THE CROSSING GUARDS STUDY
An analysis of the positive roles for child safety and mentoring

Conducted by the University of Pittsburgh
Office of Child Development/Early Childhood Partnerships
An independent and objective applied program evaluation funded by Allies for Children

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A+ Schools
Be There Campaign
City of Pittsburgh
The Mentoring Partnership
of Southwestern Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
Office of Child Development
United Way of Allegheny County

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was conducted to better understand how the City of Pittsburgh utilizes crossing guards and to identify improvements to the system for deployment, equipment/safety, and professional development/supervision.

The perspectives and work of multiple stakeholder groups were recorded, analyzed and profiled via individual interviews, focus groups, surveys, and vignettes of daily work practices. The stakeholders included: school crossing guards, supervisors, union representatives, public safety officials, school representatives, and adult community members.

- Universal respect for the work, value, and importance of crossing guards was a consistent theme.
- Crossing guards serve an important role in supporting the safety and security of children.
- Many crossing guards already show “natural” mentoring interactions with children and their families.
- Crossing guards and their administrators expressed support for opportunities to augment the professional development and education of crossing guards.
- Professional development and education in mentoring is one of those high profile topics.
- Crossing guards and police could work together to mentor children on pedestrian safety skills. This ensures better education for children and increases connectedness between police and crossing guards.
- The hiring and orientation process for the crossing guards needs to be standardized across all new hires.
- A work group comprised of multiple stakeholders must be established to discuss the priorities and implementation of the several applied recommendations from this report.
- Supervision for the crossing guards should be reevaluated, with the possibility of increasing the number of supervisors.
- Crossing guards need better equipment to ensure their capacity to communicate effectively with public safety officers, school officials, and others.
- More crossing guards are needed to broadly ensure the safety, security, and well-being of children.
- A separate work group must be established to evaluate and determine the safest routes for children to get to and from school, creating a metric and geo-map to be distributed for use of the community.
**Partner Goals**

- The goal of the United Way of Allegheny County’s Be There campaign is to encourage attendance at school.
- Mayor William Peduto has stressed the importance of providing proper equipment to crossing guards and installing safety measures, such as traffic signs, digital countdown displays and bike lanes, in school zones (see page 6).
- The mission of the Department of Public Safety, which houses the Crossing Guard Division, is to provide for the security and safety of all residents and patrons of the City of Pittsburgh through the oversight and execution of the public safety operational strategies. Their mission includes improving community and first responder safety through training, technology, fleet upgrades and increased community visibility as well as enhancing and enforcing team collaboration across all Public Safety Bureaus.

**INTRODUCTION**

Allies for Children brought together the United Way of Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania, A+ Schools, and the University of Pittsburgh’s Office of Child Development (OCD), Division of Early Childhood Partnerships, Scaling Progress in Early Childhood Settings (SPECS) Research team to review and analyze how crossing guards are utilized in the City of Pittsburgh. Allies for Children believes that route safety is an integral part of encouraging attendance both at school and in out-of-school time programs and improving relations between public safety officials and children. The city, as a whole, is interested in improving the experience of travel and safety for students as they make their way from home to school on a daily basis, in the hopes that a positive experience will increase school attendance. The goals of different organizations that are currently connected to the crossing guard study are highlighted at left.

Crossing guards can and often do serve as mentors.

The Office of Child Development supports Allies for Children and all the above beliefs, goals and missions and, in addition, believes that crossing guards provide students with more than a hand to hold when crossing the street or a smiling face when heading to school. Crossing guards can and often do serve as mentors.

The SPECS team had several meetings and correspondence with Allies for Children’s Executive Director Patrick Dowd and Research Associate Mara Christy which provided the backdrop and detail for our approved proposal. In addition, the SPECS Team also participated in several roundtable meetings with key stakeholders on the project including the Allies for Children group, representatives from the Mayor’s Office, the City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Safety and United Way. These roundtable meetings helped to clarify the direction and objectives of the Crossing Guard Study and the expected outcomes.
**SPECS Participatory Action Research Model**

Early Childhood Partnerships uses Scaling Progress in Early Childhood Settings (SPECS), a participatory action research (PAR) methodology in our collaborative work with community partners. PAR involves all relevant parties in actively examining together current processes in order to improve upon them. It is a collaborative and consensus decision-making process whereby stakeholders determine the purposes, methods, expected outcomes, and implications/recommendations of the evaluation research.

