



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



BERNARD C. "JACK" YOUNG
Mayor

MICHAEL S. HARRISON
Police Commissioner

August 25, 2022

Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

**RE: City Council Resolution #22-0107R
Informational Hearing- School Safety**

Dear Council President Mosby and Members of the City Council:

The Baltimore Police Department (BPD) has reviewed Council Resolution #20-0107R which invites representatives the BPD, Baltimore City School Police, and other relevant agencies to brief the City Council regarding safety in our schools, current safety measures, and the safety of school staff.

BPD recognizes that ensuring overall student safety requires robust partnerships with other city agencies; nonprofit and community organizations as well as local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. Over the last few years we have worked diligently to greatly enhance our partnerships with external stakeholders and to improve the ways in which our officers engage with youth.

In order to achieve clear lines of responsibility when addressing crimes occurring at schools and to further our common goal of more effective, community policing throughout Baltimore City, the BPD and Baltimore City School Police (BCPS) have entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU, which is periodically reviewed and renewed to ensure that the interagency operations and procedures are still congruent with the goals of effective policing, includes provisions such as:

- ✓ The general authority and jurisdiction of BSP officers, including the distinction between BSP's "Primary Jurisdiction" (on Baltimore City school property) and expanded jurisdiction (off of Baltimore City school property).
- ✓ Who shall be the lead agency in various situations, such as those involving active shooters and other emergencies.
- ✓ The criminal offenses for which BPD will be the lead investigative agency, regardless of whether they occur on or off school property. The MOU sets forth rules that BPD officers must follow when conducting criminal investigations that occurred on school property, as well BSP's responsibilities and limitations in these cases.
- ✓ Protocols for how BSP must handle arrests, prisoner processing, evidence processing, court appearances, warrants, and next-of-kin notifications in criminal matters.
- ✓ Requirements for initial and in-service training that BPD must offer to BSP personnel.

We have also been working with the US Attorney, ATF, DEA, FBI, Homeland Security, MD Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Maryland State Police and the Maryland Attorney General to specifically identify, investigate and prosecute to the fullest extent of the law, those violent offenders who engage in disturbing acts such as carjacking, robberies involving firearms. In fact, through the expansion of *Project Safe Neighborhoods*, we will be enhancing our efforts to prosecute those individuals who break federal law by carrying a gun in a school zones. By going after those bad actors who put the lives of our school children and our teachers in danger and seeking longer sentences in federal prison, we will be able to ensure that our schools are the sanctuaries they are intended to be.

In addition, we have been working to improve how our officers interact with young people by establishing the following new policies:

- ✓ Policy 1201, Child Abuse Investigations
- ✓ Policy 1202, Interactions with Youth
- ✓ Policy 1207, Youth Interrogations (*back out for public comment now as changes were made to comply with new state laws*)

To support the new policies, BPD developed a new in-service curriculum for all sworn members in effective youth interactions. The Department engaged community-based partners such as Strategies for Youth (SFY) which is a nationally recognized policy and training organization dedicated to improving police/youth interactions. The two-day training, which was just completed, covers topics such as:

- ✓ Child and Adolescent Development
- ✓ Intellectual, Developmental and Behavioral Disabilities
- ✓ Diversion and Alternatives to Arrest
- ✓ Youth Stops and Searches

BPD has no objection to this resolution. We will continue to coordinate with other law enforcement agencies; community organizations and other relevant stakeholders to make sure that our students are safe before, during, and after school. Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,



Michelle Wirzberger, Esq.
Director of Government Affairs

cc: Natwana Austin, Executive Secretary of the Baltimore City Council
Natasha Mehu, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations
Nina Themelis, Special Assistant and Legislative Liaison, MOGR
Andrew Smullian, BPD Deputy Chief of Staff