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School Safety & Security Staffing Report

Review of School Resource Officer and Armed Security Options

Prepared for the Pleasantdale School District 107 Board of Education

October 2026

Purpose. At the Board of Education's direction, the administration examined whether Pleasantdale should maintain its current school-safety staffing model or add a more dedicated armed professional presence in one or both schools. The review considered School Resource Officers (SROs), District-employed armed safety/security officers, third-party contracted armed security, and continuation of the District's current layered approach with the addition of a volunteer security team.

The investigation was designed as a decision document, not an advocacy paper. It considers operational capability, cost, legal requirements, liability, local practice, research, school climate, and alignment with Pleasantdale's existing safety philosophy.

Pleasantdale Safety Philosophy

"Harden our schools without making them feel hard."
This principle is used throughout the report as an evaluative lens. A safety measure should improve protection while preserving a welcoming, student-centered environment appropriate to the age of the children served.

Models examined

- Current/Enhanced Model: Continue the District's layered safety program and limited, shared SRO support without permanently assigning armed personnel to either school. Additionally, implement a volunteer security team.
- Dedicated SRO Model: Assign a sworn law-enforcement officer through a municipal police department or the Cook County Sheriff's Office.
- Armed Safety/Security Model: Employ or contract for an armed security professional whose role is limited primarily to protection, monitoring, deterrence, and emergency response.

Executive Summary

Pleasantdale already operates a layered school-safety system that includes controlled access, secure vestibules, visitor management, electronic access controls, surveillance, radios, panic-alert systems, emergency communications, reinforced door/window glazing, drills, crisis planning, and regular coordination with first responders. The District also conducts periodic independent security assessments and uses the findings to develop a multi-year improvement plan.

The 2025 West40 assessments organized security around four functions: deterrence, detection, delay, and response. Their recommendations focused primarily on access control, communications, emergency preparedness, first-responder coordination, signage, door security, equipment, and procedures. The assessments did not identify the absence of a permanently assigned armed officer as a specific deficiency.

Pleasantdale is also not starting from zero with law-enforcement support. The District currently receives limited SRO services at no charge. Burr Ridge Police Department provides shared SRO support at Pleasantdale Middle School, with Officer Harvey serving four Burr Ridge elementary/middle schools and generally spending about one day per week at Pleasantdale. Pleasantdale Elementary School receives limited SRO support through Officer Hawbenreiser from the Willow Springs Police Department.

The principal policy question is therefore not whether Pleasantdale should have any SRO presence. It is whether the District should move from limited, no-cost shared support to a dedicated armed presence at one or both schools, and whether that presence should be a sworn SRO or a security professional.

Option	Primary capability	Coverage potential	Known/estimated cost
Current limited SRO support	Periodic law-enforcement presence; existing layered safety program	PES and PMS, limited/shared	$0
Dedicated Burr Ridge SRO	Sworn officer; immediate police response when present	PMS only	Approx. $131,250 Year 1 + equipment/overtime (3.25% annual increase per CBA)
Dedicated Willow Springs SRO	Sworn officer; immediate police response when present	PES only	$155,916 Year 1 + overtime (3% annual increase per CBA)
Cook County Sheriff SRO	Sworn officer under one countywide partner	One shared officer or two dedicated officers	Current cost TBD (2018 $92,258 per officer)
District-employed armed security	On-site armed protective response; District-defined role	One or both schools	Current all-in cost TBD (Neighboring District $42,000 in 2024)
Third-party armed security	On-site armed protective response; vendor staffing/replacement	One or both schools	Vendor quote required (Between $35 and $70 per hour)
Volunteer Security Team	Visual surveillance during times of high vulnerability.	PES and PMS	$0

Preliminary overall finding

The available evidence does not establish that a permanently assigned SRO or armed guard will prevent school shootings. A trained armed professional physically present in a building does, however, add one capability Pleasantdale's other security layers cannot provide: immediate armed response before outside law enforcement arrives. The Board's decision is therefore principally a local risk-management, school-climate, and resource-allocation judgment.

Section 1. Board Decision Framework

At the Board of Education's direction, the administration examined whether the District should maintain its current safety staffing approach or add dedicated armed personnel. The review was intentionally structured to compare multiple models through the same criteria rather than assume in advance that any one approach is preferable.

