

Applicable Provisions of New Police Reform Law Relative to School Resource Officers:
Sections 23, 78, 79, and 109

SECTION 23. Said chapter 6 is hereby further amended by inserting after section 116G the following 3 sections:-

Section 116H. (a) The municipal police training committee shall establish and develop an in-service training program designed to train school resource officers, as defined in section 37P of chapter 71. Such program shall include training on: (i) the ways in which legal standards regarding police interaction and arrest procedures differ for juveniles compared to adults; (ii) child and adolescent cognitive development, which shall include instruction on common child and adolescent behaviors, actions and reactions as well as the impact of trauma, mental illness, behavioral addictions, such as gaming and gambling disorder, and developmental disabilities on child and adolescent development and behavior; (iii) engagement and de-escalation tactics that are specifically effective with youth; and (iv) strategies for resolving conflict and diverting youth in lieu of making an arrest. Such program shall also include training related to: (i) hate crime identification and prevention training curriculum including acquisition of practical skills to prevent, respond to and investigate hate crimes and hate incidents and their impacts on victim communities; (ii) anti-bias, anti-racism and anti-harassment strategies; (iii) bullying and cyberbullying; and (iv) comprehensive training to help school resource officers interact effectively with school personnel, victim communities and build public confidence with cooperation with law enforcement agencies.

(b) The course of instruction, the learning and performance objectives and the curriculum and standards for training developed pursuant to this section shall be developed in consultation with experts on child and adolescent development and child trauma and with educators and attorneys experienced in juvenile and education law and preventing and addressing youth hate crimes.

Section 116I. The municipal police training committee shall establish and develop within the recruit basic training curriculum a program for regional and municipal police training schools for the training of law enforcement officers in the commonwealth in appropriate interactions with persons on the autism spectrum and those with other intellectual and developmental disabilities. The program shall include training for law enforcement response to individuals on the autism spectrum and those with other intellectual and developmental disabilities who are victims or witnesses to a crime or suspected or convicted of a crime.

Section 116J. The municipal police training committee, in consultation with the executive office of public safety and security, shall establish and develop basic and in-service training programs designed to train officers on the regulation of physical force under section 14 of chapter 6E. Such programs shall be included in basic and in-service training for all law enforcement officers.

Section 116K. (a) The municipal police training committee shall develop and establish, within its recruit basic training curriculum and its in-service training curriculum available to in-service trainees, a course for police training schools, academies and programs for the training of law enforcement officers on mental wellness and suicide prevention. The course, which shall consist of 2 hours of total instruction annually, shall teach law enforcement officers how to: (i) utilize healthy coping skills to manage the stress and trauma of policing; (ii) recognize the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder within themselves and other officers; and (iii) recognize the signs of suicidal behavior within themselves and other officers.

(b) The course shall include information on the mental health resources available to help law enforcement officers and shall be designed to reduce and eliminate the stigma associated with law enforcement officers receiving mental health services.

(c) The course of instruction shall be developed by the municipal police training committee in consultation with appropriate groups and individuals having an interest and expertise in law enforcement mental health and suicide prevention.

(d) All law enforcement officers shall annually attend and complete a course on mental wellness and suicide prevention.

SECTION 78. Section 37L of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the third paragraph the following paragraph:-

School department personnel and school resource officers, as defined in section 37P, shall not disclose to a law enforcement officer or agency, including local, municipal, regional, county, state and federal law enforcement, through an official report or unofficial channels, including, but not limited to, text, phone, email, database and in-person communication, or submit to the department of state police's Commonwealth Fusion Center, the Boston Regional Intelligence Center or any other database or system designed to track gang affiliation or involvement, any information relating to a student or a student's family member from its databases and other recordkeeping systems including: (i) immigration status; (ii) citizenship; (iii) neighborhood of residence; (iv) religion; (v) national origin; (vi) ethnicity; or (vii) suspected, alleged, or confirmed gang affiliation, unless it is germane to a specific unlawful incident or to a specific prospect of unlawful activity the school is otherwise required to report. Nothing in this paragraph shall prohibit the sharing of information: (i) for the purposes of completing a report pursuant to section 51A of chapter 119; (ii) upon the specific, informed written consent of the eligible student, parent or guardian; (iii) to comply with a court order or lawfully issued subpoena; (iv) in connection with a health or safety emergency pursuant to the provisions of 603 C.M.R. 23.07(4)(e); or (v) for the purposes of filing a weapon report with the local chief of police pursuant to this section.

SECTION 79. Said chapter 71 is hereby further amended by striking out section 37P, as so appearing, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

Section 37P. (a) As used in this section the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

"Chief of police", the chief of police or the board or officer having control of the police department in a city or town.