The SPECS authentic assessment and program evaluation model has been field-validated in Pennsylvania local, regional, and state-wide studies (Bagnato, Salaway, & Suen, 2009; Bagnato, Suen, Brickley, Smith-Jones, & Dettore, 2004) focused upon the use of natural methods for collecting real-life data in natural community and daily routine settings rather than through laboratory-based methods. Such SPECS “authentic” methods to collect the actual perceptions and behaviors of children and adults involve such strategies as: natural observations; focus group process and group consensus decision-making formats; internet-based survey ratings; iPad video segments; iPad and Audio-Pen segments; and real-life vignettes of children and adults in action. The SPECS model and methods has been customized and used in this current research as profiled in Exhibit 1 on the following page.

The SPECS team evaluated data made available by the City of Pittsburgh and collected new data to answer the study questions and indicators listed to the right using a participatory action research methodology and assimilated the data into this evaluation report with implications and recommendations. The research team gathered information from a variety of sources, to examine 7 different areas: hiring, deployment, equipment, supervision and professional development, positive community relationships, training, and funding. As a part of the mentoring component of this research, all participants were asked to comment on their perceptions of the connections between crossing guards and the community; describe positive experiences crossing guards have with children; and to share their thoughts about professional development related to mentoring and building positive, trusting relationships with children and community members.

The team developed multiple survey measures specific to individuals interviewed that targeted the identified research questions. These surveys were utilized for individual interviews and focus groups and distributed the survey online and passed out hardcopies to all crossing guards (Appendix H). The SPECS team completed face-to-face interviews with individual crossing guards, public safety personnel and adult community members. Focus groups were completed with crossing guards and adult community members from a variety of neighborhoods across the city. The following neighborhoods were represented in the study: Lawrenceville, Beechview, Brookline, Greenfield, Morningside, Hazelwood, Northside, Point Breeze, Squirrel Hill, and Mt. Oliver. Each focus group had 10 to 20 participants.

**Evaluation Indicators for the Crossing Guards Study**

The following 8 quantitative and qualitative research indicators were integral to the Crossing Guards Study:

1. Number of crossing guards: Trends related to deployment, public safety, and community demographics
2. Number of crossing guards in the City of Pittsburgh: Sufficiency to meet child/youth needs
3. Quality, use, and decision-making of deployment criteria: Priority to meet child/youth needs and to promote and maintain their safety and security
4. Payment and compensation of school crossing guards
5. Integration of crossing guards into Department of Public Safety: Equipment, professional training, emergency protocols, safety measures, and standards
6. Community consensus on skills and personal attributes needed for crossing guards to meet child/youth needs and security
7. Professional development mentoring for crossing guards: Technical and interpersonal competencies
8. Supports (i.e., professional training and capacity-building) needed for crossing guards to mentor children and youth and to promote their safety and security
The SPECS team utilized group decision-making formats to structure consensus results from the focus groups including the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) and Delphi Technique (DT). The team also applied a special focus and qualitative and quantitative analyses on the potential service and needed support for crossing guards to serve as natural mentors of young children including ensuring their safety and security and worked with the Office of Child Development Communication Division to gather “child/family/crossing guard vignettes” as naturally-occurring examples of crossing guards mentoring young children in their daily interactions. These multi-media vignettes were contributed by the crossing guards and/or adult community members themselves and the communications division composed them into written colloquial, vignette stories as an illustration of the real-life potential role of mentoring. Final recommendations were determined using a group consensus decision-making process in which all partners came together on February 24th at Children’s Museum to review and form consensus on each recommendation before the SPECS team made several iterations of revisions; gained approval from an internal OCD oversight group, and submitted the final report. The specific sources of information for our program evaluation include the following which are inserted after specific evaluation topics in the narrative of the evaluation below:

### Exhibit 1: SPECS For Allies for Children: Crossing Guards Study evaluation methods, process and analysis modes

<table>
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<td>Analyze current qualitative and quantitative data provided by partners</td>
<td>Collect current data from partners, City of Pittsburgh, and Allies for Children.</td>
<td>Appropriate data analyses using both statistical and goal-attainment scaling (GAS) methods</td>
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<td>Collect and analyze qualitative data through individual surveys and interviews</td>
<td>Develop survey measures that target identified research questions. Select individual crossing guards, public safety personnel, adult community members, teachers and United Way representatives to complete survey and interviews.</td>
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### Areas examined by research team
- Hiring
- Deployment
- Equipment
- Training and professional development
- Supervision
- Positive community relationships
- Funding

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Individual Interviews (INT)
- Various figures within the Department of Public Safety including the Chief of Police, the Manager of the Chief’s Office, the Assistant Chief of the Administrative Branch, and two Zone Commanders were interviewed to collect city data on the crossing guard budget and gain input from the police on their view of the Crossing Guard Division and their perception of collaboration between the police and the crossing guards.
- The Pittsburgh Public Schools Department of Transportation Director was interviewed to obtain information on the number of student walkers, the process of transportation requests, the protocol for incident reports, and the link between school transportation and crossing guards.
- The Supervisor of the Crossing Guards and the President of the Crossing Guard Union were interviewed to gather detailed information on crossing guard protocols. This included information about the application and hiring process, training procedures and policies, equipment provision, emergency and incident report procedures, and crossing guard’s perceptions of their connection to other professionals in the department of public safety.
- Six crossing guards were individually interviewed.

