

SRO Pay During COVID School Closures: Overview and Key Points

November 16, 2020

- **Students in PSD will be learning remotely starting on November 23rd.**
- **This marks the 3rd time SROs will be paid while buildings are empty.**
- **This is fiscally irresponsible, particularly during a time of drastic budget cuts.**

Overview: During the pandemic schools are often closed and still PSD pays for SROs. The cost is approximately half of what they are paid when schools are open. The financial cost of SROs to Poudre School District is troublesome, especially at a time where COVID related budget cuts are significant. The City of Fort Collins pays half, and PSD matches what the city pays. This is the current projected expense for the city of Fort Collins,, originally and during COVID. As this cost is matched by the district, this is what PSD pays for the Fort Collins SROs when schools are closed ¹

		Original	Covid
	Sgt	1	1
	Corporal	2	1
	Officer	11	5
2020	Jul-Sep	\$138,181	\$70,196
2020	Oct-Dec	\$253,332	\$128,693
2021	Jan-Mar	\$245,655	\$124,794
2021	Apr-Jun	\$207,272	\$105,295
	Total	\$844,440	\$428,978²

What is PSD paying police to do during school closures?

¹ These are the costs for the Fort Collins SROs only. One Timnath and two Larimer Sheriff SROs are paid when schools are open bringing the cost closer to \$1million/year.

² Source, Tim Doran, Fort Collins Police Services

- They are working in offices from closed schools or at the police department.
- They will be working in the community conducting investigations and/or follow-ups.
- They field “safe to tell” calls.
- They could be notified when students are arrested.³

In addition to these formal “duties” they are paid to hand out laptops to students who are studying from home.⁴

Key Points:

- Why is PSD paying police to work when schools are closed?
- COVID school closures have revealed the massive expense of SROs, and the ability we have as a community to demand that these tasks are performed by other professionals.
- Safe to Tell calls must be fielded by trained dispatchers and handled by the designated safe to tell team, not by SROs with nowhere to go.
- Uniformed police officers do not need to hand out laptops.
- SROs should never be notified when students are arrested out of school. This leads to profiling and likely violates confidentiality.
- There is absolutely no reason why 7 SROs should be working during a time when schools are not open.
- The money spent on SROs when schools are closed could be better spent on expenses arising from the pandemic like laptops, tutoring, meals for students, student health and mental health
- PSD needs to find ways to save money, not waste money paying for police while students are not in school

³ Source, Jeff Swodoba, Fort Collins Police Chief

⁴ Source, Fort Collins Police Services Instagram