticketed, and then the impact on those students and those families and those lives.

The Role of Grassroots Advocacy

Daniel Kim: So, our job at the beginning was really to organize, to generate that political will, to bring us back together, because it is an inherently uncomfortable topic, it is unsettling to talk about race and talk about unnecessary law enforcement involvement. And the problem is that the tendency is to want to turn away from that, to avoid it. But the problem is that, in that communication gap is the lives of our youth in our communities, the lives of black and brown children. So, our job is to sort of hold that conversation and push it forward. So, we ran a whole process, and I will not go into it here, in terms of organizing parallels to create the political will, and then during the negotiating process as well.

Why Campaign for an MOU?

Daniel Kim: In terms of why we launched our campaign to win an MOU, and we did that 2 years – it took about 2 years we would say. We had passed a discipline code overhaul in 2008 that looked very similar to Buffalo’s. And we saw suspension numbers coming down, we saw expulsion numbers coming down, we saw some impact on racial disparities, modestly. But we saw that the law enforcement referral rates were not showing clear progress, they were going up, they were coming down. We saw that racial

disparities were remaining high in terms of law enforcement – schools calling in law enforcement. And, of course, in our organizing process we were seeing, you know, perceptions and experiences among our students and our families that this was happening and it needed to be addressed.

Daniel Kim: And then, at the same time, in our working relationships with the district and the Police Department, there emerged an opportunity to sort of codify what was in both sides' intent, which was to move to sort of a higher level of coordination in a formal, structured process that is created through a contract, an IGA or an MOU.

Context of the Campaign for an MOU

Daniel Kim: This is just really quickly to say that as many of you would know, especially those in community organizations, generating political will is not something that happens easily. It is a part of – it is part of a campaign, and our campaign is actually more than a decade old. And you can read these details later, but these are some of the victories that we have won along the way and the steps that we have taken to arrive at a point where we were also campaigning for an IGA.

Daniel Kim: You know, I could mention here as well that part of what generates the political will is not just the organizing process itself, but in those 12 years we had built these working relationships with the agencies, we had engaged in a media campaign to change the public debate and the policy climate. So those are all components of that context of the organizing process, the campaign process.

Signing the Intergovernmental Agreement

Daniel Kim: And, then we reached the signing of the Intergovernmental Agreement. And I just want to share two quotes here, one from Chief White and the other from Superintendent Boasberg. He was quoted in the paper, Chief White was, as saying, "We have as the police no desire to be disciplinarians. That is not our job. That is the parents' job, that is the schools' job. Our job is to deal with serious violations of the law, and that is what we are going to do."

Daniel Kim: And Superintendent Boasberg, I am going to read a quote from something that he had said in the press about our work as well, which is, "To thank Padres Y Jovenes Unidos for all the work that you are doing to get us to this point. We are here because of what you did. The work you did to push us, to push us hard, to push us thoughtfully, to push us constructively, and to push us to a solution."

Key Elements of the DPD-DPS Intergovernmental Agreement

Daniel Kim: So, I am not going to get into too many details about the IGA itself. I mean, Commander Nagle and Chief Eaton have covered these details. I am happy to send one-pagers summarizing fact sheets or the actual IGA itself.

Daniel Kim: Just a couple of things to highlight here would be that the IGA did provide for meetings between SROs at the department and community stakeholders. And also provided for new trainings for SROs and for schools on how best to deal with youth in schools, including, you know, it specified that possible topics would include the factors that tend to affect overuse of – or inappropriate or unnecessary use of law enforcement, as well as racial disparities in law enforcement. These things are listed in the slide, which include cultural competence, adolescent psychology, education around special ed students, as well as LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning) students.

What Does the Implementation Process Look Like So Far?

Daniel Kim: So, what does the implementation look like – sorry, what does the implementation process look like so far? I mean, we are still very early in the process, but there are some, I think, some helpful things that we can share from what the processes look like.

Annual Community Accountability Meeting (April 2014)

Daniel Kim: The IGA was signed in February 2013, and the school year after that we began a process with the Superintendent sort of to begin to create a community accountability process for the IGA. What that looked like is basically one of the major – one of the major pieces, actions, or events that we work with in our organizing cycle is that we have an Annual Community Accountability Meeting with the Superintendent and the top leadership of the student services side. And these are students in the picture presenting a report card to the district.

District-wide Number of Referrals to Law Enforcement

Daniel Kim: It gives them a grade, A, B, C, D, through F, on different factors. And when they presented about law enforcement referrals in schools, this comes out of the pages of the report card, and what you are seeing there is data from the number of referrals to law enforcement, the number of times schools called the police in to deal with situations. And the year we were looking at is 2012-2013, and that year we saw the number go up. This is the very year that we were negotiating the agreement, the IGA.

