

## **Public School Resource Officers**

Uploaded by: Marvin Cheatham

Position: FAV

Action: 2025-02-12 - Hearing 2/12 at 1:00 p.m.

Pending: [Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee](#)

Hearing: Feb 12 @ 1:00 pm Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Hearing

The 36,563 Officers, Members and Residents of the Matthew Henson Community Development Corporation strongly support the much-needed Public School Resource Officers - Firearms Required to be armed in Baltimore City Public Schools similar to all other MD Public School jurisdictions. Aren't our children, teachers, faculty and parents just as worthy as all others? Requiring a Baltimore City school police officer and a school resource officer to carry a firearm while present on the premises officer and carry a firearm while present on the premises of the school to which the officer is assigned.

Baltimore City School Police Gun's Recovery is an astonishing: 2023-24 \*11 (so far); 2022-23 \*15; 2021-22 \*15; 2020-21?; 2019-20 Pandemic; 2018-19 \*10; 2017-18 \*5.

Baltimore City Shooting outside school area: Mergenthaler March 8, 2023, Death; Achievement Academy Nov. 11, 2019; Patterson Sept. 7, 2023, DEATH; Carver Sept. 7, 2022; Edmondson March 11, 2023, DEATH; Forest Park Jan. 25, 2023, DEATH; Dunbar Sept. 1, 2023, 12-year-old shot; Carver Dec. 5, 2023, Triple Shooting; Carver May 20, 2022.

Since 2015 George Washington Carver Vocational Technical Senior High School has had six (6) guns confiscated from school.

MHCDC has two schools in our immediate catchment area: Matthew Alexander Henson Elementary School and George Washington Carver Vocational Technical Senior High School. To paraphrase a quote from the Godfather movie; we are going to hold MD Senators and Delegates, and publicly name names, of all that do not protect our children, faculty, staff, and parents!

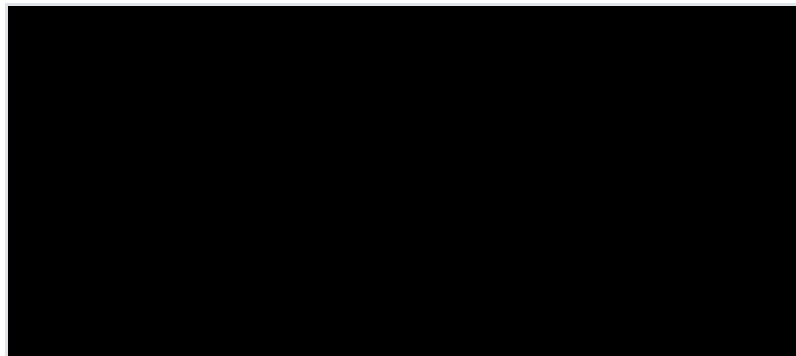
BALTIMORE, Md. — A teenager and his parents were indicted Tuesday for their alleged involvement in an Oct. 27 2022 shooting outside a Baltimore high school that left three people wounded.

The indictment accuses William Dredden III, 40, and Tiffany Harrison, 37, of driving their 15-year-old son to Carver Vocational Technical High School and helping him attack a student outside the school by “striking him repeatedly with a handgun and their fists as he waited for his classes to begin,” Yahoo News reports.

As the three were leaving the area after the attack, prosecutors allege the teen ran into another 15-year-old with whom he engaged in a verbal altercation. Both students pulled out handguns and started shooting, injuring each other. A third student was also injured in the crossfire.

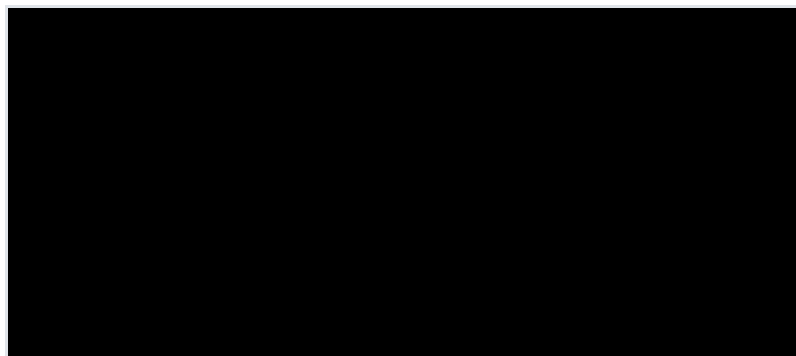
**BALTIMORE, Md.** — A teenager and his parents were indicted Tuesday for their alleged involvement in an Oct. 27 shooting outside a Baltimore high school that left three people wounded.

