DISTRICT OFFICES
Tom Flanagan, Superintendent
150 Colchester Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401
802-865-5332
tflanagan@bsdvt.org

REPORT OF THE BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL SAFETY TASK FORCE

Submitted to Superintendent Tom Flanagan

February 15, 2021

TASK FORCE MEMBERS[1]

EMMA KOURI · BSD PARENT, TASK FORCE CHAIR

LAMIJA SEMIC · STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE, TASK FORCE CO-CHAIR

ADEN HAJI · BSD COMMISSIONER

BARBARA PRINE · VERMONT LEGAL AID

BRIAN DIFRANCO · LEADER OF SRO PROGRAM, BPD

MICHAEL HENRY · SRO, BPD

JAMES KIEFER · EMS PRINCIPAL

ELI PINE · STUDENT & COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE

RACHEL JOLLY · BURLINGTON COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER

ZORAYA HIGHTOWER · BURLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

SPARKS · DIRECTOR OF EQUITY AND SAFE INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

SPECIAL GUESTS & CONTRIBUTORS

KELLY AHRENS · BURLINGTON COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER

LEVAR BARRINO · BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

JOSH MEYER · BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

LISA BEDINGER · SOUTH BURLINGTON COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER

PRINCIPALS GREEN, SCHEIDT, KELLEY & RILEY · BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

---

[1] *Resigned task force members:* Francika Gurung (Student Representative); Mariam Mwibeleca (Student Representative); Casey Provost (Community Representative)

SCOPE OF WORK

This task force was created upon recommendation by the Burlington Board of School Commissioners. The objective of this task force is to examine the role of School Resource Officers (SRO) and develop recommendations to further the District's policy goals in implementing all elements of restorative practices, as part of the district priorities of equity and inclusive schools.

This section of the task force scope of work relates to number one of six goals in the BSD 2020-2021 Strategic Goals, as indicated below.

2020-21 Strategic Goals
1. Our schools are **restorative and equitable communities.**
    o Schools suspend African American students, students with disabilities, and students who qualify for FRL less frequently.
    o Staff report increased use of restorative practices.

THE SPECIFIC TASKS TO BE COMPLETED INCLUDE:

1. Identify and document the original intention of the SRO presence in the schools, and the functions SROs perform in the schools.
2. Determine whether any of these functions must be performed by uniformed law enforcement officials.
3. Include options for alternative approaches which reinforce a restorative model for all of Burlington's students/youth during and outside of school hours.
4. Ensure the safety of all Burlington's students/youth during and outside of school hours using a restorative practice model that eliminates the traumatizing effects associated with weapons, uniforms, and a police presence communicated by some of the district's students and community members.

MEETING FREQUENCY:

The task force met weekly from 5-7PM and conducted sixteen meetings in total on the following dates: October 19 & 28; November 4, 11, 18, & 25; December 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30; January 6, 13, 20, & 27; and February 3.

MILESTONES:

The main milestones of this Task Force were to submit a progress report by the 1st of December 2020 and a final report with recommendations by the 15th of February 2021.

TASK 1

IDENTIFY AND DOCUMENT THE ORIGINAL INTENTION OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER PRESENCE IN THE SCHOOLS, AND THE FUNCTIONS SROS PERFORM IN THE SCHOOLS.

It is impossible to validate the original intent of having SRO presence in BSD schools due to lack of documentation. However, verbal accounts[2] describe that the SRO program was initiated after a series of school shootings in the country (ie., Columbine) and when, in parallel, the Burlington Police Department (BPD) had started a community style of policing around the city. It was essentially a reaction to the current events of the time in order to ensure safety of the students while at school.

Currently, the SRO program operates from an MOU that was written in 2015[3]. In that document, the <u>intention</u> of the program is explained by a set of goals and objectives listed here:

- Establish a positive working relationship in a cooperative effort to prevent juvenile delinquency and assist in student development.
- Protect the constitutional and civil rights of students.
- Maintain a safe and secure environment on school campuses which will be conducive to learning.
- Promote positive attitudes regarding the role of police in society through non-punitive alliance-building interactions with students and staff.
- Conduct criminal investigations and refer student cases to the Restorative Justice program and Court Diversion to the greatest extent possible.
- Ensure that all Burlington Police Department Officers understand the needs, strengths, and challenges of various age, cultural, and ability groups.

Overall, it can be seen that the intention was to have a law enforcement presence at the school to promote physical safety while at the same time, build relationships with students and refer students when the need arose.

