

SSK Interlocal Board Annual SRO Program Review



November 7, 2024



This document serves as an executive summary of the full School Resource Officer (SRO) Program Report. A digital copy of the full report and Safe and Successful Kids (SSK) Interlocal Board contact information can be found at app.lincoln.ne.gov/city/sskib.



History

- **May 2018:** Safe and Successful Kids Interlocal agreement is signed to solidify commitments from the City and Lincoln Public Schools to invest in Community Learning Centers, mental health supports for students, and SRO program for middle schools.
- **May 2018:** SRO MOU signed between the City and LPS that outlines the separation of school discipline (the responsibility of school administration) and law enforcement (the responsibility of SROs).
- **November 2018:** Community-developed assessment measure is created to measure goals in the SRO MOU.
- **November 2020:** Annual reports to SSKI Board on progress toward the goals in the SRO MOU begin.



SRO Goals

1. To create a common understanding that school administrators and teachers are ultimately responsible for school discipline and culture; SROs should not be involved in the enforcement of school rules; and a clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities of SROs as to student discipline, with regular review by all stakeholders, is essential.
2. To minimize student discipline issues so they do not become school-based referrals to the juvenile justice system;
3. To promote effectiveness and accountability;
4. To provide training as available to SROs and appropriate LPS staff on effective strategies to work with students that align with program goals;
5. To employ best practices so that all students are treated impartially and without bias by SROs and LPS staff in alignment with applicable City and LPS equity policies; and
6. To utilize best practices for training and oversight with the goal of reducing disproportionality.



SRO Facts

Complaints:

In 2023-24, LPD investigated one complaint against SROs. This complaint was classified as exonerated.

Commendations:

In 2023-24, SROs received nine commendations for a variety of events. One of the commendations was the result of an SRO's quick action performing the Heimlich Maneuver on a choking student.

Training:

In 2023-24, SROs received an average of approximately 52 hours of training that included a variety of topics related to mental health, ethics, diversity and crisis intervention, among others.

Presentations:

In 2023-24, SROs conducted presentations on a variety of topics, including Alcohol/DUI, General Law Enforcement and Internet Safety.

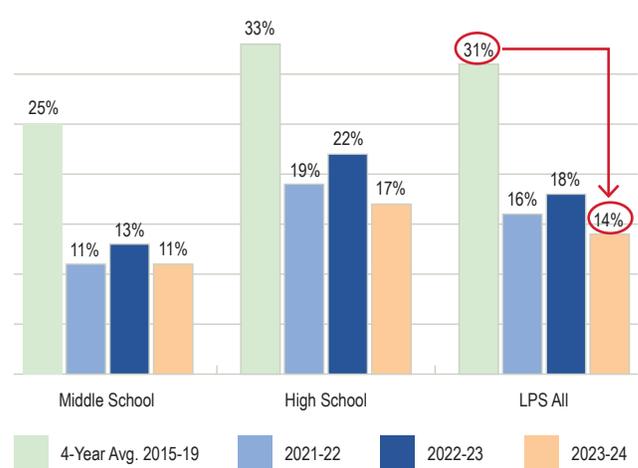
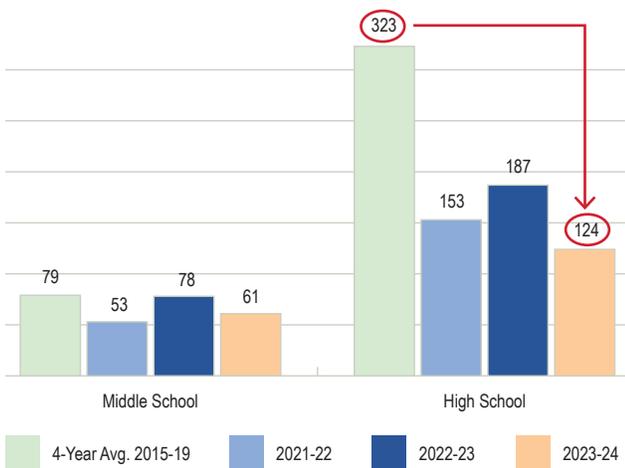


Representative Data and Takeaways

The full SRO program report includes nearly 200 pages of data, analysis, and recommendations. The graphs, takeaways, and recommendations in this summary document are a small representative snapshot of this report. The information provided was selected to demonstrate some of the key data used to measure the goals established for the SRO program. To gain a full understanding of the SRO program review for 2023-24, individuals should read the entire report.