2012-2013 Rates of Referrals to Law Enforcement for Colorado's 20 Largest School Districts

Daniel Kim: And we also saw that there were significant racial disparities in who was being referred to law enforcement, such that a black student in Denver Public Schools in that year was 4.6 times more likely than a white student to be referred, and a Latino student was almost twice as likely to be referred than a white student.

I, Superintendent Tom Boasberg, Commit to the Following Solutions to end the School-to-Jail Track in DPS in 2014-15

Daniel Kim: So, based on that presentation, Superintendent Boasberg signed a commitment to initiate from – from the district's side to open the door to an accountability conversation with the Denver Police Department as well as on the DPS side.

What Does the Implementation Process Look Like so far in Denver?

Daniel Kim: And, where that is at right now is that we will have some initial consultations with Chief Eaton and Commander Nagle and Chief Quinones in the Denver Police Department to begin exploring what are areas where we can use the IGA to do some collaborative problem solving.

Daniel Kim: Just as a couple of examples, for instance, that have come up in our conversations that have been very helpful are that now is a good time to begin clarifying what do we want out of these new trainings for SROs. In the conversations, it became clear that there are actually questions that need to be cleared up about who owns the trainings. Who provides them? What role is appropriate? How do they interact with the new Colorado POST training which came out of statewide [unclear]? And then,

and then what are the needs, which things should come first? So, we are really glad to be engaging in that conversation.

Daniel Kim: Another area that came up is that, from our perspective in seeing both of the [complications? consultations?] on both sides is that our discipline code, our matrix, actually decriminalizes certain categories of student conduct, that actually on the legal side remain quote/unquote “criminal.” So, for instance, we have like four levels of vandalism in our discipline code, and the lowest levels of it which are defined by, you know, the value of the damage in the vandalism, for instance, if it is under a certain amount the schools are not supposed to call the law enforcement in. But there is confusion there for both sides because – because on the police side it is still a criminal act. So, and there are multiple categories that are like this. There is also status offenses where the code tries to decriminalize, for instance, a student having substance abuse issues, that should be handled more through treatment or intervention rather than... But, technically, it is still quote/unquote a “crime” to be in possession of a case of alcohol say when they are underage.

Daniel Kim: So these are areas that we know that we have to – we have the ingredients we need, which is we have each other at the table to figure this out and to come up with – to use the IGA as a process to be able to come up with these solutions.

Additional Factors

Daniel Kim: I guess I would just share here that the MOU is only one piece of the solution. Basically, Commander Nagle mentioned the statewide law and the data that it provides. I think I would also say that we also know that school climate is shaped by much more than tickets and arrests. And in our organizing process we deal a lot with sort of what happens to students’ relationship to their school and adults in the building when they are searched, when they are stopped and questioned, and when they - when they feel that that process is unfair.

“Students and Families, Know Your Rights!” Campaign

Daniel Kim: So, one solution we are engaging from our side of things is a community organizing campaign, a “Know Your Rights” campaign for students and families – and I will just wrap this up right now – which looks something like this, which will be grassroots education, handing out “Know Your Rights” guides around suspensions. What do you do if you think you have been suspended or ticketed or arrested unfairly? What are your rights? What are your due process protections?

Daniel Kim: And then building an actual advocacy hotline and a legal clinic where we come together with special ed advocates, juvenile public defenders, law school students at the University of Denver, to begin being able to actually engage with these families and students who are having these issues where an interaction with law enforcement is being harmful, and has been something that has [unclear] or potentially [unclear] impact. So, those are some of the things we are pursuing on our end.

Resources

Daniel Kim: And these are some resources of some of the things I have talked about. There is our *Statewide Report Card*, which gives data on all the districts in Colorado. The *Community Accountability Report Card*, which is the report card we presented to the district. And then the last document is a sum-up of our work over the past 12 years and how we got here. Thank you.

Questions?

Emily Morgan: Great. Thank you so much, Daniel. Really, really appreciate it. As I said, we are kind of running short on time, but I really did want to ask one last question to Michael, Bill, and Daniel. Thank you so much for providing insight into the ways in which the organizations and people you represent today have collaborated – schools, police, parents, and students – to maintain safety while also keeping youth engaged in school and reducing the number of students unnecessarily removed for disciplinary reasons. It was so helpful to hear concrete discussion of the policies and practices you have collaboratively developed and implemented in Denver. And we know that collaboration is not always easy. And where it works best is because of partners' commitment to maintaining the evolving collaboration.

Emily Morgan: So, based on some of the work that has been outlined as necessary next steps, can you each briefly – and as briefly as possible – comment on what you envision for the next stage of your work together? And maybe we could hear from Michael, and then Bill, and then Daniel.