The <u>functions</u> that the SROs perform in the schools are also outlined in the MOU[3] as follows:

- Assist the Superintendent, principals, faculty, and staff in enforcing the campus code of conduct and other school rules in order to maintain a safe learning environment. When it pertains to preventing a disruption that would, if ignored, place students, faculty, and staff at risk of harm, the SRO will resolve the problem to preserve the school climate. In all other cases, disciplining students and other conduct deemed inappropriate is District responsibility.
- Promote positive interactions between law enforcement and students.

---

[2] H. Sparks; B. Difranco
[3] File MOU_2015

- Provide students, staff, and parents with a familiar and recognizable law enforcement contact.
- Establish positive working relationships with students, staff, and parents to prevent crime, disorder, substance abuse and other negative behaviors.
- Assist students, parents and staff in solving problems.
- As needed, conduct criminal investigations and refer cases to the Restorative Justice program, Court Diversion as appropriate.
- The SRO shall meet with building-level school administrators, teachers, parents and student representatives quarterly to discuss the issues of school safety.
- The SRO shall be integrated into the school community through participation in faculty and student meetings and assemblies, as well as trainings, as appropriate.

In addition to the functions outlined above, more specific, day-to-day functions have been described via verbal communication[4] directly reported by Officers Brian Difranco and Michael Henry as follows:

- General support/mentorship to students
  - Rides to games, food support,
  - Helping students with life skills (ie., tying a tie)
  - Fundraising
- Breaking the barrier between civilians and police officers (PO)
  - Removing component of fear
  - Showing PO as human beings
- Referrals to partners including, but not limited to:
  - Guidance Depts
  - Substance abuse
  - Justice centers
  - School psychologists
  - Criminal courts*
  - Equity/inclusion offices
  - Family courts*
  - Mental health programs
- Teaching
- Active shooter drills
- Prevention/interception of dangerous incidents (ie., life-threatening acts)
- Confiscation of guns, weapons, etc.
- Share information with school Admin (ie., family events that relate to students)
  - Not available to other PO
- Provide SRO/BPD with training, integration, and perspective into the community

---

[4] Brian Difranco and Michael Henry, discussed and shared during weekly Task Force Meetings

- Addressing criminal activity (ie., referring to criminal court)
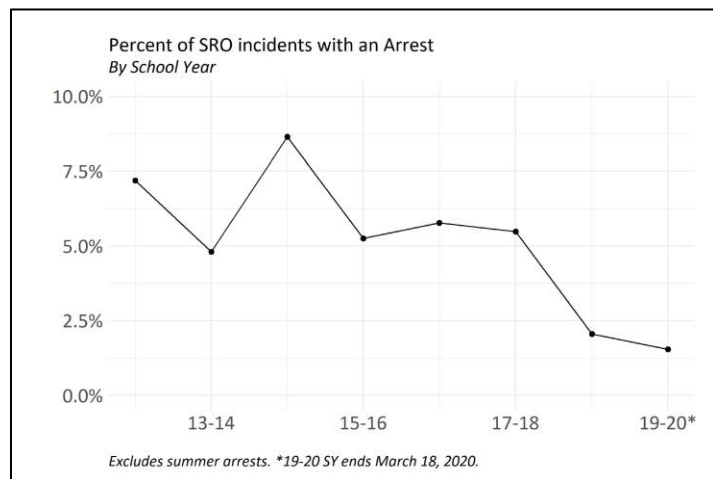- Addressing active shooter situations

  *SRO do not have any activity associated with truancy.

The SRO also participate in various Community Outreach activities, as described in a presentation by SRO Michael Henry to the Task Force[5].

Unfortunately, there is virtually no documentation of the SRO activities or evaluation of the SRO program. The MOU required quarterly reports from the SRO as well as twice annual evaluations of the SRO by the School District. None of this was done; therefore, all information currently available is almost completely anecdotal from both the SROs and the District and it is nearly impossible to evaluate the program in an objective way because there is almost no data. In light of this, the BPD did generate a report[6] for the Task Force so that we could have an overview of arrests during the last four school years. From this report, there are data that allow us to evaluate two of the intentions from the MOU. Specifically, the first, which includes the prevention of juvenile delinquency, and the last, which is to ensure that the BPD understand the needs, strengths, and challenges of various age, cultural, and ability groups.

Prevention of juvenile delinquency

The figure to the right (provided by the BPD) shows the frequency of "arrests", which in this case is citations, and illustrates that the SROs spend a small amount of time arresting students. In the worst year it was as much as 9% but in more recent years it has been closer to 2%.   By deduction, it can be interpreted that at least 95% of the time that they are in the schools and interacting with students, the SROs are

Percent of SRO incidents with an Arrest
By School Year

*Excludes summer arrests. *19-20 SY ends March 18, 2020.*

doing activities that are not associated with law enforcement. This is an important detail in the context of Task 3: identifying who else can do the functions currently performed by the SRO. As described by SRO Mike Henry, much of the day-to-day activities were spent acting as support people for students and simply being a presence in the school.