Central decision question

Would the addition of a School Resource Officer or armed school security professional provide a meaningful improvement to student and staff safety beyond Pleasantdale's existing and planned safety measures, and, if so, which model would provide the greatest benefit with the fewest unintended consequences?

Evaluation criteria

- Incremental safety capability beyond the District's current layered system.
- Emergency response value and reliability of daily coverage.
- Fit with the developmental environment at PES and PMS.
- Alignment with Pleasantdale's goal to harden schools without making them feel hard.
- Role clarity, especially the separation of safety functions from routine student discipline.
- Legal, training, liability, insurance, and implementation requirements.
- Annual and long-term cost, including equipment, overtime, benefits, and replacement coverage.
- Available research regarding effectiveness, school climate, and unintended consequences.
- Consistency with local practice while recognizing that neighboring districts use varied models.

Section 2. Current Pleasantdale Safety & Security Framework

Pleasantdale's current model is layered rather than dependent on a single security measure. The District completes a formal safety audit approximately every four years, convenes a Safety Task Force that includes parents, staff, administrators, and students, and develops a multi-year safety plan for Board review. District officials also meet annually with Burr Ridge Police Department, Willow Springs Police Department, and Tri-State and Pleasantview Fire Protection Districts to review emergency plans.

The 2025 West40 physical-security assessments used the framework of deterrence, detection, delay, and response. Existing measures and current initiatives include:

- Locked buildings, controlled entry, secure vestibules, and visitor management.
- Electronic access-control cards and first-responder building access planning.
- Interior/exterior cameras, license-plate readers, and office video monitoring.
- Classroom phones, public-address/intercom systems, two-way radios, and emergency notification systems.

- Hard-mounted office panic buttons, wearable alert technology, and CrisisGo.
- Reinforced/shatter-resistant window/door glazing and other physical-hardening measures.
- Emergency drills, crisis plans, reunification planning, and staff training.
- Ongoing improvements to door numbering, signage, lighting, emergency supplies, AED placement, and rapid first-responder access.

Current SRO support: Pleasantdale currently receives limited SRO services at both schools without charge. Burr Ridge Police Department provides shared SRO services at PMS; Officer Harvey serves four Burr Ridge elementary/middle schools and is generally in the Pleasantdale building about one day per week. PES receives

limited SRO support through Willow Springs Police Department from Officer Hawbenriser who also serves at the Willow Springs District 108 schools. Neither arrangement provides a dedicated officer assigned exclusively to Pleasantdale.

Baseline finding

Pleasantdale currently maintains a layered school-safety program and is actively implementing improvements identified through an independent security assessment. The assessments do not, by themselves, establish that the absence of a permanently assigned armed professional constitutes a specific security deficiency.

Section 3. Increased Security Personnel Models

This section focuses on a variety of models that would allow for armed personnel in our schools. These options include local municipal police departments, regional county officers, and non-sworn law enforcement officer security guard options.

School Resource Officer (SRO) Model

A School Resource Officer is a sworn law-enforcement officer primarily assigned to a school or school district through an agreement with a law-enforcement agency. A Pleasantdale SRO would be expected to focus on safety, emergency preparedness and response, prevention, appropriate law-enforcement functions, and, where appropriate, positive participation in the school community. Routine student discipline would remain the responsibility of District staff and administrators.

3.1 Burr Ridge Police Department - Dedicated PMS SRO

Burr Ridge Police Department has indicated that it is willing to provide a dedicated SRO if Pleasantdale funds the position. The officer would be assigned to Pleasantdale Middle School during school days and would work approximately the same hours as teachers, 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., for roughly 40 weeks. On non-school days and during summer or school breaks, the officer would return to a regular Village patrol assignment.

- **Coverage:** PMS only. Burr Ridge jurisdiction does not extend to PES for this purpose.
- **Absence coverage:** No substitute would be provided when the assigned officer is sick, on vacation, in training, or otherwise absent.
- **Emergency redeployment:** The officer could be temporarily pulled from PMS for a significant police emergency elsewhere in the Village.
- **After-hours events:** Extracurricular and evening coverage would be billed separately as overtime.
- **Selection:** Burr Ridge Police Department would select the officer.
- **Discipline:** The officer would not be used for routine student discipline.

