



# School Crossings

## Update

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# Current Program

- FCPD is currently responsible for 164 crossing locations each day
  - 328 crossings (am/pm) – 30 minutes each = 164 hours each day
  - Crossing Guard (CG) staffing = 52 crossing guards (62 authorized)
    - Handle approx. 240 crossings per day
  - Patrol Officers
    - Provide coverage for all vacant crossings, approx. 88 per day (44am/44pm)
    - Patrol minimum staffing is **90 officers – Nearly half needed daily on average**



# Challenges

- Hiring and Retention of Crossing Guards has been a long-term issue
- Insufficient number of Crossing Guard positions, requires patrol to fill the gap
- Impact to Patrol operations during school crossing hours
- FCPD has been responsible for school crossings within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Towns of Herndon and Vienna, and Fort Belvoir
  - Herndon and Fort Belvoir crossings eliminated in 2023
  - Vienna has 9 crossing locations = 18 crossings per day



## Costs

- Crossing Guard personnel services are approx. \$2M annually
- Overtime used to mitigate need for patrol officers to cover = \$1.5M

# Crossing Criteria

- FCPD criteria for crossing
  - Minimum of 13 students crossing
  - 25 vehicles per 5 minutes for ES and 30 vehicles per 5 min for MS and HS
  - Evaluated by Traffic Division Personnel
- Other Considerations
  - Alternate route or method of transportation available
  - Controlled intersection within 500 feet
  - Traffic patterns, terrain, presence or lack of traffic control, etc.
  - Time required for children to be in road as compared to sight distances for drivers
  - Gap time between vehicles
    - Less than four gaps of 30 seconds or three gaps of 40 seconds for elementary age
  - Where FCPS walking boundaries or bus services change



# National Comparison

Jurisdiction	Population	# of Students	# of Schools	# of Crossing Locations	# of Sworn Officers	Coverage Responsibility
Raleigh, NC	1.15M (Wake County)	157,000	192	40	802	RPD, using part-time SCGs and sworn officers as backfill. No overtime is authorized for officer coverage.
Virginia Beach, VA	469,000	66,000	37	37	828	VBPD, using part-time SCG, pre-hire cadets and sworn officers for backfill.. When staffing is insufficient, VBPD notifies the school district they will not be able to cover.
El Paso, TX	678,000	50,661	76	--	1100	El Paso School System with no PD assistance.
Arlington, TX	400,000	56,000	78	94	700	City of Arlington uses part-time SCG employees with no police assistance
Miami, FL	2.6M	329,458	540	40	1200	Private company contracted by the City. MPD does not assist.
Milwaukee, WI	574,000	69,115	154	180	1603	140 crossing guards work for City – no association with Police
Fairfax County, VA	1.13M	183,000	199	164	1484	Part-time SCG assigned to police department, backfilling by on-duty and overtime police officers

# Neighboring Jurisdictions and Crossing Guard Starting Pay Data

Fairfax County starting pay \$16.58/hr

## Loudoun County: Starting pay \$19.56/hr

- 35 public schools with crossings (No HS)
- 96 crossing times and 41 crossing guard positions
- If a CG is not available, an auxiliary assists
  - If an auxiliary is unavailable, assignment is offered as overtime
  - If still uncovered, a deputy covers

## Alexandria PD: Starting pay \$15.60/hr

- 12 elementary schools  
(No crossings for MS or HS)
- 43 crossing times, 12 crossing guard positions  
The remainder are covered by private contractor (since Fall of 2023)
- In the event a guard or contractor calls off, they backfill with parking enforcement officers
- No patrol officers handle school crossings

## Arlington County PD: Starting pay \$20.13/hr

- 5 middle schools and 18 elementary schools
- 176 crossing times with 44 crossing guards covering
- If a guard calls out and no other guards are available to cover, 2 crossing guard office members assist. Otherwise, the crossing remains uncovered. Schools are notified and a school employee helps monitor.

## Prince William County PD: Starting pay \$17.55/hr

- 47 schools with crossings (No HS)
- 152 crossing times and 60 crossing guards
- If a guard is not available, the assignment is filled by cadets
- Sworn officers are never used for crossings.

# Recommendation

- Privatize the School Crossing Program under FCPS
  - Identify a vendor to handle the program entirely
  - Cost estimates for privatization are \$700,000 - \$1,000,000 annually
    - Potential funding exists in the school bus stop arm program

# Other Options

- Collaborate with FCPS to find alternatives when CGs are not available
  - Administrators, staff, or school security can be trained to provide coverage
  - Reassess FCPS walking and bus routes to reduce the number of crossings
- Program Stays with FCPD
  - Work with County to allocate more school crossing guard positions
    - Additional 20 positions = \$700,000 bringing total program personnel costs to \$2.7M
  - Complete a pay study to be more competitive with the region
  - Adjust existing crossing criteria to eliminate excessive crossings
    - Eliminate most HS and MS crossings

# Questions and Feedback?