

In response to recent questions regarding Spokane Public Schools safety policies and procedures, we thought it would be helpful to summarize our existing campus safety model and share how it came to be adopted. While our model has received substantial media attention lately, the process in developing it has been ongoing and public since 2015.

At that time the district was receiving a high volume of complaints regarding campus safety and student discipline. Additionally, various Community members also voiced concerns about SPS having one of the highest suspension rates and arrest rates in the state (over 800 arrests per year). Several groups expressed their intent to file a civil lawsuit against the district if the causes weren't adequately identified and addressed.

Recognizing these issues, the former SPS Superintendent collaborated with district leadership and numerous community partners to find solutions. The [Superintendent's Work Group](#) was formed to oversee the collection and review of student behavior-related data, as well as to receive updates on interventions and trainings designed to address student behavior. This workgroup still meets on a quarterly basis and is open to public attendance.

As part of this process, SPS collaborated with the Spokane Education Association for their input and reached agreement to include contractual language in their bargaining agreement regarding expectations for student behavior, additional supports, and training around [restorative practices](#).

Following five years of community forums and study, the new model emerged in 2020, following the passage of the [School Board Equity Resolution](#).

Safety is and always has been a top priority in SPS, with the renewed understanding that everyone in our learning community holds a shared responsibility for each other's wellbeing, not just Campus Safety Specialists.

Here is an overview of our current safety model:

- While we previously had a total of 11 Campus Resource Officers district wide — we now have 15 Campus Safety Specialists – two per high school. are non-commissioned positions that do not have arrest authority but are trained and instructed to contact law enforcement regarding activities which require mandatory reporting, critical or crisis situations, or other situations when appropriate. This transfer of authority to law enforcement aligns with the [resolution language](#). Every SPS employee attends annual training on mandatory reporting. The new model also includes training school administrators in de-escalation procedures. Each SPS employee badge includes a list of contacts and phone numbers for reporting hotlines and emergency services as an additional reminder.
- We launched a [Multi-Tiered System of Supports](#) to connect students with interventions based on their individual needs. Each school now has teams of counselors, therapists, specialists, and mentors who review student behavior and resources, then provide wrap-around services to support each student.
- Our threat assessment and response protocols are coordinated with the various law enforcement agencies, a school-based committee of safety personnel, counselors,

and other staff who meet regularly throughout the year to reassess. In any non-crisis event, building administrators collaborate with safety and central office personnel to determine whether law enforcement should be involved in any student issue.

The model is having a positive impact. Total district-wide exclusions (suspensions and expulsions) have fallen from more than 4,000 in the 2014-15 school year, to under 2,000 this school year. Disproportionality for students of color and students with disabilities has continually decreased. Student perceptions of school safety are steadily rising according to annual surveys of our student body, and our rate of on-time graduation is at an all-time high.

We continue to welcome input into our safety model from community groups and members including all law enforcement agencies and SPS is committed to adopting any additional policies and procedures that enhance and improve the safety of our children and employees.

Although we are happy to talk about our safety model, its history, and the current positive impact on students and families, we are unable to answer any question that could be perceived as relating to the current FBI review. However, upon completion of that review, we look forward to answering your questions.