---

[5] SRO function_BSD, presented by Michael Henry on November 18, 2020
[6] BPD SRO Overview 2020

With specific regard to the prevention of juvenile delinquency, it can be seen that the SRO program does indeed have a considerable impact. See the figure below (provided by the BPD), which illustrates juvenile arrests by the SRO vs. non-SRO police.
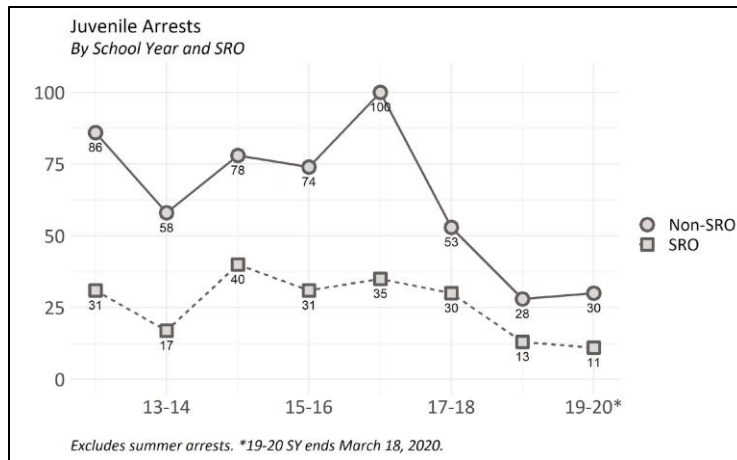
What can be taken from these data are two important points: first, that the SRO clearly arrest fewer students (therefore, the prevention of juvenile delinquency is succeeding). Second, that the positive impact of the training for and exposure to best practices in addressing the needs of youth, received by the SRO, does not extend to the BPD (ie., prevention of juvenile delinquency is failing at a community level). It can be interpreted, therefore, that the additional training received by the SRO for working with youth – which is clearly associated with fewer arrests – could be beneficial to all BPD officers if juvenile delinquency is to be prevented at a community level.

Ensure that the BPD understand the needs, strengths, and challenges of various age, cultural, and ability groups

This intention is critical especially in light of fact that racial disparities in arrests and police brutality have existed for years across the country and Burlington is no exception. Indeed, 2020 reports show that the BPD used excessive force on Black residents at record rates. In addition, data from the BPD reveal that Black juveniles are arrested at a rate similar to that of White juveniles although they appear much less in the population. This is illustrated in the figure to the right (provided by the BPD). Considering this figure together with the one above it can be seen that juvenile
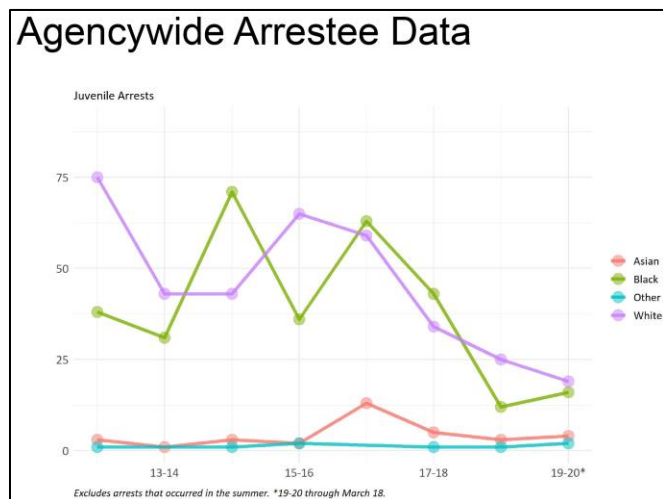
arrests by the BPD have decreased in recent years, but the BPD arrest more students than the SROs and they disproportionately arrest Black juveniles.