Surveys (SURV)
- Anonymous surveys were collected from 16 crossing guards to obtain feedback on certain issues both in the department and the community. Surveys were distributed to all of the crossing guards with their paycheck and an online survey link was sent to each one of the guards as well.
- Anonymous surveys were collected from 15 community members to obtain feedback on their perceptions of crossing guards and their work in specific neighborhoods and their relationships with crossing guards. The online survey was distributed to the community through a link that was posted on the Early Childhood Partnerships Facebook page, reaching an audience of 74 people.

Focus Groups (FG)
- Seventeen (17) adult community members participated in a community focus group to obtain feedback from adult community members who interact with crossing guards on a daily basis.
- Twelve (12) crossing guards participated in a Focus Group.

Natural Observations (OBS)
- Crossing guards were observed at different intersections throughout the city to provide additional data for the SPECS team.

Vignettes
- Crossing guards were interviewed about their personal experiences with mentoring children. Each crossing guard was asked to share personal qualities that they believe have prepared them for the role of a mentor and a favorite mentoring experience during their time as a crossing guard.
SPECS CROSSING GUARDS STUDY EVALUATION RESULTS

Mayor Peduto’s Commitment to Safety

Newly elected Mayor Peduto has expressed his commitment to supporting schools and increasing safe routes for students throughout the city. In a February 2015 press conference Mayor Peduto accepted the report of his Education Task Force, which established a set of recommendations focused on improving City and School District collaboration. One of the recommendations urged the Mayor to “prioritize reducing and eliminating danger in zones immediately surrounding all schools” (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, February 2015).

Demographics and Role

Crossing guards are part of the City of Pittsburgh’s Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Police, and Administrative Branch. The Department of Public Safety is led by a Director who oversees the overall public safety strategy for the City of Pittsburgh and is committed to strengthening the relationship between the community and all Public Safety Department Bureaus. The Bureau of Police is commanded by the Chief of Police. Within the Bureau of Police, there are three Branches: the Administrative Branch, Executive Branch and Investigative Branch. Each Branch is under the command of an Assistant Chief. The crossing guards are in the Administrative Branch which also includes the Training Academy, Personnel & Finance, Support Services, and Research and Special Events Planning (City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Safety, 2015).

The role of a crossing guard in the City of Pittsburgh is multi-faceted and the relationship between the crossing guard and community has shifted over the past few decades; Appendix B provides a description (definition) of the roles and duties of a crossing guard. In the City of Pittsburgh, one can apply to be a crossing guard at the age of 18. The average age for a guard is in their 30s, however many guards tend to be older because they apply after retiring from other professions as a way to keep busy and work with a population (children).
that they enjoy. The current female to male ratio of crossing guards within the city is 95:5. Most crossing guards apply for the position as a way to work and remain close to their own children and many guards stay on the job for years after their children finish school. It is important to note that crossing guards do not just serve children before and after school; their work also includes monitoring intersections during community events such as parades, festivals, funerals, construction work, and sporting events (INT).

According to the crossing guard job description a regular full time school crossing guard earns about $71.70 per day and a substitute guard earns about $67.72 per day. Crossing guards work between 25-40 hours per week. A crossing guard must be employed for 145 days before they have the option to receive health insurance. Once a crossing guard is employed for the preliminary period plus another 90 days, the guard then has the option to choose an enhanced plan which adds dental insurance and vision care to the current benefits package. The crossing guard is responsible for paying the full incremental cost of additional coverage for dependents (INT).

In the City of Pittsburgh 23,000 students are transported to public and non-public schools every day and over 19,000 students are classified as walkers. Elementary and middle school students are required to walk if they reside within one and a half miles from their school. High School students are required to walk if they reside within two miles from their school. Although there are 19,000 students classified as walkers, only 12,937 of these students walk to school. The remaining 6,063 students that are classified as walkers are provided bus transportation due to identified hazards on their route. A route is determined as hazardous by considering vehicle hazards, such as no curbs, high traffic volume, or a high number of tractor-trailers using the route. Social hazards are not considered. In 2006 the city expanded the definition of hazardous routes to include social hazards, but this new definition did not pass through state legislation (INT).

