

Community Safety and Wellness Task Force

SRO Roundtable
Youth Listening Sessions

Community Safety and Wellness Task Force (SWTF)

A joint, community-led task force charged with examining the public safety & wellness needs of Durham residents and communities, educating residents on existing safety and wellness resources, and providing recommendations for additional programs to enhance public safety and wellness that rely on community-based prevention, intervention, and re-entry services as alternatives to policing and the criminal legal system.

SWTF School Resource Officer Roundtable

The SWTF created roundtables related to the specific areas of interest, including school resource officers (SROs). The SRO Roundtable is tasked with identifying safety and wellness needs related to the school setting and offering recommendations for alternatives to the current use of SROs in Durham Public Schools.

Youth Listening Sessions

Purpose: The SWTF SRO roundtable will conduct youth listening sessions to better understand safety and wellness needs in schools and provide recommendations on alternatives to school policing that meet these needs.

Youth Organizers and Participants: Because we believe that individuals who are most impacted are in the best position to identify needs and concerns, youth listening sessions will be led by DPS students in middle and/or high school who attend schools with SROs. Youth organizers will receive support from members of the SWTF SRO Roundtable in organizing and confirming a time, date, and location for each listening session.

Timing: Our goal is to complete at least 3 youth listening sessions with 8-12 youth per session by October 31, 2021. The sessions will preferably be held during school hours.

Compensation: Student organizers will receive a stipend of \$125 for organizing a youth listening sessions in their schools. Additionally, each of the 8-12 students participating in the listening sessions will receive a stipend of \$25 for their participation.

Data Collection and Confidentiality: Audio from each listening session will be recorded for the sole purpose of identifying safety and wellness needs and collecting recommendations for alternatives to the current practice school policing. The names and contact information of students who participate in the listening sessions will not be recorded or shared. However, the SWTF SRO Roundtable will collect the age, grade and school of listening session participants for the sole purpose of identifying safety and wellness needs and collecting recommendations for alternatives to the current practice school policing.

Contact

If you are interested in hosting a listening session at your school, please email Tyler Whittenberg (twhittenberg@advancementproject.org) or Nori McDuffie (noriny13@gmail.com).

Guiding Questions for SRO Listening Sessions – Creating an Affirmative Vision

1. How do you imagine schools where all students feel safe and supported?
2. What are ways that schools can hold students and staff accountable for their actions without arrests or referrals to law enforcement?
3. Excluding SROs, who are the adults you would want in your schools to ensure the safety and wellness of all students?
4. How can teachers and schools staff help prevent incidents of harm before they occur?
5. What mental health resources are needed in your school?
6. Which existing resources and policies help to foster safe and supportive school environments without the presence of police?
7. What sorts of new resources or amended policies would help to foster safe and supportive school environments without the presence of police?