- **Cost:** Preliminary estimate is 75% of approximately $175,000 in total compensation, or about $131,250 in Year 1, with an estimated 3.25% annual increase. Uniform/equipment and overtime costs remain additional or undetermined.
- **Length of Agreement:** Two-year minimum agreement

Year	Estimated District cost (Salary/Benefits)
Year 1	$131,250
Year 2	$135,516
Year 3	$139,920
Year 4	$144,467
Year 5	$149,162
5-year total	$700,315

Projection assumes 3.25% annual growth and does not include currently unknown equipment, uniform, or overtime costs.

3.2 Willow Springs Police Department - Dedicated PES SRO

Willow Springs Police Department has indicated that it is willing to provide a dedicated SRO if Pleasantdale funds the position. The officer would be assigned to Pleasantdale Elementary School during school days and would work approximately the same hours as teachers, 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., for roughly 40 weeks. On non-school days or school breaks, the officer would return to a regular Village patrol assignment. The district would have to determine if summer school coverage is required.

- **Coverage:** PES only. Willow Springs jurisdiction does not extend to PMS for this purpose.
- **Absence coverage:** No substitute would be provided when the assigned officer is sick, on vacation, in training, or otherwise absent.
- **Emergency redeployment:** The officer could be temporarily pulled from PMS for a significant police emergency elsewhere in the Village.
- **After-hours events:** Extracurricular and evening coverage would be billed separately as overtime.
- **Selection:** Willow Springs Police Department would select the officer.
- **Discipline:** The officer would not be used for routine student discipline.
- **Cost:** Preliminary estimate is $155,916 in total compensation, benefits, training, and equipment, with an estimated 3% annual increase. Overtime ($64.29/hour with a 3% annual increase) remains additional.
- **Length of Agreement:** Four-year minimum agreement

Year	Estimated District cost
Year 1	$155,916 (Salary/Benefits/Training/Equipment/Etc.)
Year 2	$142,310 (Salary/Benefits)
Year 3	$146,579 (Salary/Benefits)

Year	Estimated District cost
Year 4	$150,976 (Salary/Benefits)
Year 5	$156,405 (Salary/Benefits)
5-year total	$752,186

3.3 Cook County Sheriff's Office - Districtwide Option

A Cook County Sheriff's Office partnership could avoid the municipal jurisdictional limitations that affect a Burr Ridge/Willow Springs model because both schools are in Cook County. The staffing level could be negotiated through an intergovernmental agreement. Pleasantdale could choose one officer who divides time between PES and PMS or two officers, with one dedicated to each building.

A 2018 Proviso Township High School District 209 agreement with Cook County provides a useful historical model. That agreement kept the officer under Sheriff's Office supervision, separated school discipline from law-enforcement responsibilities, included a mechanism for the school district to raise officer-fit concerns, and used a 75% school-district cost-sharing formula. The historical cost was approximately $92,258 per officer for nine months of service in 2018; a current Pleasantdale cost would require an updated County estimate.

Armed Safety/Security Officer Model

For purposes of this report, an armed safety/security officer would have a narrower role than an SRO. The position would be focused on protection, monitoring, deterrence, emergency preparedness, and response. The officer would not participate in routine student discipline, relationship-building programming, classroom instruction, cafeteria supervision, or routine student-facing responsibilities.

The District's intent would be to add a protective capability without creating an additional student-discipline or law-enforcement presence inside the educational program.

3.4 District-employed armed safety/security officer

Riverside-Brookfield High School District 208 provides a nearby example of direct District employment. Its 2024 posting for a Deputy School Safety & Security Officer (Armed) required an active off-duty or retired law-enforcement professional authorized to carry a firearm on school grounds and preferred SRO or equivalent training. The posting listed a $42,000 base salary for 180 eight-hour days, with additional compensation for event supervision.

For Pleasantdale, the potential advantages of direct employment would include greater control over selection, supervision, evaluation, assignment, appearance, and role definition. The trade-offs include greater employer responsibility for training oversight, benefits, workers' compensation, insurance, equipment, and direct liability exposure. The all-in Pleasantdale cost is not yet known. This position may also be subject to bargaining with our Union, as it does not meet the requirements for exemption from union membership.

