

Madalyn Letellier

From: Lizbeth Ginsburg [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 7, 2026 12:16 PM
To: Ruben Carmona; Mayor's Office; All City Council;
[REDACTED]; Public Comments
Subject: Opposition to returning SRO to SHS

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Dear Mayor Wilson, City Councilors, Members of the School Committee and Superintendent Carmona,

I am writing in response to the Superintendent's plan, announced unilaterally in April 2026, to return to the previously rejected practice of having a police officer (SRO) at the Somerville High School. As the parent of a just-graduated senior and a rising sophomore at Somerville High School (SHS), and as a long-time Somerville resident who cares about safety and justice for all members of our community, as well as democratic processes and transparent decision-making, I am deeply opposed to this action.

1. In 2023, the school committee engaged in a deliberative process and made specific recommendations to the Superintendent that involved measures *other than* having a police officer (SRO) in the schools. These measures focused on providing resources in schools to address safety concerns without having a police officer in schools. The Superintendent's current plan to return a SRO to SHS is a unilateral and undemocratic action that ignores years of work previously done on this issue and the community input that it involved. This should be rejected. To the extent the district has concluded that the School Committee's recommendations are not suitable to meet this moment, the response should be a transparent and thoughtful process that involves community input, rather than a unilateral move to return police to schools without any meaningful explanation to SHS stakeholders and city residents at large.

2. Data shows that returning police to schools will not make things safer - instead it is a giant step backwards. As I have considered this proposed action, I keep wondering why Somerville is taking this step, which seems to move us TOWARDS a school-to-prison pipeline, rather than taking the steps the School Committee directed in 2023 as a way of interrupting it. I have been unable to find any explanation offered to the public for why the Superintendent and other decision-makers think this move is either necessary or appropriate given the data and previous community input.

3. In an era where Somerville has in many ways stood up to federal abuses and overreach, I have been proud to be a resident of a city that has stood up for our most vulnerable residents. Yet this plan to return police to schools is starkly inconsistent with other actions Somerville has taken, with no process and real explanation from our leaders.

4. In the context of militarized ICE enforcement actions, where children from immigrant families are being terrorized and live in fear, I find it hard to believe that adding a police presence in our schools will

do anything other than decrease their sense of safety, and possibly will deter some children from immigrant families from coming to school. It will also make it less likely that their parents will participate in school events such as parent-teacher conferences.

5. The money that is being targeted to return a SRO to SHS should instead be used for the resources that the School Committee has already recommended. To my knowledge, these recommendations were never fully implemented. Those recommendations should be implemented, tested, and then improved upon before we return to the previously-rejected practice of having police officers in schools.

I urge you all, as the leaders making decisions that impact our children's collective safety and well-being, to stop this unilateral action and to instead reverse course and return to fully implementing and then improving on the School Committee's 2023 recommendations.

Lizbeth Ginsburg


Somerville, MA 02144

Madalyn Letellier

From: Rachel Dines [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 8, 2026 12:06 PM
To: Mayor's Office; All City Council; [REDACTED]; Public
Comments
Subject: Keep police out of SPS

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Dear Mayor Wilson, School Committee Members, and City Councilors:

As a longtime Somerville resident and parent of an SPS student, I was incredibly disappointed to hear that SPS is attempting to bring back police into our schools. And to do so without any transparency, seemingly ignoring the fact that the School Committee, in 2023, legally directed the Superintendent to follow their guidance on this matter is shocking behavior.

I implore you in the strongest possible terms to abide by the agreements made in 2023 to keep police out of our schools.

I look forward to your response and to seeing meaningful follow-through on the 2023 recommendations.

Sincerely,

Rachel Dines

[REDACTED] Somerville, MA

Parent of Argenziano rising second grader

Madalyn Letellier

From: Linnaea Sidel [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 8, 2026 1:36 PM
To: Mayor's Office; All City Council; [REDACTED]; Public
Comments
Subject: Fight against SROs in our schools

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Dear Mayor Wilson, School Committee Members, and City Councilors:

As a current junior and SPS student, I was shocked to hear that SPS is attempting to bring police *back* into our schools and in doing so, is seemingly ignoring the fact that **the School Committee, in 2023, legally directed the Superintendent to follow their guidance on this matter**. As a student who will be directly affected by this, I implore you in the strongest possible terms to abide by the agreements made in 2023 to **keep police out of our schools**.

In the 3 years since the school committee's decision, here is what has NOT changed:

1. The evidence. We know—both from extensive national research and from families' experiences right here in Somerville—that **police in schools do more to cause harm than to prevent it**. This isn't about "good" versus "bad" police; unfortunately, it's how the system of policing works in the US. We don't want this to continue to happen to Somerville children, especially to our students of color, students with disabilities, and students who are immigrants--the students harmed most.
2. What our community wants: **alternatives to police**. Through years of conversations, our Somerville community has loudly and consistently demonstrated broad support for alternatives to police. We don't want policed schools; what we do want is to build and maintain substantial mental health support for students. The 2023 recommendations reinforce our community's desires for **restorative justice, mental health supports, and training for our teachers, staff & students** about anti-racism and implicit bias. We know this from the hundreds of comments that Safe Schools Somerville has collected and from at least 2 student surveys in Somerville High School. Again and again, **student and community voices oppose bringing back the SRO or having police in schools**. If the goal of bringing police back to our schools is to support the students, it seems an immense oversight to ignore their voices.
3. The desire for our children, teachers, and staff to be safe at school. **Police don't stop school shootings or create a feeling of safety**. The response to put police in schools to protect kids and staff from the things we fear most does NOT provide protection--**it actually makes students feel unsafe**. As a student in the very school system in question, I would know this feeling.

What *HAS* changed in these 3 years? Notably, Federal overreach and ongoing ICE actions in Sanctuary Cities. The threat of ICE is the biggest reason we need to stop police presence in our schools. What have we learned based on the recommendations from 2023? As part of its 2023 recommendations, the School Committee directed further **investment in Restorative Justice** including 5 Community Engagement Specialists (CES), Mental-Health First Aid Training via youth-led ambassadors, and De-

escalation Training (2 trainings per year for staff). Having only interacted with these specialists a few times, I *still* know just how vital they are to my community. I firmly believe that our CES team makes students feel vastly safer than any sort of police intervention ever will. Instead of jumping to an action (reintroducing an SRO) that is NOT evidence based, runs contrary to community voice, and directly contradicts School Committee recommendations, I urge you to **meaningfully learn how the recommendations from 2023 have been implemented and received**. That would answer questions such as:

- What is working well?
- What requires evolution given our current context?
- How are these programs being further invested in & developed?

Upon hearing that trusted leadership is working to bring police back into schools in a disconcertingly secretive way, I was shocked and a little scared. I remind you that doing better means listening to the voices of the people your policies are impacting. I urge you: **Implement the guidance already in front of you, show up with transparent, open communication, and walk the talk of SHS's own Highlander Habits** -- especially communication, collaboration, and culturally-competent citizenship. If I can recite these from memory, surely the adults that taught me them can reflect on their own Highlander Habits as well.

I look forward to your response and to seeing meaningful follow-through on the 2023 recommendations.

Sincerely,

Linnaea Sidel

SHS 11th grader