According to the report generated by the BPD, the student demographics are as follows[7]: White, 61%; Black or African American; 16%; Asian, 12%; Multi-racial, 8%; Hispanic or Latino, 3%. When looking at the frequency of SRO citations by race in the figure below (provided by the BPD), it is nearly identical to the BPD figure above in terms of trends in racial disparities.
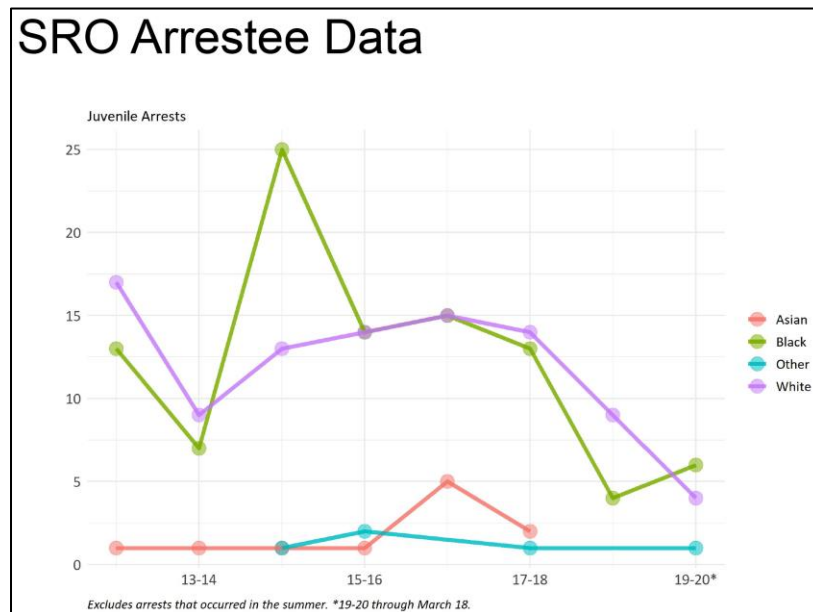
By calculation, Black juveniles made up between 31-60% of juvenile SRO arrests across the four school years yet occur at only 16% in the school population. Therefore, despite decreases in arrests and a lower rate of arrests by the SROs compared to non-SRO police, the Black juveniles in the school and the community are still disproportionately arrested. Therefore, the intention of improving cultural sensitivities is failing at both the SRO and the community level since the racial disparities persist. Based on the clear positive impact of the SRO training for and exposure to best practices in addressing the needs of youth for decreasing juvenile citations, it is plausible that additional training focusing on implicit bias and racial sensitivities would help to eliminate the disparities. To have maximum impact on all BSD BIPOC juveniles, this would need to occur both at the BPD and SRO level as well as within the school at the faculty/staff level.

---

[7] As noted in the report, the BPD calculates demographics using different metrics than those used by the district.

Additional context on the SRO program

The Task Force has been exposed to various perspectives on the SRO program (through both personal accounts and general written feedback), especially the SRO specific to BSD, and we have discovered multiple truths that must each be acknowledged and appreciated.

First, the SRO working in the BSD schools love what they do, they love working with the kids and they find an immense amount of satisfaction working closely with some of the families in the District. Admittedly, strict law enforcement activity makes up a tiny fraction of their day-to-day work. They generally have good relationships with the administrators and faculty in the buildings.

Second, members of the BIPOC community have expressed that the mere presence of police in the school is traumatic for them. Over 1,000 community members attended a city council meeting, asking that the police be completely removed from the schools[8]. The community survey conducted by the task force showed that 27% of the community thinks they should not be in the schools at all (53% said they should and 20% were unsure). It should be acknowledged that in this survey we had a difficult time reaching the New American community; therefore, the majority of responders (57%) were white parents. This concern of the BIPOC community is what resulted in the resolution by the city and the forming of this Task Force.

Third, when the administrators attended our meeting as special guests to share their insights, there was near unanimous concern for the students and families in the district who do not feel safe with the SRO in schools. At the same time, there was also near unanimous concern for what resources would be put in place if the SRO are removed from the schools.

These multiple truths are all valid and reveal that the current SRO program, although having good intentions and appreciated by many, is at the same time traumatic for many. These multiple perspectives and experiences also reveal that this challenge is a complex one. It will therefore require a complex and thoughtful solution driven by a fully committed District. As it is the responsibility of the District to ensure that all BSD community members feel safe, valued, and respected, a cultural overhaul centered around Restorative Practices will be explored in this report. Recommendations will be outlined under Task 4.

---

[8] Commissioner Z. Hightower, verbal communication

TASK 2

DETERMINE WHETHER ANY OF THESE FUNCTIONS MUST BE PERFORMED BY UNIFORMED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS.

With the input of Officers Difranco and Henry, the Task Force determined that the following functions must be performed by a trained law enforcement officer, with or without a uniform.

- Prevention/interception of dangerous incidents (ie., life-threatening acts)
- Confiscation of guns, weapons, etc.
- Addressing criminal activity (ie., referring to criminal court)
- Addressing active shooter situations

In addition, based on feedback from BSD Administrators, it is important that the responding officer is one that has received training for best practices in addressing the needs of youth and is in regular communication with administration. This can improve outcomes and is supported by the data presented under Task 1.