Calls for Service and Referrals

- Juvenile referrals were issued during 185 CFS at LPS schools in 2023-24 compared to the 4-year average of 402.
- 14% of CFS resulted in a referral in 2023-24 compared to the 4-year average of 31%.
 - A juvenile referral is when an SRO or responding officer has probable cause that a juvenile is responsible for a criminal act and the juvenile is referred to the County Attorney.



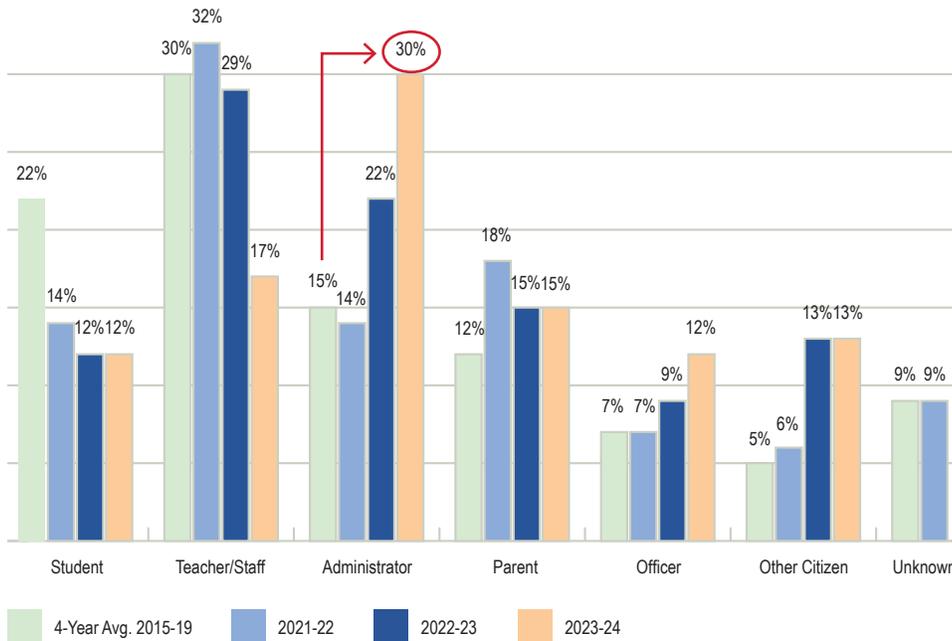
Middle & High School CFS w/ Referral	4-Year Avg. 2015-2019	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	% Change from 4-Year Avg.
Middle School	79	53	78	61	-23%
High School	323	153	187	124	-62%
Total	402	206	265	185	-54%

Referral /CFS %	4-Year Avg. 2015-2019	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Middle School	25%	11%	13%	11%
High School	33%	19%	22%	17%
LPS All	31%	16%	18%	14%

Persons Initiating Calls for Service

- Historically, Teachers/Staff initiated the highest percentage of CFS.
- However, that changed in 2023-24 as Administrators initiated the highest percentage of CFS, doubling the percentage from the 4-year average.

This is the desired outcome of ongoing training for SROs and administrators.



- Of the 155 CFS initiated by Officers, 121 (78%) did not have a party listed.
 - For example: a found item CFS.
- In 2022-23, the “Unknown” and “Other” categories were combined into “Other Citizen”.

