
Boston Public Schools



Safety and Security Strategic Support Team Overview

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January 18, 2023

Agenda



- **Overview**
 - **Operations Findings**
 - **Recommendations**
 - **Questions and Answers**
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Context



- ❖ Systemic Improvement Plan (SIP), jointly signed by the Mayor of Boston, representatives from BPS and accepted by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), outlines a series of initiatives and activities to support the physical, social, and emotional well-being of students to ensure a safe school environment.
 - ❖ On December 31, 2020, the Governor of Massachusetts signed into law “An Act Relative to Justice, Equity and Accountability in Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth” Bill S. 2963 (Police Reform Law). As a result of the law, there was a loss of police powers licensed by the BPD under Rule 400A for BPS.
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Key Findings - Commendations



- ❖ The team heard from multiple sources that Succeed Boston Bullying Intervention Program is a non-punitive program that is an effective tool for BPS (e.g., a bullying intervention specialist at each school).
 - ❖ The Chief of Safety Services is heavily engaged with the BPS community and actively seeks feedback on safety-related issues.
 - ❖ Safety Specialists appear to be dedicated to their work and have a passion for serving students in positive ways (e.g., Specialists attending court proceedings and advocating for students).
 - ❖ The BPD Police Commissioner has expressed a desire to be a part of the school safety solution, a willingness to interact with students, and a commitment to handle issues through diversion instead of prosecution.
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Operations Findings

Safety Services

Key Findings



- ❖ The time to select and onboard candidates for security positions was too long. As a result, candidates found other opportunities while waiting for a hiring decision by BPS.
 - ❖ Campus staff reported having to spend more time addressing safety concerns in the school, which took away the time they spent in the classroom (e.g., the change in role from police officer to safety specialist).
 - ❖ The Police Reform Bill caused some confusion around roles and responsibilities between BPD and BPS.
 - ❖ Not enough collaboration between IT and Facilities on technology needs
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Recommendations

Safety Services

Recommendations

- ❖ Encourage the Superintendent and BPD Commissioners to work collaboratively on developing and implementing a shared MOU/IGA that involves input from community stakeholders. At a minimum, the agreement should --
 - Prioritize opportunities for police to build positive relationships with students; and
 - Design a process for sharing information.

 - ❖ Create a focus group of appropriate stakeholders and administrators to consider if BPS should form an internal, sworn police department.

 - ❖ Require BPS Security Services to be more involved with the hiring process to help reduce the time it takes to select and onboard candidates.

 - ❖ Mandate that law enforcement records, as identified by FERPA, reside under the management and supervision of Safety Services.
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Recommendations



- ❖ Acquire an anonymous reporting system hotline or software product to encourage the reporting of inappropriate and anticipated dangerous behaviors.
 - ❖ Address low morale issues in the Safety Services department by encouraging team building, skip-level meetings, and professional development opportunities.
 - ❖ Prioritize roles and responsibilities in all department units to ensure that personnel focus on school-based safety and policing practices, not duties customarily associated with municipal or county policing functions. Recruit or promote mid-level management who will champion school-based policing approaches.
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Recommendations



- ❖ Partner with the Human Resources to --
 - Monitor turnover rates, establish exit interview protocols for department employees who voluntarily separate from BPS, and identify and track the causes for leaving to identify opportunities to make or recommend changes in policy;
 - Revisit, rewrite, update, and distribute job descriptions to reflect current roles and responsibilities to ensure accountability and performance;
 - Invite the Communications and Human Resources Departments to plan and staff ongoing recruitment opportunities and leverage mass communication and social media approaches so the district can successfully fill current vacancies.
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Thank You Questions and Answers