TASK 3

INCLUDE OPTIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES WHICH REINFORCE A RESTORATIVE MODEL FOR ALL OF BURLINGTON'S STUDENTS/YOUTH DURING AND OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS.

As described under Task 1, the majority of SRO activity is not associated with law enforcement but with mentoring students and connecting them with needed resources. In fact, as explained by Officer Difranco, these additional roles fell to the SROs due to social workers being overwhelmed with cases. Therefore, alternatives need to be aligned with the needs of the students. We approached this task in different ways to gain the most insights possible, from a variety of perspectives, regarding alternative models and what that might look like for the District. We solicited community input, we conducted interviews and gathered information on successful restorative models at schools both in and out of the state, and we invited administrators, staff, and partners of the District to engage with us to discuss current resources available and how they might be re-imagined in order to support a new restorative model.

Community input

In the community survey, one of the questions asked who else could perform the functions listed in the MOU, if not the SROs. Short-answer responses (362 in total) were organized manually into categories so that the data could be summarized. See the figure below, which illustrates the response categories and their frequency.
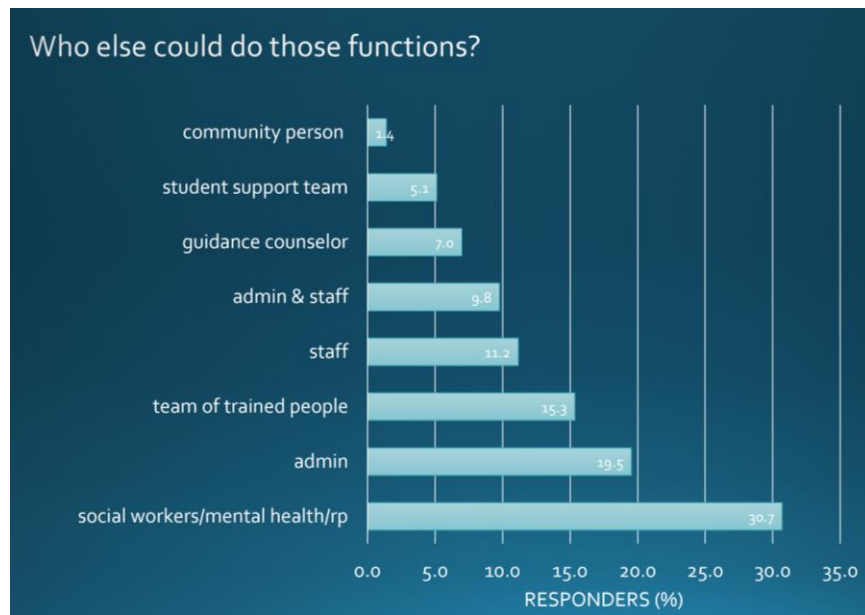
The most common response (30%) included social workers, mental health providers, restorative practitioners, or some combination of the three. A considerable number of responders (20%)

wrote in admin or admin/staff, and this is likely a reflection of the fact that the functions listed in the MOU were linked either to law enforcement or to administrative items, but not the more nuanced support and resource day-to-day functions listed by the SRO in task 1. At least 15% of responders commented that these functions should not fall on any one person but should be the collective responsibility of a team of trained individuals. Taken together, the input we obtained from the community survey suggests that restorative practice training for more individuals in the building would be beneficial and that a team approach is warranted. We address this further in our recommendations under Task 4.

Study of alternative models

Interviews were conducted with Administrators at other schools including U-32 and Mount Abraham Unified School District in Vermont; Roseville Area High School in Minnesota, and Pa'Lante in Massachusetts. We also spoke with an administrators and SRO from St. Vrain Valley School District in Colorado. Finally, we attended a webinar called "Reimagining safety in schools" during which we heard from the Superintendent of the Jennings School District in Missouri. Each of these schools/districts use inspiring restorative models and, although there are differences in some details and approaches, we detected some common themes and take-home messages for success:

- A humanistic approach to education, seeing students as individuals with basic needs
- Student-focused, youth-led restorative practices that empower youth and build strong community members
- Emphasis on relationships; for example, Teacher Advisory programs and restorative practice mentors for both adults and students in the building
- Data tracking, monitoring, and evaluation are critical for accountability and continuous improvement
- Securing of external funding to support resources needed and speed of implementation

We have integrated these themes into our work under Task 4 and they lay part of the foundation of our recommendations.