Over the past five years the number of crossing guards has decreased due to budget cuts. The city’s declining population was cited as a possible contributing factor. In the past, there have been up to 237 full time crossing guards and 35 substitute crossing guards. The current budget covers 102 crossing guards, however eight positions remain unfilled. There are currently 94 crossing guards in the City of Pittsburgh; 86 are full-time guards and 8 are substitute guards. About 7-8 police officers need to be pulled from their assignments to cover empty crossing guard posts every day because of this shortage. Some crossing guards are also now assigned to more than one post. This requires the guards to start out at one corner and then quickly commute to another corner. This leaves intersections unguarded and creates potential danger for pedestrians. During an interview with public safety officials, it was stated that placing a police officer in the role of a crossing guard is “not a bad thing nor is it much of an inconvenience during the daylight shift,” however, it does require significant rearranging and can be an inconvenience during after-school hours when police call volume rises and traffic increases.

Based upon our multi-source evaluation results, the SPECS team offers the following revised definition of a crossing guard:

A crossing guard is a civil servant who protects the members of the community by monitoring and directing traffic through their assigned intersection, safely crossing children and other pedestrians from one corner to another. A crossing guard is a mentor to the children of the community, using both natural and taught skills that foster a supportive and positive relationship. They also instruct children on proper pedestrian safety skills both in and out of the classroom. Crossing guards possess a considerable amount of knowledge about building and maintaining positive community relations, traffic regulations, and Public Safety procedures. (SURV, FG, INT)
When an officer is removed from duty to guard a corner, that officer is being pulled away from responding to 9-1-1 calls and backing up a fellow officer in the case of emergencies.

When an officer is removed from duty to guard a corner, that officer is being pulled away from responding to 9-1-1 calls and backing up a fellow officer in the case of emergencies. Public safety personnel have voiced their concerns about having too few crossing guards. They have begun to address these safety needs at major intersections by installing four-way stoplights, where all traffic in the intersection is stopped for pedestrians to cross. These intersections are safer for older children and adults, but younger children may not understand how to navigate these intersections and still need adult supervision when crossing. Consensus was that in order to provide the highest level of safety to both child and adult pedestrians, more crossing guards are needed (FG, INT).

**Hiring & Orientation**

An applicant receives several background checks, followed by a series of interviews, and finally a physical examination before being hired as a crossing guard. Once hired, the individual submits his or her clearances, receives an employee handbook to read and completes safety training (more details below in “Safety Training” section). Next, the new crossing guard shadows an experienced crossing guard for two weeks. While shadowing, the new guard spends up to three days at different types of corners or intersections to be exposed to a range of situations that may occur while on duty. This is a very “hands-on” experience for new crossing guards. The experienced guards serve as mentors for the new guards and share techniques that they have learned in the past from their work and their own mentors. After the two week shadowing period is complete, the new crossing guard is assigned to his or her own corner. When a new guard does not seem ready to be assigned to a permanent post, the supervisor observes and provides feedback to make sure the guard is ready. If the supervisor determines the new hire is not ready to cross children independently, the guard will continue in the shadowing process until ready. However, with the current shortage of guards, it is difficult to allot new hires additional time for shadowing (INT).
Applications for crossing guards are under review for most of the year, except during the summer. The entire hiring and orientation process may take up to three months to complete. It was reported that these two factors impact the administrative branch’s ability to fill and maintain every budgeted position and have enough guards ready to begin in September when school starts (INT).

**Deployment Practices**

The SPECS team was unable to locate a standard decision-making process or rubric utilized when evaluating intersections for the need of a guard. Most intersections were identified as needing guards years ago. When a request for a guard at a new intersection is received, the intersection is evaluated by the crossing guard supervisor and the following factors are considered: age of student walkers, number of student walkers, and traffic conditions at the intersection. The SPECS team was also unable to uncover a method or metric to prioritize intersections from highest need to lowest need, which was suspected to impact deployment of guards, especially given the shortages. The only information found pertaining to deployment methods was that guards bid to work at intersections when they become vacant and that seniority is a major factor in determining which posts are covered (INT).

When a guard calls off due to injury or illness, a substitute guard is called to cover the intersection. A substitute guard is required to “get dressed as if they were going to work and wait for a phone call” from the supervisor who would then assign the substitute to a corner. Although no specific number could be identified, it was shared that crossing guards rarely call off due to their commitment to the community they serve (INT).

