

# Whole School Safety

Board Presentation

March 24, 2021



# CPS Commitment

Under the commitment of Academic Progress, CPS commits to driving **safe and supportive school cultures that enhance learning**



# CPS Progress Towards Dismantling School-to-Prison Pipeline

CPS has seen progress since School Year 2012:

- 91% reduction in out-of-school suspensions
- 87% reduction in expulsions
- 80% reduction in student arrests taking place at school

Unfortunately, despite these improvements, exclusionary disciplinary actions still disproportionately impact students of color

# Status of School Resource Officer Program as of August, 2020

- Local School Councils were asked to vote on the decision regarding the SRO program at their schools
  - 72 schools: 55 schools kept the program / 17 schools removed the program
- Last fall, significant improvements were made to the Inter-governmental Agreement to address key concerns that were previously expressed:
  - New eligibility and selection criteria
  - Principals will now play a role in selection of their SROs
  - SROs are prohibited from using the “Criminal Enterprise Information System”
  - Improved process for complaints involving SROs
    - Centralized intake via COPA
    - COPA will have a special unit to review SRO-related complaints
  - Improved Training
  - Compliance with Welcoming City Ordinances

# Evolution of School Safety and Chicago Board of Education's Call to Action

- Although CPS has historically used CPD School Resource Officers as part of its safety strategy for many of its schools, the district acknowledges that it is critical for CPS to ***review and reimagine a vision for the future of safety in schools*** that considers the further reduction or even elimination of the SRO program.
- Per the 2020 Board Resolution, the CPS Board of Education is ***seeking alternatives to the SRO program:***

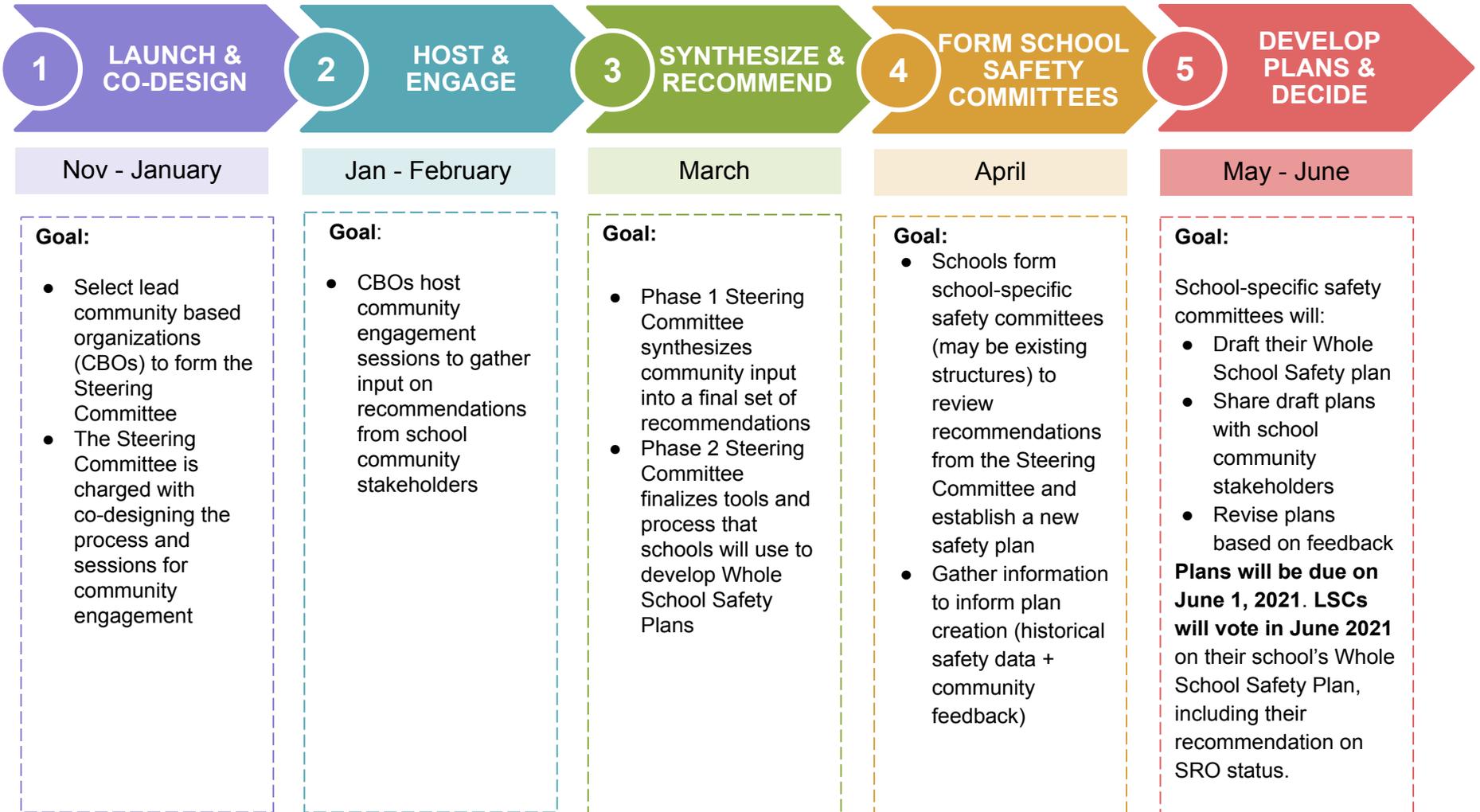
CPS must develop an “inclusive, thoughtful and expeditious process to develop and implement ***alternative systems of safety for CPS students*** in every school that prioritizes their physical and social-emotional well being, learning and transformation.”