Input from District administrators, staff, and partners

Because they have the experience of being in the buildings and they will be directly impacted by our recommendations, we sought input from within the District. Administrators were invited to engage and discuss with us during our weekly meeting. We invited principals Green, Scheidt, Kiefer (who is a Task Force Member), Riley, and Vice Principal Kelley to discuss our work and help us understand what could be possible for alternative models. The principals were unanimous in their support for the SRO program and the appreciation of the SROs currently working in the district. They were also unanimous in their agreement that some members of the District are

traumatized by police presence. When presented with the challenge of this Task Force to build alternatives to the SRO program, they explained the importance of at least having an officer in direct communication with the school administrators to be able to provide information on student safety as needed (for example, if a student had a domestic issue the night before, they might have a difficult day at school). In addition, they pointed out that having a responding officer trained in juvenile needs and de-escalation leads to better outcomes for the students. This feedback is integrated into our recommendations. The principals were invited back to discuss alternatives with the Task Force so that we could directly involve them in our recommendations. However, they did not accept the invitation to further engage.

Kelly Ahrens presented to the group about the historical role of the CJC in building restorative practices in the school. Kelly shared with us the vision and philosophy behind restorative programs, and she shared a 5-year history on how that has evolved at BSD. One of the major take-home messages from her experiences, combined with feedback from LeVar Barrino, was that for a restorative model to be sustainable it cannot be susceptible to changes in staff and administration. Training in restorative practices at multiple levels and a team-based approach, as well as commitment by the District to retention of RP staff, is absolutely essential to long-term success.

Finally, we involved Kelly Ahrens, Lisa Bedinger, LeVar Barrino and Josh Meyer in several of our meetings.   Each of them brought a unique perspective regarding restorative practices, reimagining behaviors, integrating student perspective, and what could be possible with the current resources that exist in the District. They joined as guests and led our breakout group sessions brainstorming on safety and alternative models that could be possible given our specific context; the output of the breakout sessions is what formed our recommendations under Task 4. We also spent considerable time discussing the realities of limited resources, limited physical space, and that many staff in the school are already overloaded. For example, it was discussed that the Student Support Center staff are an excellent resource, and they could receive training in restorative practices to then be integrated into the RP teams. However, given that these staff are already stretched thin with their current daily functions, it will be essential to re-design their roles, their functions, and make space in their day for the trainings and the restorative practice approaches to be undertaken.

In light of stretched staff and the feedback of the Administrators, the Task Force would like to emphasize that it would be unreasonable and perhaps even destructive to make sudden changes without implementing the additional support needed for the adults in the building. In this regard, the support system(s) associated with the new alternative model must be built in advance, or at least in parallel, so that administrators and teachers do not shoulder the burden of filling the resource gap while individuals are being trained.

TASK 4

ENSURE THE SAFETY OF ALL BURLINGTON'S STUDENTS/YOUTH DURING AND OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS USING A RESTORATIVE PRACTICE MODEL THAT ELIMINATES THE TRAUMATIZING EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH WEAPONS, UNIFORMS, AND A POLICE PRESENCE COMMUNICATED BY SOME OF THE DISTRICT'S STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

Note on district culture and climate around safety

One of the things the Task Force discovered is that the district has no official, overarching definition of safety. For example, based on the way in which this Task Force was charged, it could be viewed that the SRO program is completely separate from the rest of the culture and climate in the district when in fact, they are intimately intertwined. As reviewed under Task 3, the alternative models that we explored shared two components that seem to be critical to success. The first is involving students as leaders in building the culture, the expectations, and holding one another (including adults) accountable. The second is that instead of focusing primarily on education, these alternative models genuinely focused first on the basic needs of the students. By having more care for the students as human beings and putting basic needs first, this maximizes their ability to be present and engaged for learning.

To gain more insights into what encompasses safety, the Task Force asked an open-ended question on our community survey: *what would create a safe and inclusive school environment?* At the same time, the group conducted small group brainstorming sessions using prompts to determine what we considered to be the primary components of a safe environment. Based on the responses to the survey and the brainstorming output, we created an illustration that highlights the main themes that emerged. See the figure below.

Clearly, safety goes beyond the limited physical definition and is a complex, multifaceted state of being. It is the responsibility of the District to ensure that every single member of the school

community feels safe. However, over 1,000 community members have voiced concerns to City Council about feeling unsafe with police presence in the schools[9]. Despite having good intentions, the impact of the SRO program has been harmful and traumatic for some members in the District. In addition, but not necessarily related to the SRO program, results of the 2019 District-wide Climate survey revealed that 40% of staff reported not feeling safe in the district. Furthermore, 73% do not see a strong vision being presented by the district. Therefore, we suggest the District start by defining safety and culture for the District; create a vision and use that as the foundation for building restorative alternatives to the current practices. Consider the following components:

1. Build on culture of relationships, equity/cultural literacy, welcoming, inclusiveness, warmth, appreciation of staff and students (ref. Elements of Safety figure).