"Commission", the model school resource officer memorandum of understanding review commission established in subsection (b).

"Model memorandum of understanding", the model school resource officer memorandum of understanding developed by the commission.

"School resource officer", a duly sworn municipal police officer with all necessary training, up-to-date certificates, including special school resource officer certification as required by subsection (b) of section 3 of chapter 6E or a special officer appointed by the chief of police charged with: (i) providing law enforcement; (ii) promoting school safety and security services to elementary and secondary public schools; and (iii) maintaining a positive school climate for all students, families and staff. For the purpose of this section, a school resource officer shall be exempt pursuant to subsection (j) of section 10 of chapter 269, while serving in the officer's official capacity.

(b) There shall be a model school resource officer memorandum of understanding review commission to develop and review the model memorandum of understanding and make recommendations for changes to the model memorandum of understanding as the commission deems appropriate.

The commission shall include: the commissioner of elementary and secondary education and the secretary of the executive office of public safety and security, who shall serve as co-chairs; the attorney general or a designee; the child advocate or a designee; the chief justice of the juvenile court

or a designee; the secretary of health and human services or a designee; the executive director of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Inc. or a designee ; the president of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association Incorporated or a designee; the president of the Massachusetts Major City Chiefs, Inc. or a designee; the executive director of the municipal police training committee established in section 116 of chapter 6 or a designee; the certification director of the division of police certification established in section 4 of chapter 6E or a designee; the executive director of the mental health legal advisors committee established in section 34E of chapter 221 or a designee; the executive director of Citizens for Juvenile Justice, Inc. or a designee; the executive director of the Children's League of Massachusetts, Inc. or a designee; a Massachusetts public school superintendent, to be appointed by the senate president; a Massachusetts public school teacher, to be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; a Massachusetts public school social worker, to be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; a parent or guardian of a child in a Massachusetts public school, to be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; and 4 members to be appointed by the governor: 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc., 1 of whom shall be a representative of Massachusetts School Counselors Association, Inc. and 2 of whom shall be representatives from Massachusetts youth organizations with proven records of supporting services and programs for high numbers of youths in order to ensure healthy development and social responsibility.

The model memorandum of understanding shall be developed for schools and police departments as the minimum requirement for schools to formalize and clarify implementation of the partnership between the school and the school resource officer. In conducting such development and review, the commission shall determine the necessary provisions to achieve the district's educational and school safety goals and to help maintain a positive school environment for all students.

The model memorandum of understanding shall, at minimum, describe: (i) the mission statement, goals and objectives of the school resource officer program; (ii) the roles and responsibilities of the school resource officer, the police department and the school; (iii) the process for selecting school resource officers; (iv) the mechanisms to incorporate school resource officers into the school environment, including school safety meetings; (v) information sharing between school resource officers, school staff and other partners; (vi) the organizational structure of the school resource officer program, including supervision of school resource officers and the lines of communication between the school district and police department; (vii) training for school resource officers, including, but not limited to, continuing professional development in child and adolescent development, conflict resolution and diversion strategies, de-escalation tactics and any other training required by the municipal police training committee established in section 116 of chapter 6; and (viii) the manner and division of responsibility for collecting and reporting the school-based arrests, citations and court referrals of students to the department of elementary and secondary education in accordance with regulations promulgated by the department.

The model memorandum of understanding shall expressly state that school resource officers shall not: (i) serve as school disciplinarians, enforcers of school regulations or in place of licensed school psychologists, psychiatrists or counselors; and (ii) use police powers to address traditional school discipline issues, including non-violent disruptive behavior.

In carrying out its duties under this section, the commissioner of elementary and secondary education shall work with the executive office of public safety and security to provide the commission with any data and information they consider relevant to the commission's duties.

The commission shall meet every 5 years for the purpose of developing and reviewing the model memorandum of understanding. The model memorandum of understanding shall be subject to final approval by the co-chairs of the commission and shall be made publicly available by the department of elementary and secondary education, distributed to school districts and filed with the clerks of the house of representatives and senate.

Members shall not receive compensation for their services but may receive reimbursement for the reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out their responsibilities as members of the commission. The commissioner of elementary and secondary education shall furnish reasonable staff and other support for the work of the commission. Prior to issuing its recommendations, the commission shall provide the opportunity to seek public input across regions of the commonwealth. It shall not constitute a violation of chapter 268A for a person employed by a school district to serve on the commission or to participate in commission deliberations that may have a financial impact on the district or municipality employing that person. The commission may establish procedures to ensure that no such person participates in commission deliberations that may directly affect the school districts employing those persons.