Middle & High School Who Initiated CFS	4-Year Avg. 2015-2019	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Student	287 (22%)	178 (14%)	177 (12%)	157 (12%)
Teacher/Staff	387 (30%)	410 (32%)	412 (29%)	224 (17%)
Administrator	203 (15%)	175 (14%)	317 (22%)	388 (30%)
Parent	157 (12%)	237 (18%)	216 (15%)	187 (15%)
Officer	90 (7%)	85 (7%)	134 (9%)	155 (12%)
Other Citizen	64 (5%)	83 (6%)	187 (13%)	172 (13%)
Unknown	123 (9%)	118 (9%)	0	0

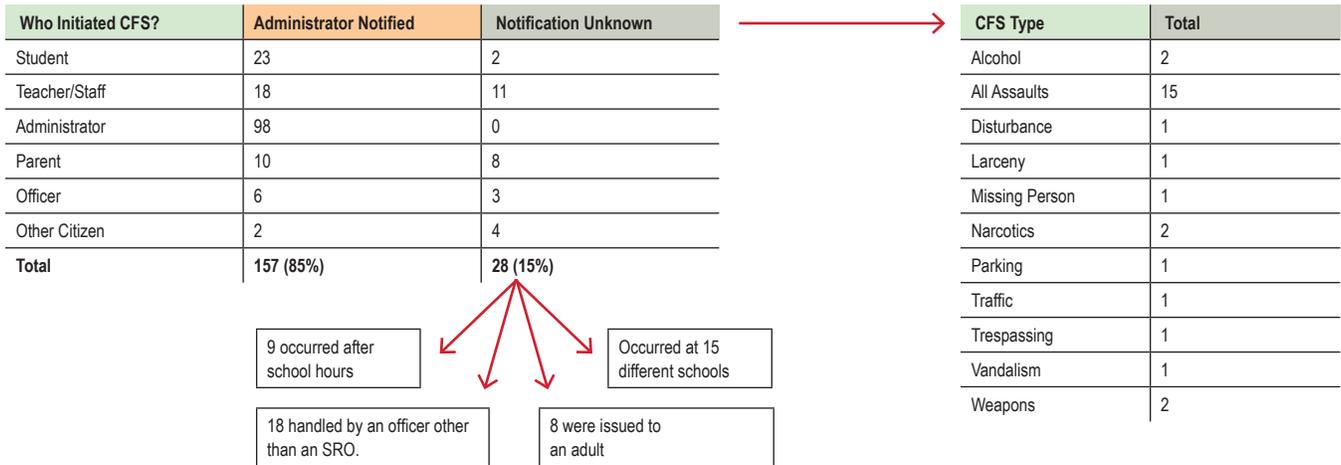
*Calls for service occur when an individual believes that a crime has been committed and contacts the SRO, 911, or the non-emergency line for incidents on school grounds.

#Referrals of juveniles occur after an investigation has been completed by the SRO. A referral is usually delivered verbally to the student and parent or over the phone. A referral does not require the student to be out of school.

+Race/ethnicity/demographic categories align with federal demographic categories used by the Department of Education and indicate self-identified race/ethnicity. Some demographic groups may be unreportable if the number of individuals in a report is so small, that the release of the information may lead to identifying individuals within the group. Not reporting those groups protects the privacy of individuals in the group.