The indictment accuses William Dredden III, 40, and Tiffany Harrison, 37, of driving their 15-year-old son to Carver Vocational Technical High School and helping him attack a student outside the school by “striking him repeatedly with a handgun and their fists as he waited for his classes to begin,” [Yahoo News](#) reports.



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Introduced in a prior session as: SB0819 Session: 2024 Regular session.

**WE URGE STRONG SUPPORT OF THIS MUCH NEEDED BILL.**

Dr. Marvin L. 'Doc' Cheatham, Sr. - ***Dr. Marvin L. Cheatham, Sr.***

Dr. Marvin L. 'Doc' Cheatham, Sr.

MAHNA/MHCDC

President/C.E.O.

[civilrights@verizon.net](mailto:civilrights@verizon.net)

443/255-6056

Lifelong City Resident

*'...A Baltimore City Civil Rights Icon'*

*"...A youth that does not cultivate friendship with the elderly is like a tree without roots."*

*Over 50 Years Civil Rights Service-Leadership*

*Please Excuse Any Typos and Auto-Correct Errors*

On Monday, February 10, 2025 at 09:54:22 AM EST, Jennings, J.B. Senator  
<[j.b.jennings@senate.state.md.us](mailto:j.b.jennings@senate.state.md.us)> wrote:

Good morning,

I apologize for updating you last minute on Senator Jennings' bill hearing for his SRO Bill. (<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Legislation/Details/sb0644?ys=2025RS>)

If you would like to submit favorable testimony, it must be submitted today, February 10th by 6pm. For information on how to submit oral/written testimony, visit:

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/pubs-current/current-eee-faqs.pdf>

With your help, hopefully we can get this bill passed this year!

Best Regards,

Lauren

Lauren Fowler

Chief of Staff

Senator J.B. Jennings

James Senate Office Building

**Annapolis:**

11 Bladen Street, Room 323

Annapolis, MD 21401

Office: 410-841-3706

**District:**

141 N. Main Street, Suite K

Bel Air, MD 21014

[j.b.jennings@senate.state.md.us](mailto:j.b.jennings@senate.state.md.us)

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**From:** Robert Wallace <[rwallace@bithenergy.com](mailto:rwallace@bithenergy.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5:38:10 AM

**To:** [civilrights@verizon.net](mailto:civilrights@verizon.net); Jennings, J.B. Senator; Malcolm Bates; Malcolm Heflin Bates; wjz; wbal; [wmar@tv.com](mailto:wmar@tv.com); [tmcqueen@afro.com](mailto:tmcqueen@afro.com); Fox 45 News - WBFF; Wendell Freeman; Wendy Bozel for Baltimore; Wayne Baker; Stacy Weiner; Clarence Mitchell; J. Wyndal Gordon; [wjzme@comcast.net](mailto:wjzme@comcast.net); [bsimms@wbaltv.com](mailto:bsimms@wbaltv.com); [jaynemiller@wbal.com](mailto:jaynemiller@wbal.com)

**Subject:** Re: S.B. 819

I agree Doc. Thanks for keeping this issue front and center.

## Robert “Bob” Wallace

*Democratic Candidate for Mayor of Baltimore, 2024*

Visit [www.WallaceforBaltimore2024.com](http://www.WallaceforBaltimore2024.com) to learn about my plan to invest **\$1 Billion In Neighborhoods.**”