2. Acknowledge that the first responsibility of the schools is to see and foster student's humanity and provide content that gives them a reason to go to school.

3. Students have basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter and those must be met for students to be available to learn.

4. Seek out and incorporate student input in the definition of safety.

5. Understand that students are individuals and come with different cultures and backgrounds; develop deep understandings of students, especially BIPOC students, LGBTQ students, and those with disabilities.

6. Replace a disciplinary, punitive response with a focus on building/repairing relationships and community.

7. Proactively build relationships with parents (especially parents of BIPOC students, LGBTQ students, and students with disabilities).

8. Prioritize a culture of trust, open communication, listening, and respect across staff and students. All humans in the District need to be appreciated and heard.

9. Address the core issues that influence discipline behavior (ie., adults should be aware of the triggers of students with difficult behavior, as well as their own triggers)

10. Funding needs to be put into resources that align with the restorative vision of the District

In the 21-22 school year, address the climate and culture issues that surfaced in the climate survey and then re-administer the survey to see if they have shifted; discipline issues will not be truly addressed if climate issues are not addressed.

---

[9] Commissioner Z. Hightower, verbal communication

<u>Task Force Recommendations</u>

1. **Develop a plan to ensure the ongoing implementation of Restorative Practices (RP) in all Burlington Schools (as indicated in the superintendent's 100-day plan)**

    a. Continue prioritization of Tier 1 RP (continued training of new teachers; ensure maintenance staff/food service workers/afterschool staff are included in the trainings and Restorative Practices Collaborative (learning community)

    b. Invest in Tier 1.5 and Tier 2 training (integration of bias training, affinity groups, trauma-informed work, mindfulness, cultural literacy)

    c. Create and implement process of support and accountability for all youth and staff; empower and adequately resource youth and staff who buy in; actively involve them in cultivating the culture

    d. Set aside time for faculty and staff to participate in restorative practices and develop as restorative practitioners. Determine what can come off their plates to create space for this

    e. Have clear expectations around RP for faculty and staff that are clearly communicated, and restorative processes in place for when those expectations are not met. Create restorative spaces and times for open discussion (ie. affinity groups, Relationship mapping)

    f. Create and implement both formal (Tier 2) and informal (Tier 1.5) processes to address harm; put a mechanism in place to separate from faculty or staff who consistently caused harm and are consistently unwilling to repair it

    g. Connect the Restorative Practice Teams directly with the principals to ensure commitment, long-term success, and consistency

2. **Re-frame and re-write BSD community expectations**

    a. Work with students, teachers and parents to collectively re-frame and re-write expectations

    b. Reward and reinforce: acknowledge when expectations are met and when they are not

    c. All policies and procedures must be re-written to remove punitive vocabulary and focus on restorative language and options

        i. Involve students in this re-writing project

        ii. Revise student handbook and school mission statements to take a restorative approach

3. **General support and mentorship to students: Recommit to Teacher Advisory Program**

   a. This is an essential recommendation for relationship building but it must be done in a way that is reasonable and sustainable given time constraints

   b. Extend to middle schools and provide the necessary supports to carry out with fidelity at the high schools

   c. Co-led by students

   d. Implement check-ins early in the day (3x/week) to identify students who need support to be successful that day

   e. Work with schools to see what can be eliminated to make space for the Teacher Advisory Program

   f. Explore the possibility of implementation in elementary schools

4. **Create Rapid Response Intervention Teams at the District level**

   a. There is a need for a staff person at each school with the skills, training, temperament, and experience of the current Student Achievement Coordinator. This staff person is not tied to a room and is available to respond to urgent matters as needed. Considering the District is not in a position to hire new staff, a viable option would be to retrain the current Student Support Center staff to do more restorative functions. This would require complete re-tooling of their current roles in order to allow time for restorative work and development; Student Support Center rooms could become community Restorative Practice spaces. The above referenced staff should work with youth restorative practice leaders, guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, and the Restorative Practices Team to compose a Rapid Response Intervention Team

   b. Need one team per school (Elementary, Middle, and High schools); it could be part of the schools existing intervention teams such as the MTSS, RP, Equity, etc. It could serve as the first response team for student issues and problems

   c. The entire team, including at least 4 staff per school, must have thorough training in tier 2 restorative practices. The team could assist the students and the teachers in a variety of scenarios, including tier 1, tier 1.5, and tier 2

   d. Teams must be fully aligned and coordinated on their approach & responses

   e. Team can make referrals to community entities (substance abuse, mental health, CJCs, courts, etc.), as well as build on community relationships with families & partners

     f.   Student who don't meet expectations are given the option of a restorative process or traditional discipline

     g.   Include support staff with additional training offered as needed. Focus on incentivization and retention so that the model is stable and sustainable. Students to be involved as support in tier 2 processes, with clearly defined roles