- *Chicago Board of Education August 2020 Board Resolution*

# The following process was created in response to the Board Resolution

**Phase 1: Community-led engagement**  
*(Embark Strategies, Joe Hoereth, Civic Consulting Alliance)*

**Phase 2: School-based implementation**  
*(University of Chicago - TREP, Civic Consulting Alliance)*

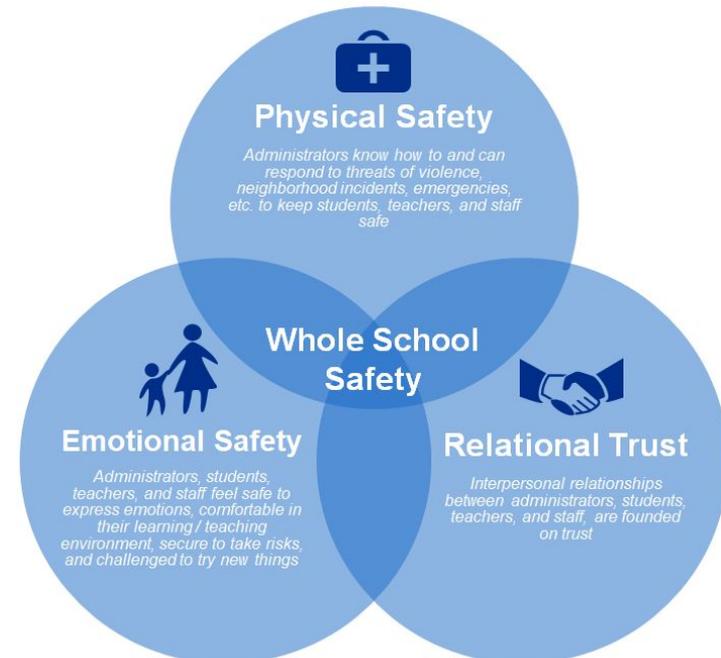


# Phase 1 focused on community engagement across the city to collect inputs on alternatives to SROs

1 5 community-based organizations (CBOs) hosted **18** community meetings which reached **676** total people in order to generate recommendations.



2 In line with CPS' Healing Centered Initiative (HCI) Framework, community members were asked to develop holistic recommendations that extended *beyond* physical safety to include emotional safety and relational trust



# Phase 1 Steering Committee Whole School Safety Recommendations

- Implement holistic restorative practices
- Increase access to social emotional learning (SEL) and mental health resources
- Create safe and welcoming physical school environments
- Increase investments in student leadership and decision-making processes
- Increase authentic parent and community engagement opportunities
- Provide additional school-level support for trauma-informed crisis intervention
- Promote and enhance Behavioral Health Teams

# Phase 2 will focus on school-based implementation



**Create / Convene Committee:** Each high school will create or convene a **school-level safety planning team** that includes a diverse set of community stakeholders, particularly including **parent and student voice**.