**From:** [civilrights@verizon.net](mailto:civilrights@verizon.net) <[civilrights@verizon.net](mailto:civilrights@verizon.net)>  
**Date:** Monday, February 12, 2024 at 9:49 PM  
**To:** Maryland General Assembly <[jb.jennings@senate.state.md.us](mailto:jb.jennings@senate.state.md.us)>, Malcolm Bates <[mbates@davidtrone.com](mailto:mbates@davidtrone.com)>, Malcolm Heflin Bates <[malcolm.h.bates@gmail.com](mailto:malcolm.h.bates@gmail.com)>, wjz <[newsroom@wjz.com](mailto:newsroom@wjz.com)>, wbal <[newstips@wbaltv.com](mailto:newstips@wbaltv.com)>, [wmar@tv.com](mailto:wmar@tv.com) <[wmar@tv.com](mailto:wmar@tv.com)>, [tmcqueen@afro.com](mailto:tmcqueen@afro.com) <[tmcqueen@afro.com](mailto:tmcqueen@afro.com)>, Fox 45 News - WBFF <[updates@communications.sbgvtv.com](mailto:updates@communications.sbgvtv.com)>, Wendell Freeman <[wendellfreeman1217@gmail.com](mailto:wendellfreeman1217@gmail.com)>, Robert Wallace <[rwallace@bithenergy.com](mailto:rwallace@bithenergy.com)>, Wendy Bozel for Baltimore <[wendy@wendy4baltimore.org](mailto:wendy@wendy4baltimore.org)>, Wayne Baker <[whb463@gmail.com](mailto:whb463@gmail.com)>, Stacy Weiner <[newsroom@wmar.com](mailto:newsroom@wmar.com)>, Clarence Mitchell <[c4@wbal.com](mailto:c4@wbal.com)>, J. Wyndal Gordon <[jwgaattys@aol.com](mailto:jwgaattys@aol.com)>, [wjzme@comcast.net](mailto:wjzme@comcast.net) <[wjzme@comcast.net](mailto:wjzme@comcast.net)>, [bsimms@wbaltv.com](mailto:bsimms@wbaltv.com) <[bsimms@wbaltv.com](mailto:bsimms@wbaltv.com)>, [jaynemiller@wbal.com](mailto:jaynemiller@wbal.com) <[jaynemiller@wbal.com](mailto:jaynemiller@wbal.com)>  
**Subject:** S.B. 819

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Action: 2024-02-08 - Hearing 2/28 at 1:00 p.m.  
 Pending: [Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee](#)  
 Hearing: Feb 28 @ 1:00 pm Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Hearing

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jurisdictions. Aren't our children, teachers, faculty and parents just as worthy as all others?

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# **SB 819 SROs firearm bill\_2024.pdf**

Uploaded by: Gail Sunderman

Position: UNF

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# MARYLAND COALITION TO REFORM SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

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## SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY and the ENVIRONMENT SENATE BILL 819: Public Schools – School Resources Officers – Firearms Required

DATE: February 28, 2024

### POSITION: OPPOSE

The Maryland Coalition to Reform School Discipline (CRSD) brings together advocates, service providers, and community members dedicated to transforming school discipline practices within Maryland’s public school systems. CRSD is committed to the fair and equitable treatment of all students, including pregnant or parenting students, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, and socio-economic status, and reducing barriers to learning for all students. **CRSD opposes SB 819**, which requires a Baltimore City school police officer and a school resource officer to carry a firearm while on school premises.

Local control is a fundamental tenet in Maryland public policy. This bill violates that premise. This is the idea that each jurisdiction maintains control of the implementation of laws/policies to reflect the values and needs of its communities. Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) has a policing strategy that it deems is appropriate for creating a school environment that promotes school safety. Indeed, recent research on where shootings take place in Baltimore City found that shootings take place outside school buildings and that students feel safest in schools.<sup>1</sup>

As the only local school system with its own dedicated police force, BCPS students experience greater police contact than any other student body across the state. The imposition of this law would only magnify that fact.

CRSD’s concern is threefold: (1) increasing the presence of lethally armed police officers in public schools would needlessly exacerbate the trauma experienced by many BCPS children; (2) the proposed legislation is a shift away from the proven restorative approaches BCPS has adopted; (3) policymakers will use the district’s limited resources to arm officers rather than prioritize needed educational and socio-emotional supports; and (4) arming school police is an unproven strategy for improving school safety.

