

History

School-based law enforcement programs were initiated in the 1950s and grown in popularity in recent decades. In 1982, the Georgia legislature provided local school boards the authority to establish school-based law enforcement officers.¹ In the 1990s, amid growing fears about juvenile crime, several high-profile school shootings, and increased federal funding for school-based law enforcement programs, more and more communities began assigning officers to schools.²



From 1997 to 2003, the number of school-based law enforcement officers rose 52 percent, from 9,400 to 14,337.³ As of 2012, well over 10,000 officers police approximately 40 percent of U.S. schools nationwide, primarily at the secondary school level.^{4,5}

Funding

- Large grants for funding drug free schools was one of the first opportunities for law enforcement to be on school campuses on a regular basis (outside of forced integration of schools during the Civil Rights Movement).
- The U.S. Department of Justice houses the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) which provides grants to law enforcement agencies for community policing efforts.
- COPS grants are the primary source of federal funding for supporting the presence of law enforcement in schools.

- COPS began funding school policing efforts in the aftermath of Columbine. The 45 percent increase in the number of School Resource Officers (SROs) between 1997 and 2000 was supported by the allocation of \$68 million through the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) In Schools Program.
- The COPS in Schools Program led to the hiring of 599 SROs in 289 communities in 2000,⁶ which fostered a continued growth in SROs from 9,446 in 1997 to an all time high of 14,337 in 2003.⁷ Since that time, COPS has contributed a total of \$905 million to hire 6,300 SROs and develop other school safety measures.⁸
- COPS offered \$13M in federal grants for school-related programming in 2011 through its “Secure Our Schools” grants.

¹ O.C.G.A. § 20-8-5.

² Na, C., & Gottfredson, D. C. (2013). Police Officers in Schools: Effects on School Crime and the Processing of Offending Behaviors. *Justice Quarterly*, 30(4), 619–650.

³ Bureau of Justice Statistics. (2000). *Local police departments 1997*. Washington, DC: Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

⁴ Snyder, T., & Truman, J. (2013, June 26). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2012*. Washington, DC: Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

⁵ Raymond, B. (2010). *Assigning Police Officers to Schools*. Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Response Guides Series. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

⁶ Cathy Girouard, “School Resource Officer Training Program,” March 2001, U.S. Department of Justice – Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/fs200105.pdf

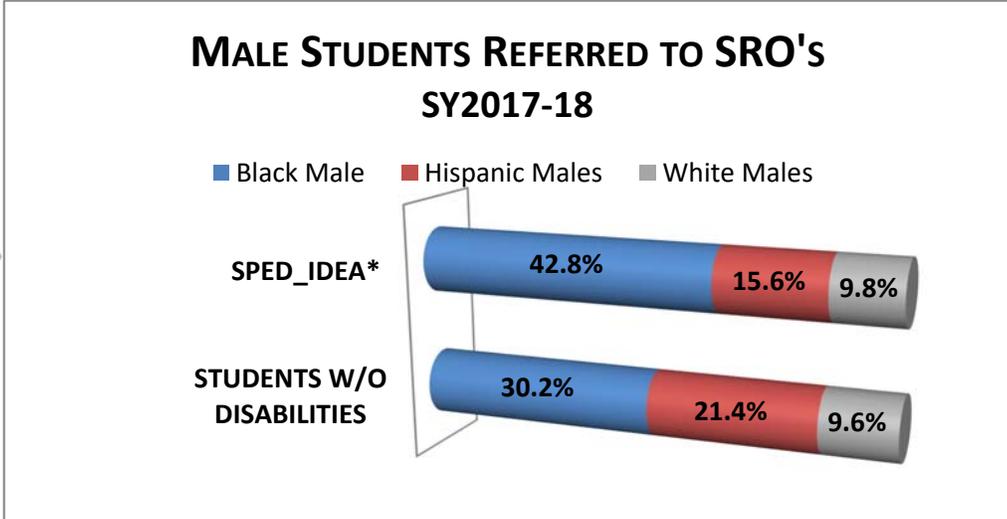
⁷ Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics, “Local Police Departments, 1997,” “Local Police Departments, 2000,” “Local Police Departments, 2003,” and “Local Police Departments, 2007”* <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=tp&tid=71>

⁸ Community Oriented Policing Services, “COPS office announces availability of \$13 million in school safety grants,” Press release. May 2, 2011. www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2583

POLICE IN SCHOOLS

GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS GEORGIA

Black male students are **3.8 times more likely** to be referred to law enforcement than white male students



Students with disabilities represent **30.9% of all students referred to law enforcement** but **only 12.5% of the student population**

Black female students are **4.6 times more likely** to be referred to law enforcement than white female students

