

TO: School Committee

FROM: Emily Parks, Superintendent

DATE: December 7, 2018

RE: New MOU language regarding SRO

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Last spring, Massachusetts passed a criminal justice reform law that included new requirements for Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between school departments and police departments. Specifically, MOUs must now address particular roles and functions of the School Resource Officer (SRO), ensuring that SROs don't take the place of school disciplinarians or school-based mental health providers in responding to student misbehavior.

The Massachusetts Attorney General's office, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have produced a model MOU for districts to consider. I have compared the model with our existing MOU, reviewed the new legal requirements with school counsel, and met with Chief Silva to discuss necessary revisions. Though the new law will necessitate some changes to the content of the MOU, we don't believe that the new law requires substantive changes from the way that the WPS and WPD currently function. To provide one example, the new law is clearly intended to limit instances of students being arrested at school, a situation that is exceedingly rare in Westwood.

The WPS and the WPD work together to ensure the safety and security of students. Our SRO provides a positive, proactive presence in our schools. I have every confidence that this collaborative relationship will continue.

Chief Silva and I should have a finalized MOU drafted in the next couple of weeks.