3.5 Third-party contracted armed security

A second pathway is to contract with a licensed private-security provider for one or more armed officers. Chicagoland firms provide armed institutional and school-security services, including personnel with prior law-enforcement experience. A contract could be written to require prior law-enforcement experience, annual firearms qualification, active-threat training, first aid/CPR/AED, District-specific emergency training, minimum insurance limits, background screening, defined post orders, and immediate replacement of any officer the District determines is not an appropriate fit.

A significant potential operational advantage is that Pleasantdale could contract for coverage rather than for one particular employee. The vendor could be required to provide a qualified replacement when the regularly assigned officer is unavailable. This differs from the preliminary SRO models, under which the position would be vacant when the assigned officer is absent.

Current local vendor pricing would need to be obtained before a final financial comparison. The District should evaluate hourly rate, minimum hours, supervision, equipment, insurance, substitute coverage, event rates, and escalation provisions rather than compare hourly rate alone.

3.6 Off-duty safety team

As part of its review, District Administration contacted Community Consolidated School District 181 (Hinsdale) to learn more about its school-safety staffing model. District 181 uses a team of police officers who work paid school-day safety shifts outside of their regular law-enforcement assignments.

How the model operates

- D181 uses four Safety Officers in its standard staffing model. Two officers are assigned to the District's two middle schools for the full school day, while two additional officers rotate among the elementary schools according to a published schedule.
- The model includes a contingency plan for staffing shortages that prioritizes coverage at the middle schools. If three officers are available, two remain assigned to the middle schools while one covers the elementary schools. If two officers are available, one covers both middle schools and one covers the elementary schools. If only one officer is available, that officer visits all District schools during the day.
- Officer schedules may be fixed, rotating, or split depending on school hours, peak activity periods, building needs, and officer availability.

Role of the officer

- D181 describes the primary objective of its Safety Officers as presence and surveillance. Officers monitor school grounds and security cameras, identify potential safety concerns, report incidents, and maintain communication with school administrators and District leadership.
- D181 explicitly distinguishes Safety Officers from traditional SROs. Safety Officers are not responsible for student discipline, routine student conflicts, or direct student supervision. Their intervention role is focused primarily on emergencies, threats of violence, and other significant safety concerns.
- Officers wear District-identified clothing and name badges, use two-way radios and other District-provided equipment, and carry concealed firearms. Officers check in with the building administrator upon arrival and report through a District-level supervisor.

Cost Benchmark

D181 identifies a school-day rate of $375 per officer for a 7.5-hour shift ($50 per hour). Using 177 student-attendance days, the estimated annual cost is $66,375 per officer.

Configuration	Rate
One Safety Officer	$66,375
Two Safety Officers	$132,750

Potential Challenges

- Officer availability and scheduling. The District would need to identify a sufficient pool of qualified police officers willing and available to work school-day assignments. Consistency of assignments, substitute coverage, and coordination among participating law-enforcement agencies would also need to be addressed.
- District coordination. D181 has assigned District personnel to coordinate officer schedules and work with participating officers and police departments. As a significantly smaller district, Pleasantdale does not currently have a staff member with comparable capacity to manage this function.
- Local police staffing. Burr Ridge and Willow Springs both operate with relatively limited police staffing. This may reduce the number of officers available to work recurring off-duty school assignments and could affect the reliability of the model.

3.7 Additional Intervention: Volunteer Parent Security Force

In addition to the options outlined above, the District could consider a lower-cost, less restrictive approach through the development of a Volunteer Parent Security Force.

Under this model, trained parent volunteers would sign up for designated security shifts and serve as an additional layer of supervision, observation, and detection during higher-vulnerability times of the school day, such as arrival, dismissal, recess, and other periods when students are outdoors or moving throughout the campus.

Volunteers would receive District-provided training and would be equipped with a clearly identified Volunteer Security sweatshirt, a two-way radio, and a Centegix card connected to the District's emergency response system and 911.