As a Congressional Research Services report points out, the public response to issues of school safety and security too often focuses on violence prevention and incident response. The report notes: “. . . school safety and security also include issues related to bullying, harassment, childhood trauma, student mental health, substance abuse, school climate, and student discipline” all of which require different kinds of responses.<sup>2</sup> For example, Federal cross-agency efforts to address school violence have expanded to

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<sup>1</sup> Bowie, L. & Vuttaluru, S. (February 2, 2023). How violent neighborhoods threaten otherwise safe Baltimore Schools. *Baltimore Banner*. <https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/education/k-12-schools/shootings-near-baltimore-city-schools-PPIKB4DTKNCKBENO2CLFW4QUEY/>

<sup>2</sup> Congressional Research Service (August 10, 2021). *Federal support for school safety and security*. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46872/11>

support grant programs to increase mental health awareness among school-aged youth and school personnel and connect youth with mental health issues and their families to needed services. Other federal grant programs help local education agencies develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive programs and activities that foster safe, healthy, supportive, and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement. Maryland needs more of these types of programs, not more guns in the schools.

There is a lack of meaningful data supporting the claim that arming school police increases school safety or lowers violent crime.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, there is substantial data that shows that even one instance of police contact increases the likelihood that a young person will have further involvement with the justice system, fall behind, and/or ultimately drop-out of school.<sup>4</sup> Research also finds that a public health approach is the most effective way to address school safety.<sup>5</sup>

SB 819 undermines the intentions of the BCPS *Building A Generation: City Schools' Blueprint for Success*, which focuses on Student Wholeness and Staff Leadership, supports relationship-building pedagogy, and the implementation of restorative approaches to school discipline.<sup>6</sup> Arming school police will not improve school safety or student well-being, and is likely to worsen school climate and student safety.

For more information contact: Maryland Coalition to Reform School Discipline  
[CRSDMaryland@gmail.com](mailto:CRSDMaryland@gmail.com)

### **CRSD Members:**

The Choice Program at UMBC

Public Justice Center, Education Stability Project

Project HEAL (Health, Education, Advocacy, and Law) at Kennedy Krieger Institute.

League of Women Voters of Maryland

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<sup>3</sup> Congressional Research Service, School Resource Officers: Law Enforcement Officers in Schools, 2018, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45251/3>.

<sup>4</sup> Devlin, D. N. & Fisher, B. W. (2021). An examination of school resources officers as an approach to reduce social disturbances in schools: Evidence from a national longitudinal study. *Journal of School Violence*, 2.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15388220.2021.1875843>

Gottfredson, D. C., Crosse, S., Tang, Z., Bauer, E. L., Harmon, M. A., Hagen, C.A., & Greene, A. D. (2020). Effects of school resource officers on school crime and responses to school crime. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 19:3.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1745-9133.12512>

Stephanie Ann Wiley, The Amplification of Deviance Following Police Contact: An Examination of Individual and Neighborhood Factors among a Sample of Youth, July 2, 2014, 35,

<https://irl.umsl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1244&context=dissertation>.

<sup>5</sup> Flannery, D. J., Fox, J. A., Wallace, L., Mulvey, E. & Modzeleski, W. (2020). Guns, school shooters, and school safety: What we know and directions for change. *School Psychology Review*: 50. 2-3.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/2372966X.2020.1846458>

<sup>6</sup> Baltimore City Public Schools. *Building a generation: City schools' Blueprint for Success*.

<https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/blueprint>

Baltimore Alliance to Reclaim our Schools (AROS)

Youth, Education and Justice Clinic, University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law

Maryland Office of the Public Defender

Sayra and Neil Meyerhoff Center for Families, Children and the Courts,

Disability Rights Maryland

ACLU of Maryland

**sb0644.pdf**

Uploaded by: Julie Reeder

Position: UNF



## **SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY and the ENVIRONMENT**

### **SENATE BILL 644: Public Schools – School Resources Officers – Firearms Required**

**DATE: February 10, 2025**

**POSITION: OPPOSE**

Youth As Resources (YAR) is a youth-led organization focused on grant-making, leadership development, community organizing, and institutional change. We empower ourselves and our peers to address the root causes of our pressing issues through training, organizing, collaboration, and funding.

Our 22-member Board of Directors, all Baltimore City youth aged 14-24, governs the organization and manages two grant cycles per year, fund development, program priorities, and outcome evaluation. Each year, we adopt an issue agenda based on our lived experiences and those of our peers. For FY 2025 (July 2024 – June 2025), our focus areas include school police accountability, school climate, youth homelessness, and mental health/disability awareness.

