

DRAFT

Culture and Climate Meeting Minutes 5/31/19

Relax Robert rules

Last meeting's minutes approved

Survey subcommittee: (Michelle, John, Adam)

- We need to go over what we created
- What do we want to present to the board is a survey and who do we want to survey?
- What time of year do we want to survey? Do we want to survey more than once to see if results change?
- What was the process in developing the survey?
- What is the benefit of the survey and how can the data collected inform the board of how to move forward?
- NYS also has a survey - and if we deviate from that, why? If we stray from the NYS survey, what is the justification? Finally, is the survey that we put together at least compliant with what the state mandates?

Committee Output to BOE/Deliverable for the year:

- Members and their roles
- Consensus if our definitions of culture and climate
- Recommended survey and dates of each meeting
- Who do we survey? Needs to be specific and explain why
- Recommendations to BOE and other stakeholders that have a large outreach - do they have input?
- Guests that came - who spoke? What did they present?
- What is our accepted SRO definition - there is a national one but we need to include the references that informed our committee definition
- Other references cited
- Various options discussed - implementation of SRO and MOU
- What should be in a MOU in general?
- Comment- can we discuss MOUs further?
- What other plans are there?
- Do you support SROs to committee? Yes or no?
- How do we proceed with this committee? Moving forward, what is our plan?
- Suggestion: a flow chart of where we are with implementation of certain things, as an appendix (from Task force through what we have done)

Mr. Daniello: SRO Presentation (see slides on website)

- Community policing: building a rapport with the community
- Police can teach certain classes about: date rape, substance abuse, bullying, etc.
- What evidence exists that SROs are valuable? Need a responsible adult who both cares and listens. They can act as an informal counselor and be an active listener.
- Reviews stats about incidents in New Rochelle district that looked at how many times the police were contacted in 2017, 2018 and 2019 and then how many of those incidents led to arrests.
- SROs are not in place to discipline. When there is disorderly conduct, the guards and administrators are responsible for handling the issue.
- Presentation included clips from school shootings and specifically Columbine - the average police response time is 3 minutes and here at NRHS it is most likely 3 minutes to the parking lot and therefore closer to 6 minutes before they can get to right location within the building (assess where the shooter is).

Questions posed after Daniello's presentation:

Considering that SROs have multiple roles and 40 hours of training- how do they truly train to deal with kids? The chosen officer is someone who is diplomatic, an active listener, someone who is patient, and can communicate well. Beyond the 40 hours of specific SRO training, many areas that need to be covered and addressed occur in the 6 month police academy.

Is there specific data that says that SROs work? There are so many variables.

Where did the data come from in regards to disorderly conduct? Directly from incidents that led to police arrests.

Is there any data that shows how many schools that experienced shooting had SRO's present? There was one that was stopped in 9 seconds but here is no other hard data - we just have what schools have presented to the media.

In the training that the SRO's go through, since working with kids a certain skill set is needed, what training is specifically involved in dealing with socio/emotional aspects? Furthermore, in regard to training, what is the awareness for students with special needs. Even though, the SRO is aware of students with IEPs, in NRHS alone, we have over 500 students with disabilities. SRO's work with counselors and can just be an active listener when a counselor is not available. Additionally, part of the academy training is how to deal with these types of issues and over time, you just learn. SRO's, approximately will have 5 years on the field before being brought on as an SRO.

Is there a middle ground when it comes to officers having a weapon? NYC security guards have police training and have the power to arrest.

Comments posed after Daniello's presentation:

1. All the roles SROs play is helpful but can't a mentor play those roles as well? When the Code of Conduct dictates that administration should call the police, is an SRO really necessary if an admin is calling anyway?
2. Do we want a possible ineffective SRO in our building exposing students to more police (possibly another negative connection to cops)?

Rabbi Weiner- statement form the executive IRC (Inter-religious counsel)

Please see the full statement below:

Thank you all for a few moments of your time.

I am here today as President of the Inter Religious Council of New Rochelle, and on behalf of our Executive Committee. Within our great city, there is no civic organization which represents a greater diversity than does the IRC. The member congregations of the IRC bring together peoples of all the colors of the human rainbow and across the spectrum of beliefs, economics, neighborhoods, ethnicities and nationalities. Our congregations are Buddhist, Catholic, Bahai, Greek Orthodox, Jewish, Mormon, Protestant, Muslim, 7th Day Adventist and more.

The mission statement of the IRC says that

We are committed to promoting interfaith understanding among all religions. We exist to keep the lines of communication open among religious communities, to foster an atmosphere of trust and cooperation, and to serve the New Rochelle community through a combination of action and dialogue.