The primary responsibility of volunteers would be to serve as additional "eyes and ears" for the school by monitoring activity, identifying potential concerns, and quickly communicating with school personnel or emergency responders when necessary. Volunteers would not be responsible for student discipline, law enforcement, or physically intervening in security incidents.

This model could provide an additional layer of visibility and detection while also creating another avenue for parents to support and engage with their child's school community.

Section 4. Illinois Legal, Policy, Liability & Insurance Framework

This section identifies the principal legal and risk-management considerations associated with each model. It is intended as a policy framework, not legal advice.

4.1 SRO legal framework

Illinois School Code Section 105 ILCS 5/10-20.68 defines an SRO as a law-enforcement officer primarily assigned to a school or district under a memorandum of understanding with a local law-enforcement agency. Beginning July 1, 2026, an MOU is required for a district using an SRO. The MOU must address officer roles and responsibilities, required training or waiver procedures, training for interactions with students with disabilities, limits on ticketing/citations, data collection/reporting, and regular program review.

The Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board provides an SRO course of at least 40 hours covering juvenile-officer duties, the school environment and youth communication, and rapid-response tactics/scenario training. Pleasantdale should also include explicit language keeping routine school discipline with educators and administrators.

4.2 Armed security legal structure

An armed security officer is not a police officer and does not possess general police powers. Third-party providers and armed personnel must comply with applicable Illinois private-security licensing and firearms requirements. A private contractor should be required to document all company and individual credentials before assignment.

Direct District employment appears possible based on Illinois school-district practice, but the precise statutory mechanism authorizing a directly employed public-school security officer to carry a firearm on school property should be confirmed by District counsel before this model is treated as implementation-ready.

4.3 Liability and insurance

The employment structure changes where primary responsibility sits, but no option eliminates District exposure. An SRO remains an employee of the police or sheriff's agency; a contracted guard remains an employee of the vendor; a directly employed guard is a District employee. Any agreement should address supervision, indemnification, insurance, workers' compensation, vehicle liability, use-of-force claims, civil-rights claims, incident reporting, and removal/reassignment procedures.

Issue	SRO	Third-party armed security	District-employed armed security	Volunteer Security
Employer	Police/Sheriff agency	Security vendor	Pleasantdale	None
Police authority	Yes	Generally no	Generally no	None
Core agreement	MOU/IGA	Service contract	Employment policies/job description	Volunteer Job Description
Student discipline	No under Pleasantdale model	No	No	No
Replacement staffing	Depends on IGA	Can be guaranteed	District responsibility	District responsibility
Direct District employer exposure	Lower	Lower than direct employment	Highest	Lower
Insurance review	Required	Required	Required - especially important	Required

Caution: No armed staffing model should be implemented until District counsel and the District's insurer have confirmed the legal structure, coverage requirements, recommended indemnification language, minimum training standards, and any necessary Board policy changes.

Section 5. Comparable District Practices and Costs

In September 2026, Pleasantdale surveyed superintendents in 13 nearby elementary districts regarding SRO and security staffing. The survey provides current, superintendent-reported information for the 2026-27 school year.

District	FT SRO	PT SRO	Armed security	DARE
Butler 53	No	No	Yes	Yes
Darien 61	No	No	No	Yes
Gower 62	No	No	No	Yes
Westchester 92.5	Yes	No	No	No
Komarek 94	No	No	No	No
Brookfield/LP 95	No	No	No	No
Riverside 96	No	No	No	Yes
Western Springs 101	No	No	No	No
LaGrange 102	No	No	No	No
Lyons 103	No	Yes	No	No
South LaGrange 105	No	No	No	Yes
Highlands 106	No	No	No	No
Pleasantdale 107*	No	No	No	Yes

*Pleasantdale receives limited no-cost SRO support at both schools but does not have a full-time or part-time SRO assigned exclusively to the District.

Only three of the 13 surveyed districts reported a dedicated SRO or armed-security staffing model: Westchester 92.5 (full-time SRO), Lyons 103 (part-time SRO), and Butler 53 (armed security). The remaining ten did not report a dedicated full-time/part-time SRO or armed/unarmed security position.

