

City of St. Louis Park – St. Louis Park School District School Safety Contract Proposal

SRO Legislative Changes Recap

In August 2023, just before the start of the 2023-2024 school year, broad awareness of changes in Minnesota Statutes 121A, 121A.58, and 121A.582 came to be known. The primary elements of concern from these legislative updates centered on the classification of School Resource Officers (SRO) as agents of the school (district) and effectively created a second use-of-force standard for officers; one for officers working under the school resource officer designation, and all others. After extensive consultation with stakeholders, the city's civil and criminal attorneys, and the St. Louis Park School District, the St. Louis Park Police Department transitioned to the Juvenile Response Officer (JRO) model for the 2023-2024 school year. The JRO response model expanded the traditional school support work that existed under the SRO model from primarily supporting the high school and middle school, to a broader set of work that included support to the elementary and private schools as well. Juvenile-related investigative work and other activities were also expanded under the JRO model. Although the JRO model was successful in so many ways, including the continued engagement with staff and students at the primary locations, the intention was always to revert back to the SRO model when the anticipated statutory remedies were made to maximize engagement opportunities where it matters the most.

In March 2024, statutory updates were made to clarify the role of SROs in schools along with placing peace officer use-of-force standards under a single umbrella. The contractually mandated duties of an SRO with a school district must include the officer:

- fostering a positive school climate through relationship-building and open communication
- protecting students, staff, and visitors to the school grounds from criminal activity
- serving as a liaison from law enforcement to school officials
- provide advice on safety drills
- identifying vulnerabilities in school facilities and safety protocols
- educating and advising students and staff on law enforcement topics
- enforcement of criminal laws

Additionally, the statute updates added increased training requirements for an SRO as well as department policy/best practices that will be identified by the POST Board. Nothing in the legislative requirements is meant to limit the incorporation of additional duties performed in a school district contract with a law enforcement agency.

Draft Contractual Elements

Philosophy of work:

- The city and police department are guided by the philosophy that goes beyond the SROs primary responsibility to school and community safety, supporting the development and

learning of youth in St. Louis Park is best served when solutions outside of juvenile entry into the criminal justice system are sought when possible.

Services provided:

- An SRO will be assigned by the St. Louis Park Police Department to the St. Louis Park High School (1) and the St. Louis Park Middle School (1). The SROs will be available to respond to, counsel, and support the relevant positional needs of the other public schools in the district including their staff, but they will primarily work from and support the designated schools identified in this agreement.
- The school district will work in partnership with the police department to achieve school safety goals including annual training/learning for staff to maintain readiness and understanding for a response to a school/community safety threat. Each agency will be responsible for the costs associated with their respective staff and facilities related to school safety planning and emergency operations planning that may arise that are not otherwise explicitly identified in this agreement.
- SROs and other police department staff will provide input to school/district staff as it relates to matters of building, campus, and occupant safety.
- Additional duty events that require the presence of one or more police officers will be paid for by the school district at the existing overtime rate including benefits generally established by the St. Louis Park Police Department. These events include but are not limited to school sports activities, homecoming dances, community events occurring on school district property, and graduation.

Standards of work:

- Support district policies and procedures but the enforcement is generally the responsibility of school and district staff unless there is a clear nexus to school/student/staff safety that necessitates the intervention of an SRO. The training of school staff regarding the role of the SRO is the responsibility of the school/district including any costs associated with that effort.
- SRO training, equipment, uniforms, tactics, and procedures as guided by police department policy and state statute and attached to their overarching responsibilities as sworn police officers in the State of Minnesota, fall under the sole authority and responsibility of the St. Louis Park Police Department.
- Student Discipline - The SRO(s) will not recommend, determine, or provide input on student(s) disciplined by the School. Unless requested by the school administration or other personnel, the SRO(s) is not responsible for responding to any situation that other school personnel can adequately handle. The Parties understand and agree incidents such as disorderly conduct, bullying, cyberbullying, disruption of school assembly or activities, profanity, dress code, and fighting that does not involve physical injury or a weapon, shall be considered school discipline issues to be handled by other school officials unless the presence of the SRO(s) is necessary to protect the physical safety of students, school personnel, or the public. Nothing in this agreement prevents or limits the authority of the

SRO(s) to exercise his or her duties as a law enforcement officer regardless of whether the exercise of those duties occurs on or off school grounds.

Payment/contract term:

- The city requests a cost-share model of 50% of the total cost (\$463,150 in 2024).

Expense breakdown:

Resource	Services provided	Total cost
Two School Resource Officers	Embedded response to, counsel for, and support of the relevant positional needs of the other public schools in the district including their staff.	\$333,000
Sergent oversight	Daily supervision of work and issues at the school, tracking additional duty requests for school events, school safety planning work, tracking and scheduling training, engagement with school staff, planning, juvenile outreach functions, and coordinating school safety threats onsite or remotely including intelligence briefings and crime analysis functions. An estimated 40% of the sergeant's time is spent on SRO-related and juvenile response work	\$72,400
Lieutenant oversight	Higher level supervision of program and staff, estimated to be at least 5% of the position during a typical year. The corresponding financial commitment does not include costs associated with the chief, deputy chief, or other city leadership that supports this work.	\$10,750
Crime analysis	This work links cases and incidents across the metro, generates intelligence bulletins, data mines social media and other systems to provide threat assessments and awareness, serves as the primary link to the Hennepin County youth early intervention program, assesses known or suspected threats from SROs and school staff, coordinates information and intelligence collection with local law enforcement and crime analysis networks. The volume and complexity of this work continues to grow. An estimated 20% of the crime analyst's work supports this area.	\$24,000
Vehicles	Two squads dedicated primarily to the SRO function. (cost of one squad fully outfitted current: \$70,000); useful life: 6 years; straight-line depreciation for an annual vehicle cost.	\$24,000
Equipment and training	These costs run in the thousands of dollars annually per officer. This becomes quite variable and is being excluded from specifically identifying a dollar amount.	
Total projected 2024-2025 school year cost		\$463,150
Cost-share request 50%		\$231,500

School Resource Officer Contract Information

City	What schools are the SRO's in	Contract Y or N	School District Support	Percentage position funded by schools
Bloomington x	3 Total: 2 different HS 1 covers MS	Y-5 year	Yes	62% not to exceed \$300,000
Brooklyn Park x	6 Total	Y-1 year	Yes	67%
Champlain x	1 Total: in the MS	Y-Yearly	Yes	75% of officer salary and benefits (but have not kept)
Crystal x	1 JRO	N	No	N/A
Eden Prairie x	4 Total: 2 in HS 1 MS 1 in other schools may add 5th	N	Yes	checking MOU 50%
Edina x	2 Total: 1 in HS 1 in MS	Y-Yearly	Yes	60% of actual cost billed at the end of the year
Maple Grove x	5 Total: 1MGHS, 1 MGMS, 1-OHS, 1-OMS. 1 floater	Y- 3year	Yes	66% of 10 year salary 50/50 on benefits \$78,575.10 per officer
Minnetonka x	2 Total: 2 in high school	Y-Yearly	Yes	100%
Plymouth x	7 Total: 4 for Wayzata 3 for Robbinsdale	Y-2 to 3 Years	Yes	Schools pay a daily rate varies by school dist.
Richfield x	No SRO's			