Crossing guards are often encouraged to provide pedestrian assistance for special events. These events include, but are not limited to, sporting events, funeral services, parades, construction sites, and large city celebrations. When an event is announced at a crossing guard meeting, any guard is free to sign up and positions are awarded based on seniority. The community benefits by utilizing crossing guards at these events because this allows police officers to perform their usual duties and to provide crowd control. The community seems to

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### Special Events

Awarded on a seniority basis, any guard is free to sign up to work special events, such as:

- Sporting events
- Funeral services
- Parades
- Construction sites
- Large city celebrations
respond positively to the crossing guards at these events and people often voice their appreciation and show respect to those on duty (INT).

**Provision of Safety Equipment and Safety Training**

Safety Equipment is provided to each new guard, upon hire, by the Department of Public Safety as shown in the chart on the left. It was reported that the raincoats sometimes leak and if waterproof clothing is not worn underneath the raincoat then the guard ends up getting wet. Uniform items are replaced as needed within a two-year period. Guards have one uniform that they are required to wear until the date of rotation; at that point, they switch into the uniform for the new season. New employees are also given an ethics handbook. They are informed about policies, which include uniform standards and rules and regulations of the crossing guard position. This information is updated on a yearly basis. Flashlights are also available for guards to use, but are not required (INT).

While many crossing guards report feeling safe and comfortable with the equipment provided, many voiced concern about the need for more equipment. Crossing guards are not provided a way to quickly communicate with police in the event of an issue or an emergency situation.

The majority of guards reported that some form of direct communication to the police department, specifically the zone commander of the area in which a guard is working, is a necessity (SURV, INT, FG). The current protocol for a guard when responding to an emergency situation is to contact 9-1-1 and then to contact their supervisor. Next, the supervisor contacts the needed resources and utilizes a telephone tree to communicate the message to all others. Communication with the supervisor is not enough; the supervisor is often out working intersections and not readily available to answer these calls (INT).

Surveys and interviews indicated that 77% of crossing guards think that they are not adequately equipped to communicate directly with the police in the event of an emergency. When asked what equipment would make them feel

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**Safety Equipment Provided Upon Hire**

- Shirt
- Pants
- Boots
- Light Coat
- Winter Coat
- Sweater
- Hat
- Reflective Vest
- Rain Coat
- Flashlights
safer, 67% indicated a direct line of communication with the police; another 9.5% specifically stated that they would prefer radios as a way to communicate with the police.

Exhibit 2 (at right): A statistical representation of crossing guard survey responses to the question of “What equipment would make you feel safer?”

When crossing guards were asked how often emergency situations arise, the majority responded that “situations requiring a radio occur daily.” Crossing guards reported having to respond to issues with drugs, violence, and public intoxication, all while still having to maintain the safety of the pedestrians at their intersection.

In the focus group, one woman shared her experience: “I had a shooting on my corner three weeks ago. I called 9-1-1. It was 30 minutes before they responded. I had kids getting off the bus that I had to go hide so they wouldn’t see what was going on.” Other crossing guards voiced that communication was necessary, so that they may be informed of emergency situations (FG, INT). An anonymous crossing guard shared her experience in the online survey: “Police do not inform us of emergencies in our area. One day a gunman was on the loose. School was in lockdown, four police cars passed me and not one of them informed me of the situation.”

Consensus was that it is difficult and dangerous to simultaneously practice emergency observational skills, protect and cross pedestrians in a busy intersection, and talk to 9-1-1. Consensus was that a direct line of communication to the zone commander in their area would be a major improvement (INT, FG, SURV).

Public Safety Officials were supportive of the recommendation that crossing guards be provided with a direct means of communication to the police department, such as radios. One commented that this matter should be a “top priority” and that crossing guards are “the eyes and ears on the street” (INT).
Natural observations, paired with interviews, focus groups and surveys, confirmed that crossing guards confront traffic and other hazardous situations in order to protect the pedestrians in their path constantly. 9.5% of crossing guards indicated a stop sign would make them feel safer, however many other crossing guards have also voiced that a stop sign would impede their ability to properly do their job because it requires the use of both hands. 9.5% of crossing guards indicated they would like to have more reflective vest/uniforms (INT, FG).

Safety Training is provided by the Police Academy and is mandatory for all crossing guards upon hire. A course on CPR training is given to new guards and existing guards must retake CPR every year. Guards are also trained in a program referred to as “verbal judo”. Verbal Judo helps them deal with irate drivers who do not want to obey the traffic laws. Crossing guards are taught to enhance their “Cat’s Eye” observational skills in order to be equipped to handle child luring issues. They are instructed on how to take descriptions of perpetrators in the case of an incident occurring within the vicinity of the guard (i.e. a bank robbery). Crossing guards are also taught procedures to report traffic violations to the city magistrate court. These include writing a detailed description of the car and driver, the license plate information and then sending the information to the traffic division. The traffic division then writes the citation and sends it to the violator (INT, FG). Crossing guards can be called as a witness for both reported emergency situations and submitted traffic citations (INT). In regard to training in general, many crossing guards and public safety personnel supported the idea that in addition to safety training, training should also be focused on interactions with the children and adult community members (SURV, INT, FG).