Selected cost benchmarks

District/model	Approx. annual District cost	Notes
Pleasantdale current model	$0	Limited shared SRO support at PES and PMS
Westchester 92.5 full-time SRO	Approx. $40,000	Cost-sharing agreement with Village of Westchester and police services are also provided to the private schools in town.
Lyons 103 part-time SRO	$80,000	10-month part-time officer

District/model	Approx. annual District cost	Notes
Butler 53 armed auxiliary officers	$107,691.45	Two auxiliary officers; 2026-27; 3.5% annual increase

The local data demonstrate that there is no single "SRO cost." District expense depends heavily on municipal cost-sharing, staffing model, number of officers, and what costs are included in the agreement.

Section 6. Research, Effectiveness and School Climate

The research base does not support a simple conclusion that armed personnel either "work" or "do not work." The evidence is strongest when the question is narrowed to specific outcomes such as emergency-response capability, disciplinary referrals, student experience, or school climate.

6.1 Prevention and school shootings

Available research does not establish that the presence of an SRO or armed guard reliably prevents school shootings. A 2021 cross-sectional study of 133 school shootings and attempted shootings from 1980-2019 found no significant reduction in injuries associated with an armed guard on scene. The study also reported higher fatalities in incidents with armed guards, but the authors emphasized important limitations, including observational design, reliance on public records, and the inability to measure attacks that may have been deterred and therefore never occurred. The study should not be interpreted as proving that armed personnel cause higher casualties.

6.2 Immediate response capability

Regardless of the limits of causal research, an armed professional physically present in a building provides a capability that cameras, locks, window film, panic systems, and communication tools do not: an armed response can begin before outside law enforcement arrives. This is the strongest operational distinction between the current model and a dedicated armed-presence model.

6.3 Discipline and law-enforcement involvement

Research on school policing has identified concerns that police presence can increase law-enforcement involvement in student behavior and, in some settings, exclusionary discipline. That evidence supports Pleasantdale's proposed boundary that an SRO would not be used as an arm of routine school discipline. The armed-security model is even narrower and would not include routine student interaction or disciplinary responsibilities.

6.4 School climate

A January 2026 National Institute of Justice-sponsored study compared 60 California schools in districts that removed police with 120 matched schools in districts that retained police. Schools removing police reported improved caring relationships with staff and meaningful student participation, while the study did not find increases in violence victimization, bullying/harassment, substance use, delinquency, or suspensions during the study period. Interviews also showed that districts retaining police valued quicker response and positive officer relationships but emphasized the importance of clear protocols, mental-health response, and appropriate police utilization.

The lesson for Pleasantdale is not that either model is universally superior. Rather, the quality of the overall safety system and the clarity with which an officer is integrated into that system matter substantially.

6.5 Developmental differences between PES and PMS

Much of the SRO research focuses on middle and high schools. Pleasantdale should therefore be cautious about applying findings directly to a PreK-4 setting. At PMS, an SRO may have more opportunity to perform a broader prevention and school-community role. At PES, the policy question may be more narrowly focused on whether the protective benefit of a permanent armed adult justifies introducing that visible presence into an early-childhood and elementary environment.

Research finding

The evidence does not establish that a permanently assigned armed professional prevents school shootings. It does support treating any armed presence as one layer within a broader system - not as a substitute for threat assessment, student supports, access control, communications, training, or first-responder coordination.

Section 7. Opportunity Cost and Resource Allocation

Adding dedicated armed personnel would create a recurring financial commitment. Depending on the selected model and staffing level, that commitment could range from tens of thousands of dollars to well over $100,000 per officer annually.

The Board may therefore wish to consider two related questions: Would the investment improve safety? and Would it improve safety more than other uses of the same resources?

Potential alternative investments could include additional access-control improvements, communication and first-responder notification systems, radios and monitoring technology, physical-security improvements, active-incident exercises, threat-assessment resources, mental-health/student-support personnel, or other priorities in the District's multi-year safety plan.

These alternatives do not buy the same capability. Cameras improve detection; reinforced doors improve delay; student supports may improve prevention. None provides the same immediate armed-response capability as a trained officer physically present in the building. Conversely, an armed officer does not replace prevention, communication, access control, or mental-health supports. The comparison is therefore a resource-allocation judgment, not simply a price comparison.