As part of our commitment to school police accountability, we have:

- Launched the School Police Accountability Roundtable (SPAR), a youth-led coalition of young people, adult activists, and advocacy organizations focused on education, justice, and mental health. Our goal is to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline by reducing police presence in schools and ensuring that school officers foster positive relationships with students and families. SPAR is essential because it allows us to create our own strategies and make decisions, with adults providing resources and information—but not speaking for us.
- Engaged over 1,500 peers in developing a school police report card, a survey measuring student experiences and relationships with school police.
- Advocated for an annual school police report card survey and five hours of mandatory youth-led training for school officers and part of the school police policies and general orders.
- Educated peers about their rights when interacting with school police.
- Worked with allies on policies regarding the use of force, police involvement in school discipline, and diversion strategies.

- Helped develop a student-friendly police complaint form, which has been adopted by the school system and the Civilian Review Board.
- Successfully fought efforts to arm school police and testified against legislation that would have doubled the statewide budget for school resource officers.

**We oppose SB 644 because requiring Baltimore City school police officers to carry firearms on school grounds will increase harm, not safety.**

Increasing the presence of armed police in schools will only add to the trauma that many of us already experience. There is no evidence that arming school police improves school safety. Instead, we believe it will make students feel even more over-policed and unsafe.

We already see school police use pepper spray against students. Giving them guns creates the real possibility that they will escalate situations that could be resolved with other de-escalation methods.

Research shows that students arrested in school are three times more likely to drop out, less likely to be employed, and significantly more likely to be involved in the adult justice system. We need more opportunities to address mental health, healing, relationship-building, and trauma. Simply adding more policing will not address the root causes of violence in our schools.

Arming school police would also be costly. Baltimore City Public Schools already spends far more on school police than on mental health resources—but mental health and wellness resources are what we actually need.

We urge you to oppose SB 644 and instead invest in real solutions that make students feel safe: mental health support, restorative justice practices, and community-building.

Thank you.

# **SB0644-EEE-OPP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: UNF





**BRANDON M. SCOTT**  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**SB 0644**

February 12, 2025

**TO:** Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** Senate Bill 644 – Public Schools - School Resource Officers - Firearms Required

**POSITION:** **Oppose**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **opposes** Senate Bill (SB) 644- Public Schools - School Resource Officers - Firearms Required.

SB 644 would require all Baltimore City school police officers or school resource officers (SRO's) to carry a firearm while on the premises of the school they are assigned. This bill only applies to Baltimore City Schools, which appears to blatantly target Black school-aged children, who comprise 58% of the Baltimore City Public Schools system.

SB 644 would contribute to over-policing and exacerbate instances of escalation of force against students exhibiting delinquent violent and non-violent behavior that could be solved without the use of force. Additionally, the mandate of firearms in school would demonstrably do little to reduce the incidence of school gun violence, for which firearm advocates argue officers with firearms in schools prevent. According to a 2023 study of 2014-2018 U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights data published by the University at Albany and the RAND Corporation, the presence of police officers in schools did reduce some violence on campuses but not gun related violence.<sup>i</sup> According to their findings, the presence of SRO's is actually linked to an uptick of gun related offenses. In addition, researchers found that the presence of SROs also increase the use of suspension, expulsion, arrests, and referrals to police, particularly for Black students, boys, and students with disabilities.

From this, it can be concluded that the increased escalation, force, and adverse disciplinary outcomes for students as a result of SRO presence will likely be exacerbated should all SRO's carry firearms on school campuses in Baltimore City, with little benefit with regards to reducing gun violence. For this reason, the BCA respectfully request an **unfavorable** report on SB 644.

<sup>i</sup> Sorensen, L. C., Avila-Acosta, M., Engberg, J. B., & Bushway, S. D. (2023). The thin blue line in schools: New evidence on school-based policing across the U.S. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 42(4), 941–970. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pam.22498>

# **SB644 Public Schools School Resource Officers Fire**

Uploaded by: sharlimar douglass

Position: UNF



### **Testimony Oppose SB644**

Public Schools – School Resource Officers – Firearms Required

Education, Energy, and the Environment

February 12, 2025

Dear Honorable Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

MAREE is in opposition of **Senate Bill 644 – Public Schools – School Resource Officers – Firearms Required**. The Maryland Alliance for Racial Equity in Education (MAREE), a coalition of education advocacy, civil rights, and community-based organizations committed to eliminating racial disparities in Maryland’s education system.

