



Incorporated 1787
Police Department

April 17, 2018

To: Weston Public School Families and Staff
From: William S. McKersie, Ph.D., Superintendent;
Edwin S. Henion, Chief of Police, Weston Police Department
Re: Proposed Increase of Dedicated Police Presence for Weston Public Schools

The leadership of the Weston Public Schools (WPS) and Weston Police Department (WPD) have been intensively analyzing safety and security for the full campus and each school in the wake of the Parkland, FL shooting. Our multipronged approach—*providing high quality security personnel, structures and technology and developing connections to assist students and families in crisis*—allows us to effectively identify and prevent security threats. We also have been listening carefully to the concerns and questions being raised by students, staff and families.

We are recommending a major increase in policing so that starting in Fall 2018 we will have three full-time officers solely dedicated to the campus and schools. The Weston Police Department will:

1. Maintain the current School Resource Officer position at Weston High School (WHS).
2. Add a second School Resource Officer position to the campus, with special attention to Weston Middle School (WMS).
3. Increase the current part-time “Mile of Safety” coverage so that we have a full-time “Campus Officer,” who will focus attention on Hurlbutt Elementary School (HES) and Weston Intermediate School (WIS).

Additional daily police presence will be provided by Chief Ed Henion, who will continue to be visible on campus; Captain Matt Brodacki, who will supervise the three officers dedicated to the WPS and continue working with administrators on security measures; and, police officers posted at the Regional Cyber Crime Lab (located in the Central Office Annex Building), who are required to respond to any crisis on campus.

We would have up to six officers covering the WPS. Moreover, the layout of the campus, with four schools closely aligned on a one-mile long road adjacent to police headquarters, allows the police to efficiently monitor activities, identify possible threats and respond rapidly in an emergency.

A prudent move in the wake of school shootings is to increase the level of police presence and coverage. Indeed, area districts are looking to expand police coverage, in particular by adding School Resource Officers (SRO). Following several years of review and planning, WHS is in the second year of an SRO Program. Officer Joseph Mogollon’s website (<https://sro.westonps.org/>) explains the role and functions of an SRO. Simply put, an SRO is a full-time police officer, who serves as a law enforcer, educator, informal counselor, and emergency manager. Immersed in the school, an SRO can identify risks and threats early and intervene. The interventions range from one-to-one consultation with students and families in need to full-on police confrontation of threats.

Under this recommendation, the Board of Education (BOE) would maintain its plan to have six security specialists in 2018-19. There would be two at WHS, two at WMS, and one apiece at WIS and HES. The security specialists would continue to monitor their respective buildings, especially entrances and the flow of visitors during the day. We would manage the deployment of the six security specialists to assist with coverage and support at WIS and HES.

The recommended plan will be reviewed by the BOE and Weston Police Commission. The Board of Education will fully consider the proposal at its April 23, 2018 meeting. The Police Commission will subsequently review the proposal. If the proposal is approved by these two governing bodies, we will work with the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen on funding for what would be a major step to maximize the safety and security of the Weston Public Schools.