Section 8. Comparative Analysis

Criterion	Current / Enhanced Model	Dedicated SRO	Armed Security Officer	Volunteer Security
Immediate armed response in building	No dedicated on-site capability	Yes, when officer is present	Yes, when officer is present	No
General police authority	Responding police only	Yes	Generally no	No
Routine student discipline	District staff	District staff under proposed model	District staff	No
Routine student interaction	Normal school staff; limited SRO contact	Potentially significant depending on role	Minimal / not expected	Minimal / Not expected

Criterion	Current / Enhanced Model	Dedicated SRO	Armed Security Officer	Volunteer Security
Coverage flexibility	Existing shared/periodic support	Depends on agency and staffing level	Can be one or both buildings	Can be one or both building
Replacement when assigned person absent	N/A	Depends on IGA; Burr Ridge proposal provides none	Contract can require replacement; direct employment cannot guarantee it	N/A
District control over selection/role	High over school operations	Shared with law-enforcement agency	Highest if direct; contractually defined if vendor	Highest
Jurisdiction issue	Managed through current local agencies	Municipal option constrained; Cook County can cover both	No municipal jurisdiction constraint for security role	N/A
Known Pleasantdale cost	No added staffing cost	Burr Ridge approx. $131,250 Year 1; County TBD	Direct/vendor all-in cost TBD	No added staffing cost
Research on school climate	No added armed presence	Mixed; more evidence available	Limited direct research for narrowly defined model	None
Alignment with "harden without feeling hard"	Strongest continuity with current environment	Depends heavily on officer, role, visibility, and building	Can be designed as lower-interaction protective presence	Strongest continuity with current environment

Section 9. Administrative Findings

- Pleasantdale has a mature, layered safety program. Any armed staffing model would be an additional layer rather than a replacement for existing safety systems.
- The District receives limited SRO services at both schools without charge. The policy question is whether to expand from shared/periodic support to dedicated coverage.
- A dedicated armed professional adds a real capability: immediate armed response when the individual is physically present. Research does not establish that this capability prevents school shootings.
- PES and PMS do not necessarily require the same solution. Developmental setting, jurisdiction, desired role, and school climate may support different approaches by building.
- The Burr Ridge SRO option is relatively well-defined. It would provide a dedicated sworn officer at PMS for approximately $131,250 in Year 1, plus additional costs, but would not provide substitute coverage and would not serve PES.
- The Willow Springs SRO option is relatively well-defined. It would provide a dedicated sworn officer at PES for approximately $155,000 in Year 1, but would not provide substitute coverage and would not serve PMS.
- The Cook County Sheriff option offers the greatest SRO staffing flexibility. The District could negotiate for one shared officer or two dedicated officers across both schools, but current pricing must be obtained. (Cost was $92,258 in 2018).
- An armed-security model can be more narrowly protective than an SRO model. Pleasantdale would not use the position for discipline, relationship-building, or routine student interaction.
- Third-party armed security may offer a coverage advantage. A contract can require qualified replacement personnel when the regular officer is absent.

- Local practice is mixed. Only three of 13 surveyed neighboring elementary districts reported a dedicated SRO or armed-security staffing model, while ten did not.
- Legal and insurance review is essential. Any implementation should follow confirmation from District counsel and the District's insurer regarding authority, coverage, indemnification, training, and policy requirements.

Section 10. Options for Board Consideration

Option	Description	Primary tradeoff
A. Maintain current model	Continue limited no-cost SRO support at both schools and implement the District's existing multi-year safety plan.	No new dedicated on-site armed response capability.
B. Dedicated PMS SRO	Contract with Burr Ridge Police Department for a dedicated SRO at PMS.	Adds sworn police capability at PMS only; approx. $131,250 Year 1 plus added costs.
C. Dedicated PES SRO	Contract with Willow Springs Police Department for a dedicated SRO at PES	Adds sworn police capability at PES only; approx. $155,000 Year 1..
D. Cook County SRO - one officer	Use one Sheriff's Office SRO divided between PES and PMS.	Districtwide program, but officer cannot be physically present at both schools at once.
E. Cook County SRO - two officers	Assign one Sheriff's Office SRO to each school.	Most complete law-enforcement coverage; likely highest recurring SRO cost.
F. District-employed armed security	Employ one or two qualified armed safety/security officers with a narrowly defined protective role.	High District control but greatest direct employer/liability responsibility.
G. Third-party armed security	Contract for one or two armed security officers with guaranteed staffing requirements.	Potentially flexible and reliable coverage; vendor quality, contract terms, and current pricing are critical.
H. Volunteer Security Team	Parents volunteer to provide supervision and detection throughout the campus at high vulnerability times.	This option does not include armed personnel. This model is dependant on the district being able to secure volunteers.