Notification of Administration

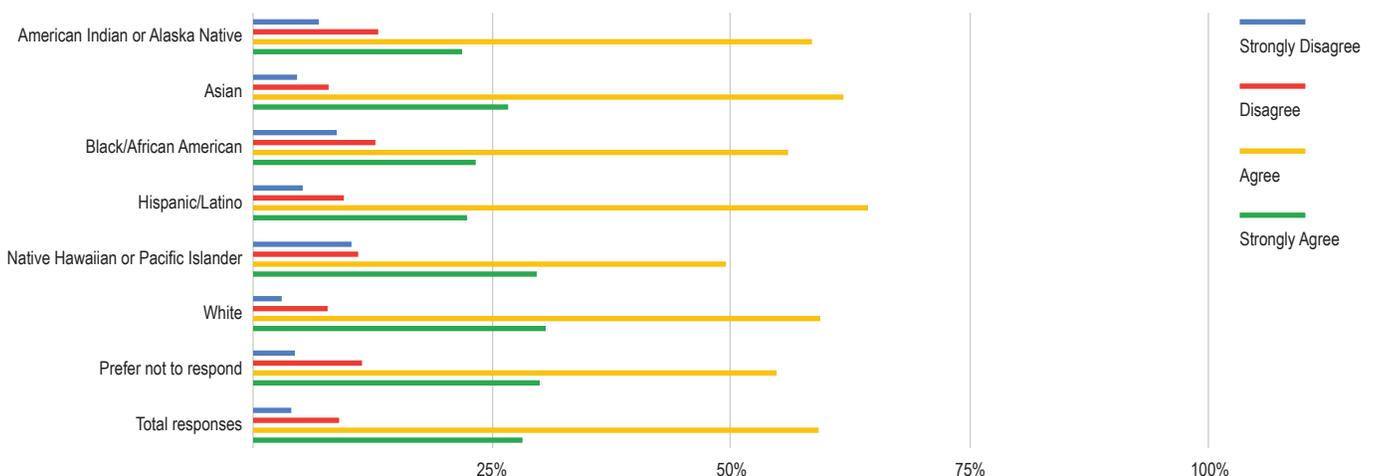
- In 2023-24, Administrators were notified during 85% of all CFS resulting in a referral.
- There were 28 CFS (15%) resulting in a referral where it is unknown if an administrator was notified.
- The regular, routine notification of administrator when a Call for Service is enacted is a desired outcome of ongoing collaboration between SROs and administrators to ensure appropriate involvement of each and respectful of identified roles.



District Student Perception Survey

For 2023-24, of the 8,532 students who responded to this item, 87% indicated that they Agreed or Strongly Agreed with this statement. Students indicating White as one of their ethnic groups tended to agree with this statement in a higher proportion than all other ethnic groups with about 90% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. Students choosing Asian and Hispanic as one of their ethnic groups had the next highest rates of agreement, 88% and 86%, respectively. The proportion of students indicating American Indian or Alaska Native as part of their background was 80%, and Black/ African American and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander had the lowest levels of agreement with the statement with each group at 79%.

Overall, my school is safer because the SRO is in our building.



Perception of SROs Key Takeaway

Students reported:

- positive perceptions about School Resource Officers (SROs) on campus
- they felt safer and the school was safer because the SRO was in the building
- those who had interactions with the School Resource Officer (SRO)
 - felt that they were
 - listened to,
 - treated fairly, and
 - respected
 - the School Resource Officer (SRO) behaved in a professional manner
 - the School Resource Officer (SRO) did a good job handling the issue.
- All ethnic groups reported positive perceptions about the School Resource Officer (SRO), in most cases white students were slightly more positive than other groups. It should be noted that Black/African American students were more positive than they have been in past administrations.

Suspensions Takeaway

10% of secondary students experienced at least one out of school suspension. This is a similar proportion as the previous year and equated to 2,348 students.

- Similar proportions of students experienced out-of-school suspensions as the preceding year
- Out-of-school suspension data continue to show evidence of disproportionality for students who identify as Male, Black, Hispanic, or Two or more races, and those participating in Special Education services and the free/reduced lunch program.
- Little to no disparity evidence exists for students in the English Language Learner program in high schools, slight disproportionality in middle schools.

Percent of Yearly Out-of-School Suspensions by Ethnicity – Middle School

Year	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
2014-2015	2%	2%	17%	19%	0%	48%	13%
2015-2016	1%	1%	15%	20%	0%	50%	12%
2016-2017	3%	1%	15%	21%	0%	48%	13%
2017-2018	1%	1%	16%	20%	0%	49%	13%
2018-2019	1%	1%	13%	18%	0%	54%	14%
2019-2020	0%	1%	15%	20%	0%	46%	17%
2020-2021	1%	1%	14%	18%	0%	49%	17%
2021-2022	1%	2%	17%	21%	0%	44%	15%
2022-2023	1%	2%	19%	19%	0%	44%	15%
2023-2024	1%	1%	17%	18%	0%	47%	15%
Overall % of 23-24 Student Population	1%	5%	8%	16%	0%	62%	10%

