The Educational Facilities Liaison Program in Partnership with the New Bedford Police Department

OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The main objective of the Educational Facilities Liaison Program is to improve the student experience in our community by facilitating positive relationships between the New Bedford Police Department and youth in the New Bedford Public School System.

The school environment is a community unto itself as it is a microcosm of the larger society. As our schools are an integral part of the general community, these officers will provide a variety of educational resources to the school community. They provide law enforcement information and advice to students and parents and provide a positive law enforcement presence in the school community. EFLs are not intended to enforce school disciplinary policies.

The purpose of this Educational Facilities Liaison Program is to:

- Enhance cultural understanding between students and law enforcement
- Inform the parties’ collaborative relationship to best serve the school community
- Help promote a positive school climate for all students, families, and staff
- Promote school participation and completion by students
- Facilitate appropriate information-sharing when needed

MISSION

- To support and foster a safe and supportive school environment that allows all students to learn and flourish regardless of race, religion, national origin, immigration status, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status
- To offer presentations and programming to the school focusing on criminal justice issues, community and relationship building, and prevention, health, and safety topics
- To encourage relationship-building by the EFL such that students and community members see the EFL as a resource for needed supports
- To outline processes for initiatives that involve the EFL and school personnel, such as violence prevention and intervention and emergency management planning
- To collaboratively promote safe, inclusive, and positive learning environments

DESCRIPTION

This program is a partnership between the New Bedford Public Schools and the New Bedford Police Department. EFLs work in partnership with students, teachers, school administrators, school boards, parents, other police officers and the community to establish and maintain a healthy and safe school community. Funded by the City of New Bedford as part of their net school spending obligation, the Educational Facilities Program began in 2000 with officers assigned to multiple schools. Currently NBPS has 6 officers assigned to support all schools on a rotation with the high schools and middle schools being their bases. The program continues to upgrade its efficiency and effectiveness through ongoing training and ongoing communication.

An Educational Facilities Liaison (EFL) is a sworn uniformed law enforcement officer trained in emergency preparedness, crisis management, community policing concepts, and problem solving who is assigned to work as a resource to NBPS. Some key duties include:

- Will act as a resource and assist with emergency preparedness, to include participating in lock-down, shelter in place, and evacuation drills, as well as safety awareness education to all grade levels as appropriate
- Will serve as a point of contact to deliver law enforcement programs such as crime prevention, conflict resolution and mediation, drug and alcohol awareness, anti-bullying, violence prevention, gang awareness, and community relations and outreach
- Will coordinate familiarization training (walkthroughs), to include review of the schools’ emergency response plan/procedures, for responding officers within the district. These walkthrough trainings will be coordinated with school administration