Decision point for the Board

The central choice is whether the incremental value of a dedicated armed presence - particularly immediate armed response - is sufficient to justify the financial cost, school-climate implications, and implementation responsibilities when compared with Pleasantdale's existing layered safety system and other potential safety investments.

Section 11. Discussion Questions

1. Which specific safety capability does the Board believe Pleasantdale most needs to strengthen beyond the District's existing layered safety system?
2. Should PES and PMS use the same safety staffing model, or do the developmental setting, jurisdiction, and school climate of each building support different approaches?

3. How much value does the Board place on having an armed responder physically present in a school compared with maintaining the District's current limited, no-cost SRO support and layered security measures?
4. Which option best aligns with Pleasantdale's goal to "harden our schools without making them feel hard," while maintaining clear boundaries around student discipline and student interaction?
5. What level of recurring cost, liability, staffing reliability, and operational responsibility is the Board comfortable assuming, and what additional information would be needed before selecting a preferred option?

Appendix A - Cost Notes and Known Assumptions

Burr Ridge dedicated SRO. Preliminary figures are based on the Superintendent's discussion with the Burr Ridge Police Chief. The District would pay approximately 75% of an estimated $175,000 total compensation package. The estimate is not a formal quote and does not yet include all equipment, uniform, or overtime costs.

Westchester 92.5. District cost is approximately $35,000 annually under its Village of Westchester SRO agreement. This demonstrates that municipal cost-sharing can materially affect the school district's cost of a full-time SRO.

Lyons 103. District cost is approximately $80,000 annually for a 10-month part-time SRO arrangement.

Butler 53. The 2026-27 agreement with Oak Brook provides two auxiliary police officers for $107,691.45 annually, increasing 3.5% per year. This is a useful local cost comparator, but the model is not directly available to Pleasantdale because Burr Ridge and Willow Springs do not maintain auxiliary officer programs.

Riverside-Brookfield 208. The 2024 armed security job posting listed a $42,000 base salary for 180 eight-hour days. This is a salary benchmark, not an all-in District cost.

Cook County Sheriff and private security. Current Pleasantdale-specific pricing remains to be determined. The final report should clearly distinguish verified costs, preliminary estimates, and planning assumptions.

Appendix B - Sources Reviewed

- Pleasantdale School District 107: 2025 West40 Physical Security Assessments for Pleasantdale Elementary School and Pleasantdale Middle School; February 18, 2026 Safety Report and multi-year safety plan; September 2026 superintendent survey of comparable districts; administrative discussions with Burr Ridge Police Department; existing Willow Springs and Burr Ridge SRO support practices.
- Local agreements/examples: Proviso Township High School District 209/Cook County Sheriff 2018 School/Community Liaison Officer IGA; Butler School District 53/Village of Oak Brook 2026 amendment; Riverside-Brookfield High School District 208 Deputy School Safety & Security Officer (Armed) job description.
- Illinois law: 105 ILCS 5/10-20.68 (School Resource Officer); 50 ILCS 705/10.22 (SRO training framework); applicable provisions of the Illinois Criminal Code, Concealed Carry Act, and Private Detective/Private Security statutory framework.
- Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board: School Resource Officer Course and related program guidance.
- National Institute of Justice: The Impact of School Police Reform on Student Safety and School Experiences: Final Summary Report (January 2026), and related school-policing research.

- Peer-reviewed research: Peterson, Densley & Erickson, "Presence of Armed School Officials and Fatal and Nonfatal Gunshot Injuries During Mass School Shootings, United States, 1980-2019," JAMA Network Open (2021).

Web-based legal and research sources were reviewed in September 2026. Legal conclusions should be confirmed by District counsel before implementation.