n = 1,217

Percent of Yearly Out-of-School Suspensions by Ethnicity – High School

Year	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races
2014-2015	3%	1%	14%	17%	0%	53%	11%
2015-2016	2%	2%	15%	16%	0%	51%	14%
2016-2017	3%	1%	16%	16%	0%	51%	13%
2017-2018	2%	1%	16%	16%	0%	52%	14%
2018-2019	2%	1%	16%	17%	0%	51%	12%
2019-2020	2%	2%	15%	18%	0%	50%	13%
2020-2021	2%	2%	14%	19%	0%	48%	16%
2021-2022	2%	1%	17%	19%	0%	48%	14%
2022-2023	1%	1%	17%	22%	0%	43%	15%
2023-2024	2%	1%	17%	19%	0%	45%	17%
Overall % of 23-24 Student Population	1%	4%	7%	17%	0%	62%	9%

n = 1,131

Calls for Service Threat Assessment Takeaway

While threat assessment is the ninth most common amongst the top 12 calls for service, the threat assessment percentage change from the four year average is up 330% (from a four-year average of 10 in 2015–19 to 43 in 2023–24). With the training and deployment of threat assessment teams within our schools, the expertise of threat assessment specialists working collaboratively through our SSKI partnership, and the promotion/use of the “Safe To Say” program, staff attribute at least some of this increase to both enhanced awareness among students and staff and improved reporting tools.

Calls for Service — Top 12

LPS ALL Top 12 CFS	4-Year Avg 2015-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	% Change from 4-Year Avg
Disturbance	153	202	239	221	44%
All Assaults	228	197	205	184	-19%
Missing Person	121	151	118	130	7%
Vandalism	60	73	78	97	62%
Narcotics	115	59	78	58	-50%
Larceny	150	66	74	56	-63%
Sex Other	22	33	44	55	150%
Mental Investigation	60	51	76	48	-20%
Threat Assessment	10	11	38	43	330%
Suspicious	28	30	29	42	50%
Traffic	51	48	45	38	-25%
Found Item	31	48	50	36	16%



Overall Recommendations

1. Continue professional development to reinforce separation of law enforcement and student discipline

In partnership, LPS and LPD should continue a robust program of school administrator/SRO professional development to reinforce the separation of law enforcement and student discipline. LPD should also continue seeking to accurately record when administrators are involved in the referral to SROs. Both LPS and LPD will closely monitor data related to the percentage of time an administrator is notified when a call for service results in a referral—and analyze those situations where an administrator was not notified to understand the reasons why such notification did not occur.

Both entities should also continue with implementation of restorative justice programs and closely monitor LPD calls for service, referrals to the county attorney, and LPS student discipline data throughout the year. LPS should continue training on and implementation of the PAR framework.

2. Continue to strive for increased response rates and review LPD CFS/referrals and LPS discipline data

While survey respondent rates were substantially higher for the 23–24 school year, LPS should continue to strive for higher response rates year over year to ensure that the perceptual data accrued is authentically reflective of the diversity of students, families, and staff, in order to fulfill our commitments to just, fair, and equitable treatment of all. To better understand and respond to disparity, LPS and LPD should continue to review CFS/referrals and school discipline suspensions/expulsions to identify methods and strategies (such as Restorative Justice and Hope Science), as well as new professional development opportunities, that may decrease disparity. This data may open avenues to better understand complicating factors that need to be addressed regarding first time behaviors as well as issues of recidivism.

3. Continue to build on and enhance capacity of Threat Assessment Team

LPS and LPD should continue to build, deploy, and enhance the capacity and expertise of Threat Assessment Teams within LPS. These Threat Assessment Teams put risk assessment into context by managing and predicting risk via examination of static, dynamic and protective risk factors. This case-driven approach allows trained teams to monitor patterns and coordinate communication over time in a manner that promotes dignity and respect for all parties involved.