Senate Bill 644 advocates for requiring a Baltimore City school police officer and a school resource officer to carry a firearm while present on the premises of the school to which the officer is assigned before or after regular school hours on school days and on days other than school days.

Even with the best training, there is always the risk of accidental discharge or improper use of firearms in a school environment, which could lead to tragic consequences. This risk is heightened by the presence of students, who may not fully understand the seriousness of firearms and could inadvertently cause dangerous situations. As a result, it is crucial to carefully weigh the implications of allowing firearms in schools, ensuring that the safety of students and staff remains the top priority. The presence of armed guards can foster an atmosphere of fear rather than safety. This action may convey a message that the school is a high-risk environment, leading to heightened anxiety and stress among students. Additionally, the militarization of the school setting could undermine the nurturing and supportive atmosphere that is essential for positive mental well-being and effective learning.

MAREE is concerned that presence of armed school resource officers will disproportionately target Black and Brown students, leading to a higher risk of racial profiling and reinforcing systemic inequalities. This targeting can create an environment of fear and mistrust among students, particularly those from Black and Brown communities, which can negatively impact their educational experience. Security in schools can be achieved through multiple methods. Effective strategies include the presence of school counselors and mental health professionals who play a significant role in addressing the root causes of violence, such as bullying, trauma, and emotional distress, fostering a supportive environment that promotes overall well-being and safety.

[mareealliance.org](http://mareealliance.org)

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Baltimore City is the only jurisdiction in Maryland that prohibits school police officers from carrying firearms inside schools. There is no need for this to change. Our schools are safe, nurturing, and secure without the presence of firearms.

**MAREE respectfully asks the committee to oppose SB644.**

peace and truth,

The Maryland Alliance for Racial Equity in Education (MAREE)

## **SB 644 - Public Schools - School Resource Officers**

Uploaded by: Dawana Sterrette

Position: INFO

**The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners**  
**Letter of Information**  
**Senate Bill 644 – Public Schools – School Resource Officers –**  
**Firearms Required**

**February 12, 2025**

The Baltimore City Public School System has had its own school police force for over 40 years. The Baltimore City School Police Force has built community relations inside the school building with many of its students. The Baltimore City Police Force works in collaboration with school police and helps to keep bad things from the community spilling into the school building. The mission of the Baltimore City School Police Force is to create and maintain a safe learning environment.

As many know, school police in the City are not armed during school hours, if they are assigned to a school. However, the law allows those school police officers that are assigned to a school to have firearms before and after school hours. Additionally, those school police that patrol are armed throughout the day.

The Baltimore City school police officers are specifically trained to work with our students and receive training on trauma informed care, de-escalation, conflict mediation, mindfulness, non-violent crisis intervention, etc. The training they receive is both evidenced based and approved by the Maryland Center for School Safety and the Maryland Police Correctional Training Commission. It is much more than the average police officer.

With the engagement and public input, the City School Police Force rewrote many of its General Orders. We have also created an MOU for school police and principals with a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities. Again, the focus of school police is to not only protect, but to build relationships with the student population as a preventative measure in order to keep the school community safe. I would also include that our Chief of Police and his team have received national recognition from their work with students.

Now that the Blueprint for Maryland's Future has become law, there is additional funding to allow school systems to have more community schools, provide extensive wraparound services, promote more trauma informed care and build upon restorative practices, among many more items to address mental, behavioral and socio-economic issues of students.

And lastly, we must state that the General Assembly passed legislation in 2018, (Safe to Learn Act) on student safety and requires school districts to have a plan that identifies adequate police coverage of school buildings. This information must be submitted annually to the Maryland Center for School Safety.

Dawana Merritt Sterrette, Esq.  
Executive Director, Legislative and Government Affairs  
[dsterrette@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:dsterrette@bcps.k12.md.us)  
443-250-0190