5. **The district should hire and retain more mental health professionals who are BIPOC, LGBTQ or have disabilities**

     a.   Establish coordinated and aligned responses

     b.   Offer training in racial and ethnic inequities

     c.   Commit to strategies for retention of District employees from diverse backgrounds

     d.   Identify and commit to a ratio of mental health professionals per student

     e.   Should be connected to the rapid response teams

6. **Create paid student leadership program/positions**

     a.   Students involved in creating culture and community expectations, as well as Restorative Procedures when expectations are not met

     b.   Peer leaders (ie. Pa'lante); trained youth facilitators in RP. These could be members of the Rapid Response Team or separate

     c.   Students involved in creating culture and code of conduct

     d.   Enhancing students supporting each other (and teachers!) in RP

7. **Create clear goals and timeline for completely eliminating disparities in suspensions and educational outcomes**

     a.   Proactively include parents as partners, especially parents of BIPOC, LGBTQ, and students with disabilities

     b.   Changes in curriculum so that multiple life experiences and perspectives are reflected and students see themselves and their experiences represented/acknowledged

     c.   Hold all students to higher standards of learning

     d.   Real data tracking based on demographics on students being ejected from classes

          i.   Create means to meet and discuss with teachers who need support to eliminate disparities

e. Tangible goals with accountability and support

8. **Revise the role of police in the district**

    a. As specified in the [resolution](), this task force was charged with ending the full-time use of the SRO. Therefore, the task force recommends the elimination of one SRO position, as well as limiting the scope of the single SRO to the following:

        i. The SRO is housed at the BPD and not present in the schools unless responding to an emergency or conducting a scheduled visit (by appointment)

        ii. SRO is the communication point with the school

        iii. SRO comes to school only for scheduled events such as those listed below, in soft uniform, unless responding to emergency (Confiscation of guns/weapons/evidence; addressing active shooter):

            • Teaching elective (voluntary) courses

            • Active Shooter drill teaching (run, hide, fight)

            • Barricade trainings

    b. In lieu of 2 SROs, the City should fund 2 positions at the CJC that are Tier 2 RP Student Safety Specialists and could work directly with the Rapid Response Team. These could be City employees and could serve as Community Liaisons and would increase the work between the District and the CJC.

    c. BPD officers should undergo training for best practices in addressing the needs of youth, including restorative practices

        i. This is essential in order to move towards elimination of the consistent racial disparities in BSD youth arrests between SRO and the non-SRO police

        ii. Additional training on racial bias is critically needed to eliminate the racial discrepancies in arrests at both BPD and SRO levels

        iii. Tailor a course for all BPD officers on present needs of youth and school community

        iv. Continue to monitor juvenile arrests to track progress

    d. Re-write an MOU using an RP framework that is limited to specific law enforcement functions and allow for sharing of information regarding students about legal/safety issues

<ol type="i" start="1">
All interactions should be restorative in nature, including language used during drills and trainings
Must be evaluated regularly with real data tracking (ie., regular meetings with written documentation)
Accountability to BPD, BSD and City leadership
Wording from the City resolution could be integrated into new MOU

9. **Invest in ways to secure private funding**

    a. Put mechanisms in place (grant writers or NGO partnerships) to apply for funding for RP in the district

    b. Clarify diversifying funding streams to allow for flexibility of program goals

    c. In order to secure funding, find ways to demonstrate that BSD is a student-centered RP district with robust youth leadership

    d. Include parents in this work and invite them to come into the schools on a regular basis

10. **Collect data for analysis and evaluation**

    a. Continuous improvement

    b. Accountability

    c. Success stories for grant writing or community buy-in

Retention of staff will be a critical component to securing the long-term sustainability of the recommendations. The Administration must have a high level of commitment for promoting the restorative practices and restorative culture throughout the schools, at all levels. If the District is considering restorative practices throughout the school community moving forward, there has to be a foundation put into place (ie., RP teams) that would not wither due to changes in building administration.

In addition, regular and formal documentation and evaluation is essential for accountability and the continuous improvement of any recommendations that are put in place.