**Prepare:** This School Safety Team will gather information to inform their Whole School Safety Plan, including but not limited to:

- **Soliciting feedback from the school community** via public sessions
- **Reviewing and discussing historical school safety data** with a focus on racial equity



**Develop Plan:** This School Safety Team will **develop a Whole School Safety Plan** that incorporates feedback from the community and approval of its LSC. Budget will be reviewed using an equitable resource allocation process.

A core team consisting of CPS students, teachers/staff, principals, network leadership and two CBO members from Phase 1, will develop the tools and process that will be used by schools during Phase 2. University of Chicago Trauma Responsive Educational Practices (TREP) Project Team will guide the work.

# Additional Support for Schools during Phase 2

- A youth-led district wide training, led by VOYCE, will be available to youth who are a part of their school's Whole School Safety Committee and Local School Councils to focus on youth leadership development and governance;
- Access to CPS subject matter experts from Office of Social Emotional Learning, Office of Safety and Security and Office of Equity;
- Coaching by members of the Trauma Responsive Educational Practices (TREP) Project at the University of Chicago, and
- Access to district-wide webinar in April 2021 that will be open to the public and further present both the framework and recommendations of the Whole School Safety effort.

# High Level Phase 2 Timeline/Next Steps

- **Early April, 2021:** Schools will form and launch school-level Whole School Safety Committees
- **April-May, 2021:** Whole School Safety Committees will review school's safety data and conduct school community engagement
- **May, 2021:** Schools will make recommendations on Whole School Safety Plans in conjunction with budget reviews
- **June, 2021:** Local School Councils will vote on final recommendations on Whole School Safety Plans

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# Appendix

# History of CPS School Safety

1995

CPS implements Zero Tolerance policies resulting in an almost 6-fold increase in expulsions. At the same time, Sheila Castillo, Executive Director of the Chicago Association of Local School Councils, said security decisions should be left to individual schools.<sup>1</sup>

2010

CPS signs IGA with CPD to authorize SROs in 97 schools

2012

CPS begins transformation away from zero tolerance policies and towards more restorative approaches including initiating Student Code of Conduct Reforms and overhaul of Security Officer training

2014

CPS formally abandons zero tolerance policies

2018

CPS directs LSCs at remaining 72 schools with the SRO program to vote to recommend whether they wish to continue the program

2020

17 LSCs vote to remove the SRO program (55 schools keep the program)

CPS notes progress since School Year 2012 with 91% reduction in out-of-school suspensions, 87% reduction in expulsions 80% reduction in student arrests taking place at school

Unfortunately, these exclusionary disciplinary actions are still disproportionately impacting students of color

<sup>1</sup> Natalie Pardo, ed., "Chicago Public Schools: Expulsions Rise, but Safety Issues Persist," The Chicago Reporter (September 1998)

# The following “guardrails” were considered when CBOs created recommendations



**Legal:** The recommendations must align with state and local law and school codes. (For example, persons with documented, ineligible convictions cannot be allowed into school as a part of outreach programs)



**Focused on safety:** Recommendations should be focused on the emotional and physical safety of students. (For example, a proposal to create a science lab would be out of scope)



**Targeted:** Recommendations should be prioritized to no more than 5-10 safety concepts



**Should not be specific to a particular vendor:** Because all services will need to go through a procurement process, recommendations should be presented as a concept and not tied to a specific proposal that is proprietary to a specific vendor. For example, a specific restorative justice vendor should not be identified when presenting the concepts



**Funding will be considered during the CPS Budget Process:** All plans will be considered in conjunction with existing resources at each of the schools. The concepts should be “scalable” to different budget levels



**Role of LSCs:** School LSCs will still vote on the final safety plan that works for their school. These recommendations will still go through the LSCs in determining whether they will be accepted by individual schools. SROs may still be considered by an LSC