Safety Training Provided to New Guards
- CPR*
- Verbal Judo
- “Cat’s Eye” Observational Skills
- Protocol for taking descriptions of perpetrators
- Reporting procedures for traffic violations

* All guards must retake CPR training every year.

As If They Were Mine

Elaine Alter is a woman dedicated to her community and most importantly the children that she keeps safe every day. Elaine began her career as a crossing guard over 39 years ago and she quickly fell in love with the position. In fact, it was her love of the children that she came in contact with daily that spurred her to start a family of her own. She says, “You learn a lot about the kids and you become a fixture in the community. The kids become your own and you treat every child on the street no different from the way you would treat your own.” Elaine often works in the office but as a person who guarded her own corner for many years she had plenty of experiences to reflect on and share. In addition to making sure children cross the street safely, Elaine often found herself handing out gloves, making sure children were properly bundled or providing a few extra dollars to ensure that a child will get a nutritious meal at lunch time. Elaine always serves as a positive adult figure in the community, which she understands is so important to her community’s youth.

As an experienced crossing guard, Elaine is well aware of the positive characteristics that crossing guards need to possess. In addition to a commitment and focus on keeping children safe, she values the role of mentor that crossing guards so often play. She says, “We want to build on these often natural skills that our guards come to us with. Most of my guards are intuitive and naturally recognize when a child needs extra love, care, and attention.”

Elaine serves several roles: including mentor, leader, role model, and confidant to parents and children of the community. The community members take comfort in their ability to trust and confide in her and it warms her heart to be able to be a service to so many people. The guards she works with respect her and look up to her. Simply put, Elaine loves her job and the children she encounters. This love shines through in her passion and dedication to her work. Love is one skill that cannot be taught, and yet it is the most important skill for any guard to possess. (INT)
Supervision and Professional Development Practices

The supervisory structure for crossing guards is defined by communication and mutual respect between the supervisors and the employees. The crossing guards work as a team and refer to themselves as a “family unit.” The supervisor of the crossing guards is the direct supervisory contact for all 94 crossing guards. In the past, there were two supervisor positions, but due to funding issues, one position was terminated following retirement of a supervisor. The position of supervisor is a full-time position. The supervisor of the crossing guards is responsible for hiring new guards, evaluating intersections, managing and supervising all 94 guards, assigning posts, administering payroll, and at times, is required to cover posts due to staffing shortages (INT).

The entire department of crossing guards meets with the supervisor of the crossing guards on a bi-weekly basis to receive their paycheck, gain notification of any department updates and sign-up for any available special events. This is also the opportunity for crossing guards to meet with the supervisor individually, if needed (INT, FG).

Notable Characteristics of Crossing Guards

Crossing guards are dedicated to their duty to keep children and adults safe and secure when crossing the street. Crossing guards possess qualities that allow them to serve as public safety professionals as well as positive role models within their communities. Important and notable characteristics of crossing guards include being service-oriented, compassionate, friendly, empathetic, loving, dependable, and supportive of children’s efforts and success in school. Crossing guards are also willing to travel to the different zones within the city because it is common for crossing guards to be posted at a corner that is not within walking distance of their home. Interviews revealed that there is an unspoken promise within this line of work to treat the children that they are in contact with in the same manner that they would treat their own children. One crossing guard reported she knows who each child should be with and who they shouldn’t be with. She knows which way they should be going home and which way they shouldn’t. She spends a lot of time buttoning, zipping, and tying. She believes that these things need her attention too (INT).
Connectedness and Collaboration Among The Bureau of Police, The Crossing Guard Division and the Community

Both the Bureau of Police and the crossing guard division interviewees have indicated that the relationship between the two groups (police officers and crossing guards) is mostly a positive one. It is a relationship defined by an understanding of one another’s defined roles and a commitment to working together to support one another (INT, FG). While several interviewees expressed that the police with whom they have contact are helpful and responsive, they also shared that the relationship could use improvement in some areas. Several crossing guards voiced their concern that some professionals within the Department of Public Safety do not recognize the importance of the crossing guard position, subsequently causing crossing guards to feel “disrespected” and “underappreciated” (INT, SURV, FG). One guard stated that she wanted to “have others really see how we place our lives at risk daily” (INT). It appears that there may be a lack of consistent communication between the departments, which contributes to these feelings of disconnect. Consensus among interviewees and focus group participants was that solid communication is key to collaboration and teaming between the crossing guards and the Pittsburgh police, and is an area identified as needing improvement (INT, FG). Public safety officials reported that they are currently looking at additional ways to increase connection and comradery between the two branches and to build and maintain positive community relations (INT). Exhibit 3 at left displays ideas from crossing guards for increasing their connection with the police.

