

SENATE No. 2257

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court
(2017-2018)
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SENATE, Thursday, January 25, 2018

The committee on Education to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 274) of John F. Keenan, James M. Cantwell, Carolyn C. Dykema, Jose F. Tosado and other members of the General Court for legislation to promote local control and effective training of school resource officers,- reports the accompanying bill (Senate, No. 2257).

For the committee,
Sonia Chang-Diaz

SENATE No. 2257

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In the One Hundred and Ninetieth General Court
(2017-2018)

An Act promoting local control and effective training of school resource officers

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Subsection (b) of section 37P of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is
2 hereby amended by striking out the second paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following
3 paragraphs:-

4 In selecting a school resource officer, the chief of police shall consider candidates that the
5 chief believes would strive to foster an optimal learning environment and educational
6 community; provided, however, that the chief of police shall give preference, to the extent
7 practicable, to candidates who have received specialized training in one or more of the following
8 areas: (i) child and adolescent development; (ii) de-escalation and conflict resolution techniques
9 with children and adolescents; (iii) behavioral health disorders in children and adolescents; (iv)
10 alternatives to arrest and other juvenile justice diversion strategies; (v) and behavioral threat
11 assessment methods. The appointment of a school resource officer shall not be based on
12 seniority. The performance of a school resource officer shall be reviewed annually by the
13 superintendent and the chief of police.

14 The superintendent and the chief of police shall enter into a written memorandum of
15 understanding to clearly define the role and duties of the school resource officers. The
16 memorandum shall be placed on file in the office of the school superintendent and police chief.
17 The memorandum shall: (i) state that school resource officers may use arrest, citation and court
18 referral only when necessary to address and prevent real and immediate threats to the physical
19 safety of the members of the school and the wider community; (ii) state that it is the
20 responsibility of school officials to impose discipline for non-violent school infractions such as
21 tardiness, loitering, use of profanity, dress code violations and disruptive or disrespectful
22 behaviors; (iii) set forth protocols for utilizing the expertise of mental health professionals in
23 addressing the needs of students with behavioral and emotional difficulties, in crisis situations
24 and otherwise; (iv) require that a school resource officer devote a significant portion of time that
25 the officer devotes to professional development activities and to school-based or other training
26 that promotes heightened awareness of the challenges faced by students in the school to which
27 the officer is assigned, with an emphasis on professional development activities that impart
28 information regarding child development, including the incidence and impact of adverse
29 childhood experiences, de-escalation techniques and implicit or unconscious bias; (v) specify
30 how the school and police departments will regularly monitor and assure that a school resource
31 officer is complying with the terms of the memorandum and avoiding inappropriate arrest,
32 citation or court referral; (vi) specify the manner and division of responsibility for collecting and
33 reporting the school-based arrests, citations and court referrals of students to the department of
34 elementary and secondary education in accordance with regulations promulgated by the
35 department, which shall collect and publish disaggregated data in a like manner as school
36 discipline data made available for public review; and (vii) include other matters that the chief of

- 37 police and superintendent determine necessary to define the roles and duties of a school resource
- 38 officer.