



S.274/H.2021 An Act Promoting Local Control and Effective Training of School Resource Officers

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Why Is It Needed?

- Current law requires each school district in the Commonwealth to assign at least 1 school resource officer (SRO), unless that requirement is waived.
- This legislation will build upon this existing law to creating uniformity around the use of SROs. If officers will be present in our schools, they must be properly selected and trained and we must outline in great detail what role these officers will play. We must ensure that officers are in school for safety, not for discipline, so that we do not increase the amount of young adults entering the school-to-prison pipeline.

What Does It Do?

- The existing statute on SROs requires the superintendent and the chief of police to enter into a written memorandum of understanding (MOU) that defines the role and duties of the SRO.
 - This legislation will create additional elements to be included in the MOU, including:
 - a mission statement, goals and objectives for the program;
 - the roles and responsibilities of the SRO, police and schools;
 - the process for selecting school resource officers;
 - a process for gathering and sharing information;
 - a discussion of students' rights related to a safe and positive school environment;
 - the mechanisms to incorporate the officer into the school environment; and
 - training for SROs, including child and adolescent development, conflict resolution, and diversion strategies.
- The MOU would also be required to state that SROs will not serve as formal counselors, schools disciplinarians, or enforcers of schools regulations and that SROs cannot use police powers to address traditional school discipline issues, including non-violent disruptive behavior.
- The bill will also require that standard operating procedures be created to provide SROs with guidance on daily operations, policy, and procedures like the use of police force, arrest, and court referral on school property; a statement of students' legal rights; performance evaluation standards; and protocols for diverting at-risk students to community-based supports.

- Finally, the bill creates the SRO training program which will include training for officers in child and adolescent development, de-escalation techniques, juvenile law and diversion strategies as well as and training for school officials. Officers can receive a certificate for completion of the training.