



Equity Impact Statement: Reimagining Safety Services

Title: Reimagined BPS Office of Safety Services

Date: 1/12/2022

Was the [Racial Equity Planning Tool](#) used? Yes No

If yes, insert date(s) of REPT meetings and link to completed REPT here: _____

Did a member of the Division of Equity, Strategy and Opportunity Gaps review this statement? Yes No

BPS Racial Equity Planning Tool Sections	Summary/Rationale
<p>1. Proposal/Presentation & Impact <i>What are the proposal's/effort's desired outcomes, including in eliminating disparities? Who led this work/planning, and do they reflect BPS students' and families' group identities (key groups include individuals who are Black, Latinx, Asian, indigenous, immigrant, multilingual, and have Special Education experience)?</i></p>	<p>The primary role of Boston Public Schools (BPS) Safety Specialists is to serve as a visible, uniformed, and familiar resource to cultivate a secure learning environment in schools. The Office of Safety Services has transformed the work of the district's forty Safety Specialists since the passage of Massachusetts Reform Bill S. 2963 in December 2020. This reimagining is centered in our core values: providing a safe learning environment in every school and classroom by working hand in hand with school staff to foster positive relationships with youth, resolve conflicts through restorative justice, and protect all students. The Safety Services team partners with school administrators, designated safety teams, and all school-based staff to provide a safe and welcoming environment for the school community. The Safety Specialists serve as a proactive link between students and other school support staff, act as role models, and exercise appropriate safety and security procedures as necessary.</p> <p>Safety Specialists no longer wear police-style uniforms; instead, they wear a redesigned, more approachable uniform consisting of cargo pants and signature polo shirt that has received very positive feedback from students and staff. Similarly, our vehicles have been rebranded to focus on safety rather than policing.</p> <p>Safety Services aims to intentionally and diligently break down barriers by building relationships and facilitating communication between students, staff, and community stakeholders, including partner organizations, the Boston Police Department (BPD), and the Bureau of Community Engagement. Through our service, initiatives, and new professional development programming, we mitigate, deconstruct, and reverse any structural and cultural disconnect within our department and help close opportunity gaps.</p>
<p>2. Alignment with the Strategic Plan <i>How does the proposal/effort align with the district's strategic plan?</i></p>	<p>Safety Services' Reimagined Strategic Plan is aligned with each commitment in the district's Strategic Plan, particularly Amplifying All Voices. Input from a wide array of stakeholders gathered in over one hundred meetings, forums and listening sessions resulted in transparent decision-making and transformed desired outcomes.</p> <p>Safety Specialists will continue to fully engage teachers, other school staff, families, and students to ensure representation of their voices in school-level decisions regarding our roles, daily priorities, and deployment of staff.</p> <p>During several information sessions, additional written feedback was received through a platform in which lists of questions were generated and answered.</p>
<p>3. Analysis of Data <i>What data was analyzed? Was it disaggregated by race and other key groups? What did it show regarding disparities?</i></p>	<p>Historical data regarding incident reports and arrests by BPS School Police and BPD was evaluated disaggregated by race and gender. The data showed a higher number of arrests of Black students for minor criminal offenses. The sharing of student information with local and federal law enforcement agencies resulted in exposing students to the criminal justice system for minor criminal activity.</p>

<p>4. Stakeholder Engagement <i>Who was engaged (quantity, key groups, and roles) and how, and what did that yield? What did students/families most impacted by this proposal/effort say?</i></p>	<p>To reimagine Safety Services, we sought input and feedback from the following stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Equity Roundtable • BPS families (Citywide Parent Council, District English Learner Advisory Council, and Special Education Parent Advisory Council) • Boston Student Advisory Council • School Superintendents, Operational Leaders & Heads of School • Safety Services Community-Based Advisory Group • Boston School Police Patrolmens’ Association and Boston Police Superior Federation • BPD and Massachusetts Police Training Council • Partner organizations such as 3Point Foundation, Girls L.E.A.P., and Big Sisters <p>Students, families, and staff voiced their demands for change and expressed valid concerns regarding Safety Services policies and practices. Safety Services took responsibility to listen, and incorporate these concerns and demands as we reimaged our service.</p>
<p>5. Racial Equity Strategies <i>How does this proposal/effort mitigate disparities and increase racial and other equity? What are possible unintended consequences? What complementary strategies will further advance equity?</i></p>	<p>Safety Services incorporated what we heard to reimagine our work, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a Superintendent advisory group to update information sharing and report writing policies; • Modifying Specialists’ enforcement powers and /interaction protocols powers consistent with the Police Reform Bill; and • Redesigning uniforms and vehicles. <p>One unintended consequence of the changes has been the current challenge of the Office of Safety Services having enough employees to fill schools’ Safety Specialist staffing requests. As a result of the recently enacted Police Reform Bill S.2963 191st (2019 - 2020) and subsequent loss of police powers licensed by the BPD under Rule 400A, a number of staff members chose to resign, leaving staffing at half of the department’s original capacity.</p> <p>As we implement all of these changes, we will continually monitor the impacts and consider additional strategies to further advance racial equity.</p>
<p>6 Budget & Implementation <i>What are the budget impacts? How will implementation ensure all objectives, particularly equity-related objectives, are met? What are the group identities of the implementation team, and will they bring an equity lens?</i></p>	<p>The designated budget for Safety Services has not changed over the past two years (SY 2020-21, 2021-22).</p> <p>Chief of Safety Services/Interim Chief of Student Support Neva Coakley Grice (African-American) as well as the entire Safety Services team is leading implementation of the new plan.</p> <p>Currently, Safety Specialists are 53% Black, 27% Latinx, 20% White, 72% male, and 28% female. 90% are Boston residents, and a majority are BPS graduates. Recent new hires will soon increase the percentage of female Safety Specialists, and we will continue affirmative efforts to increase the representation of Specialists of Color, particularly Asian-Americans.</p>
<p>7. Accountability & Communication <i>How will impacts be assessed, documented and communicated to stakeholders? Who will be responsible?</i></p>	<p>We will publicly share progress through regularly scheduled information sessions and stakeholder meetings, school visits, communication with Operational Leaders, and annual reports to the Boston School Committee and the public.</p>