Many crossing guards also reported a lack of communication with the school bus drivers. Since both positions work to ensure the safety of children on their way to and from school, crossing guards think it is important that they understand each other’s roles and work as a collaborative team. “We need to come together and be on one accord with the information that we get,” explained one crossing guard (INT, FG). Although it was noted that improvements were needed with communication between crossing guards and bus drivers, it was reported that Pittsburgh Public School’s department of transportation works closely with...
A Fresh Face and a Fiery Passion

Cherise Daniels is one of the fresh faces in the Administrative Branch of the City of Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, as she recently began her position as a crossing guard. When deciding on a new profession, Cherise knew that she wanted to make a difference in the community. Cherise has a passion for helping families in various communities, and being a crossing guard allows her to do just that. Cherise’s role as a crossing guard is not only to guard the schools and the students, but to help every individual cross the streets safely. Safety is the key concern for everyone that she interacts with on a daily basis.

Cherise feels that the job of a crossing guard is not fitting for people who do not consider themselves as a “people person.” Although Cherise does not yet have a permanent post, she builds bonds quickly with the children she crosses frequently. She builds a strong relationship not just with the children, but with their parents as well as other individuals she sees every day. She knows everyone, and everyone knows her, on a somewhat personal level.

Every day, Cherise greets the children by saying, “Good morning!” and “Good afternoon!” Cherise is very much a part of the children’s lives, as she talks with them about their day, how they are doing at school, and their daily lives. From her experience, she believes that if you treat the children with respect, you will get respect in return. “My favorite mentoring experiences, I would say, are when the children are excited to tell me they had a ‘green day’ or a great report card.” She feels that when the children share their accomplishments with her, it is the most rewarding part of her job, and a key role in her integration into the communities she serves (INT).

Crossing guards report interacting daily or even multiple times daily with community members and the majority of community members report positive experiences with crossing guards (Exhibit 4 and 5 at right). Several guards that were interviewed indicated that they have wonderful relationships with adult community members because they speak with them on a daily basis and get to know their families (SURV, INT, FG, OBS). In an anonymous survey, one parent wrote: “Our crossing guard knows the names of almost everyone who walks by her corner each morning. She greets kids on their way to school, asks them how they have been, and asks them about school. She teaches kids about

Exhibit 4: Frequency of interactions that crossing guards initiate with adult community members and children (SURV)

Exhibit 5: Community survey responses depicting how adult community members view their experiences with crossing guards
The one concern raised by several guards was that many drivers do not seem to know or understand the regulations of a school zone.

crossing safely; she mediates problems between siblings (in a non-invasive kind of way). She is friendly and kind, but keeps everybody safe by maintaining control of the corner. She makes it her business to know what time kids should be getting off of the bus and what the pick-up plan is (are the kids to walk home alone, or is a caregiver to meet them at the bus). She has known some of the high school kids at her corner since they were in kindergarten. I see real value in keeping guards at the same corner for many years so that they have time to build relationships with the community” (SURV).

The one concern raised by several guards in regard to community members, specifically adult community members, was that many drivers do not seem to know or understand the regulations of a school zone. This leads to adult community members lashing out at guards and creates a disconnect between the crossing guards and the community (FG).

In an effort to educate, connect, and build positive relations with community members and children, many police officers volunteer to go into schools and speak with students about safety, the dangers of substance abuse, and the role which the police officer plays in the community. Crossing guards could participate in similar events to educate and build community relations. One example of this type of event is Walk to School Day. This organized event is a national, community event that encourages children to walk to school as a group, following safe routes and practicing proper pedestrian street skills. In the City of Pittsburgh, two schools participated in this event during the 2014-2015 school year. The coordinators worked with adult community members and teachers to arrange the event. The community survey revealed that many adult community members believe these events are valuable for their children. When asked if they felt it would be beneficial to include crossing guards in the walk, both coordinators agreed that guards would be a wonderful asset and could provide instruction on pedestrian safety to the students. Both school coordinators hope that Walk to School Day can become a city-wide initiative that includes several schools throughout the city (INT).
Mentoring

The dynamics of the crossing guard and community relationship have changed over the past decades. Due to the increase of school busing, the increased use of public transportation, and the option to choose a school outside of the neighborhood school, fewer children are walking to school now than in the past. While this changing dynamic has affected the numbers of students with whom the guards come in contact, it has not affected the positive attitude that guards show toward the children of the city (INT).