We express the essential commonalities of our varied religious heritages and traditions while respecting our differences. We promote interfaith amity and cooperation. We seek to address the human needs of our City community. We serve the community by undertaking ministries to meet these needs and by cooperating with other groups and individuals.

I am here today as this body discusses the placement of armed police officers in our schools in order to fulfill our mission to promote understanding, trust and cooperation and to address the human needs of our City community. The Executive Committee of the IRC unequivocally opposes the placement of armed police officers, euphemistically referred to as School Resource Officers, in our schools. We believe that the placement of such police officers in our schools will undermine the core values of this community: equality, diversity and unity.

All of us are aware of the need for safe schools and that every child deserves, as a human right, a good education in a safe environment. As a parent of two children in district schools, of course, I personally want our schools to be as safe as possible. Safety, however, comprises many elements far beyond the protection from extremely rare occurrences of violence in our schools. In fact, the overall feelings of safety in our schools are likely to be eroded by placing armed police in the schools. Most particularly for our students of color. The fact is, black and brown children will feel less safe if there are armed police in our schools. This erosion of their feelings of safety will act to further exacerbate the underlying issues in our district which cause strife and division. Armed police in our schools is the treatment of a symptom rather than the malady itself. The resources which might be allocated to such armed police officers in our schools would be better appropriated to more social services, more teachers, more mental health professionals, more guidance counselors and more professionals who can elevate the lives of our students. These would be real *resource officers*. These are the people who will actually make our students feel safer, reach higher and live lives of meaning and purpose.

There are those who have made the case that students have nothing to fear from the police, in general and in our schools. Sadly, the data on this does not lie – people of color do fear the police, students of color in schools with armed police do fear them. That is not conducive to learning – the core purpose of the City School District. Likewise, the belief of some that, somehow, our District would be immune from the kinds of negative consequences of armed police officers in our schools is just that – a matter of belief – a leap of faith. We at the IRC are believers, in our own individual traditions and in our District, but not at the expense of data and facts. Leave matters of faith to us and let our schools be environments of nurturing and compassion, not fear and overreactions. Let our schools be places where we believe in our students, not treat them as potential criminals. Let us believe that we can make our schools safer by lifting up those who need it. Let us believe that we can do the work of providing an outstanding education, as this district has been known for.

Across all of the religious groups that make up the Inter Religious Council, we share a belief that human beings contribute the most to our world when we strive to be our very best and to live out our highest ideals. Armed police in our schools is neither a striving to be our best nor a living of the ideals of New Rochelle – a city founded on the principle that all should be welcome in our community – equally. Striving to be our best means putting our resources to work to deal with the core issues in our schools. That is what the IRC asks this School District to do. We say no to armed police in our schools and yes to truly making our schools safe havens for our children.

Open Community Questions and Comments:

1. **A community member stated that there were three shooting they were aware of within the last year where an SRO was present- would there have been dead children without this SRO?** Mr. Daniello replied “Yes.”
2. **Do we really need the SRO? Do we need metal detectors?** We want our children to learn that police are are friends and try to get away from racial implications. We do not want a negative connection to cops.
3. Many shooters have had issues in the past - instead we need to put in the resources within the community to help address issues before they become a danger - **we need to be PROACTIVE!**
4. Some members believe that the committee has predetermined how we proceed with SROs. There should be data to represent both the pros and cons (which we have speakers who have come to meetings that have spoken to each side). **What are the unintentional consequences of an SRO?** We need to come to an intelligent decision.
5. **Have we always follow the policies and procedures?** Policies and procedures need to be updated and reviewed with the current climate. Policies and procedures also need to be implemented and people need to be held accountable.
6. A parent with 4 daughters in the district spoke about how he feels all of his daughters when asked feel safe. He also addressed that the real needs that should be addressed more in depth are the **social/ emotional needs of the students** .
7. **The committee’s motives seem politicized and there needs to be more focus on the student.**
8. **If we did have an SRO and they were out sick or vacation or a break, who replaces them? Is there something in place for this?**
9. **Are we actually going to adhere to an MOU?**
10. A parent and retired teacher spoke about her instinct is that having an armed SRO makes her very nervous and **her view is that an SRO does not improve safety.**
11. **Mark:** Do we really need to take this drastic step and add in an SRO? We need to focus on empowering youth and not focus on race. However, we cannot deny the hardships that come with being and African American and the negative stigma with police officers. We cannot say that it is not an issue when it is a reality!