Michael Eaton: Sure. I think briefly, I think we need to continue to assess. I think the next piece of this – I think Daniel hit on it a little bit – is to evaluate how this is going. Are those communication channels still in place? Are the commanders getting the information they need? And what is the feedback we are getting from our school leaders on this, I do not want to say new approach, but more clarified approach? And I think, also, the next step is – at least in our district as you saw – you know, we only service a small number of schools with SROs but we have a lot of police involvement in our schools. And so how do some of these priorities get communicated and accountability to the beat officers that are responding to schools that do not have SROs interacting with our kids on a daily basis?

Emily Morgan: Great, thank you. Bill, do you have any thoughts?

Bill Nagle: Yes. Some of the things that we found successful, Lincoln High School which has a Padres Y Jovenes Unidos group within the school, and we have a very good SRO down there, and the relationship with the principal was really good. And the restorative justice program there, we went from having about 230 incidents that required law enforcement involvement to one. So, I thought within a single year, that was a tremendous decrease. But one of the things that I think helped that a great deal was the principal and the SRO at the beginning of the year had a talk with the students and the parents, and talked about the code of conduct. Code of conduct is a great thing, but if the people do not know, you know, where they can read it and what is in it and what it means to them, it does not have much effect. So, having that code of conduct out in the forefront where everyone knows what is expected I think helps immensely. So I would encourage any school to make that a priority at the beginning of their school year.

Bill Nagle: The other thing we had, SROs that have done a lot toward problem solving. We had an SRO get an award today from the Mayor. She was in a school that had affected needs, which is kids with behavioral issues, and also a multi-intensive autistic unit and kids so profoundly impacted they cannot even speak. But in the one instance they had an autistic kid who was acting out because his routine was changed. And it is because the paraprofessionals who had been running that class had run out of their own personal money that they had been using to provide snacks, they did not have snacks that day and that change in his routine caused him to act out. So she went and got, with her sister, like \$300 on a MasterCard prepaid and gave it to them and said, "This is for snacks for the kids. Make sure that they have their snacks." So she got an award for that.

Bill Nagle: She also got, in that same award, they had kids who were fighting over beanbag chairs in the affected needs group. They had four kids in the unit, and only two beanbag chairs, and were constantly having fights. So she went out on Craigslist and got two extra beanbags.

Bill Nagle: So a lot of times officers really look at problem-solving policing, and these were recurring incidents, and two fairly simple things were done to alleviate those problems. So I think we need to make sure that we are all pushing for the same goal, and I think that is the same everywhere. Whether you are a school administrator or a faculty member or a parent or a child, if you are really looking at your future, you know, having that academic success is the goal of all of us. So we need to at times look at what is happening and what is the problem, and let us solve that problem.

Emily Morgan: Great, thank you so much. And finally, Daniel, any closing thoughts?

Daniel Kim: Sure. I mean, we are actually really encouraged that our initial scan of the data showed that law enforcement referrals are actually down by about a third. And I think what we are looking forward to being able to do in the process together is to be able to use the new data that is going to be coming out to be able to refine our analysis of where solutions are needed. We are also hopeful that as we – as we roll out our “Know Your Rights” campaign and put the student code of conduct and the matrix itself into the hands of students and parents as, “These are your rights, these are the rules for when schools should or should not be suspending or calling in the police.” That as we work with more families and their cases, that we will be able to bring to the table areas that we can work on together to come up with solutions for.

Daniel Kim: The last piece that I think we are really hopeful about, too, is to begin exploring some initial ideas for trainings that might work where, for instance, maybe some trainings targeted specifically to immigrant families, undocumented families who have very specific experiences that are shaped by policies, like Secure Communities and immigration enforcement around their interactions with law enforcement, and their feelings toward and perceptions of law enforcement. But, you know, these are all things that we are happy to explore and move forward together with the district and with the Police Department.

Emily Morgan: Great, thank you so much. And I want to thank Lisa, Michael, Commander Nagle, and Daniel for your presentations and this great discussion. I apologize that it was a little rushed, but we are really happy to have had all of your different perspec-[audio breaks up].

To Access the School Discipline Consensus Report

Emily Morgan: You will see in the PowerPoint presentation there is a link to the Consensus Report, as well as several resources. Let us see, several other resources that were mentioned on the Webinar.

For Assistance

Emily Morgan: In addition, folks you can turn to for assistance in this area.

Correctional Education Guidance Package

Emily Morgan: Also, if you have not already seen the Correctional Education Guidance Package released by the Departments of Ed and Justice, here is some more information. And this will be also a topic of discussion for the next Webinar in the series which will be held on January 28. So we encourage you to sign up for that Webinar.

Online Evaluation

Emily Morgan: Thank you, again, for joining us today. And please stick around to answer a few brief questions to help provide feedback on today's event so we can improve the rest of your Webinar series. Thank you, again.

[End.]