(c) The executive office of public safety and security, in consultation with the department of elementary and secondary education, shall make available to all communities the model memorandum of understanding, statements of operating procedures and advisories on how to establish said documents.

(d) For the purpose of fostering a safe and healthy environment for all students through strategic and appropriate use of law enforcement resources and to achieve positive outcomes for youth and public safety, a chief of police, at the request of the superintendent and subject to appropriation, shall assign at least 1 school resource officer to serve the city, town, commonwealth charter school, regional school district or county agricultural school. In the case of a regional school district, commonwealth charter school or county agriculture school, the chief of police of the city or town in which the school is located shall, at the request of the superintendent, assign the school resource officer who may be the same officer for all schools in the city or town. Annually, not later than August 1, the superintendent shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education and publicly present to the relevant school committee: (i) the cost to the school district of assigning a school resource officer; (ii) a description of the proposed budget for mental, social or emotional health support personnel for the school; and (iii) the number of school-based arrests, citations and court referrals made in the previous year disaggregated as required by the department of elementary and secondary education.

In assigning a school resource officer, the chief of police shall assign an officer that the chief believes would strive to foster an optimal learning environment and educational community that promotes a strong partnership between school and police personnel. The chief of police shall give preference to candidates who demonstrate the requisite personality and character to work effectively with children, youth and educators in a school environment with a demonstrated ability to work successfully with a population that has a similar racial and ethnic background as those prevalent in the student body, and who have received specialized training relating to working with adolescents and children, including cognitive development, de-escalation tactics, as defined in section 1 of chapter 6E and alternatives to arrest and diversion strategies. The appointment shall not be based solely on seniority. The performance of a school resource officer shall be reviewed annually by the superintendent and the chief of police.

The superintendent and the chief of police shall adopt, at minimum, the model memorandum of understanding developed by the commission pursuant to subsection (b) and may add further provisions as they mutually deem fit; provided, however, that no further provision included in the memorandum of understanding adopted by said superintendent and said chief of police shall conflict with or omit any provisions of this section. The final memorandum of understanding adopted by the superintendent and the chief of police shall be made public and placed on file annually with the department of elementary and secondary education and in the offices of the school superintendent and the chief of police.

The chief of police, in consultation with the school superintendent, shall establish operating procedures to provide guidance to school resource officers about daily operations, policies and procedures. At a minimum, the operating procedures as established by the chief of police, shall describe the following for the school resource officer:

- (i) the school resource officer uniform;
- (ii) use of police force, arrest, citation and court referral on school property;
- (iii) a statement and description of students' legal rights, including the process for searching and questioning students and circumstances requiring notification to and presence of parents and administrators;
- (iv) chain of command, including delineating to whom the school resource officer reports and how school administrators and the school resource officer work together;
- (v) performance evaluation standards, which shall incorporate monitoring compliance with the memorandum of understanding and use of arrest, citation and police force in school;
- (vi) protocols for diverting and referring at-risk students to school and community-based supports and providers; and
- (vii) information sharing between the school resource officer, school staff and parents or guardians.

(e) Each school shall annually file its final memorandum of understanding and operating procedures with the department of elementary and secondary education. The department of elementary and secondary education shall collect data on the number of mental and social emotional health support personnel and the number of school resource officers employed by each local education agency and shall publish a report of the data on its website. The department shall promulgate rules or regulations necessary to carry out this section.

(f) Notwithstanding subsection (d), if the chief of police, in consultation with the superintendent, determines that there are not sufficient resources to assign a school resource officer to serve the city, town, regional school district or county agricultural school, the chief of police shall consult with the department of state police to ensure that a school resource officer is assigned, subject to appropriation, pursuant to the requirements of this section; provided, further, that if a state police officer is assigned to a city, town, regional school district or county agricultural school, said assignment shall not be based solely on seniority and a candidate shall be considered who would strive to foster an optimal learning environment and educational community; provided, further, that there shall be placed on file in the office of the superintendent and the department of state police the final memorandum of understanding clearly defining the roles and duties of the school resource officer.

(g) No public employer shall be liable for injury, loss of property, personal injury or death caused by an act or omission of a public employee while acting in the scope of the public employee's employment and arising out of the implementation of this section. This section shall not be construed as creating or imposing a specific duty of care.

The department of elementary and secondary education shall collect and publish disaggregated data regarding school-based arrests, citations and court referrals of students to the department and shall make such report available for public review.

SECTION 109. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, a person who is appointed as a school resource officer, as defined in section 37P of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as of the effective date of this act may continue in such appointment without receiving a certification to serve as such pursuant to subsection (b) of section 3 of chapter 6E of the General Laws; provided, however, that they receive said certification by December 31, 2021.