The City of Pittsburgh crossing guards have a uniquely amicable relationship with the city’s community members, especially the children. “You become a fixture of the community,” reflects the Supervisor of the Crossing Guards. Many of the guards have been working at their posts for over a decade. One guard even recalled students she worked with going off to college and visiting her when they came home for breaks (INT). Most guards easily connect with the children with whom they come in contact and with adult community members as well. Community members spoke about the trust that they have in the crossing guards. In many instances, adult community members come to a guard first when they are looking for their child. They may even tell a guard who their child can and cannot be with (FG, SURV).

When asked what their favorite part about being a crossing guard is, 77.8% of the guards said working with children and families. One anonymous crossing guard reported, “Service and meeting people from all walks of life—everyone is important to me, to see people’s lives change from a crisis problem to a healthy result, that makes me smile and feel good about my job”. Many reported that the ability to provide service and safety for others was an important part of the job (SURV, INT, FG). Children look to the guards for both protection and validation. They often inform the guards of concerning issues at home or needs that they have (i.e. lunch money) (INT). It is clear through this study, that crossing guards are important in building positive community relations and are role models and potential mentors to community members they meet on a daily basis. It would be beneficial to bring together crossing guards and police officers, and even other first responders to expand upon mentoring abilities to build and maintain positive community relationships. Implementation of this cross-discipline professional development would create a culture of collaboration between crossing guards and police and first responders, increasing the positive connections among the branches.
**A Heart of Gold**

When **Cathy Gamble** was looking for a new job 15 years ago, she dreamt of a position that would allow her to have positive social interactions with children and families in the city on a daily basis. She decided to take a job as a crossing guard to see if it would be a good fit. Fortunately, this job has lived up to all her expectations and she has been a crossing guard for over 15 years now.

Cathy really enjoys working her position. She especially enjoys her interactions with children; whether it be singing with them, teaching them about safety and holidays, or just being the smiling face children see on their way to and from school each day. Cathy states, “We sing songs and kids need that kind of stuff. I consider myself one of those grandma people. We are people that kids go to for problems. There’s nothing nicer than when you do something for a child, and they look at you and say ‘thank you.’ It warms your heart.” Additionally, Cathy has positive interactions with the children’s parents on a daily basis. She feels that she and the parents share a bond to keep their children safe, and she likes that feeling of trust.

Even when dealing with challenging children, Cathy feels that the best approach is to always be kind and provide guidance. She views the children she sees daily like they are family. She enjoys watching children grow up from their first day of kindergarten to driving their own car. In some cases, Cathy has been part of multiple generations of families and gets to see and cross the children of children she crossed many years ago. Cathy is an excellent example of the kindness and compassion represented in the crossing guard department. Cathy says, “My coworkers are the same, because you need some kind of compassion for people to do this job. You need to have a heart and a lot of compassion.” (INT).

**Funding**

In 2005, the commonwealth placed the City of Pittsburgh under Act 47 oversight. The Act of 1987, P.L. 246, No. 47 empowers the Department of Community and Economic Development to declare certain municipalities as financially distressed, provides for the restructuring of debt of financially distressed municipalities, limits the ability of financially distressed municipalities to obtain government funding, authorizes municipalities to participate in Federal debt adjustment actions and bankruptcy actions under certain circumstances and provides for consolidation or merger of contiguous municipalities to relieve financial distress (Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, 2013).

Under this Act, crossing guards experienced pay cuts and benefit cuts, a pension loss for any guard hired after 2005, and cuts to several previously open positions. At the time of the implementation of Act 47, there was much debate about who would pay for crossing guards. For a period of time, the Pittsburgh Board of Education, not wanting to see a complete loss of this important role, picked up that responsibility. Later, the City took back the responsibility for funding crossing guards. This was done largely because the City understood the vital role crossing guards play in the community and that they serve children and adults alike.

The Bureau of Police recently received an increase in their annual budget for substitute crossing guards; it was increased from $67,720 to $135,440. Although this increase was made for substitute guards, a decrease was made to the funding of full-time crossing guard positions. The full-time crossing guard budget was decreased from $1,892,880 to $1,462,680. The current form of funding from the Department of Public Safety has been defined as a “political
dance”, leaving the crossing guards in a “vulnerable position”. It was expressed that the crossing guard branch is in a compromised state when left to compete for funding with the city police officers and that it would be beneficial if the city looked for other ways to ensure that the crossing guards receive adequate funding (INT). For more information on the budget please refer to Exhibits 7-9 and Appendix A.

Exhibit 7: Summary of the Budgeted Full-time Crossing Guard Positions over the Past 5 Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Number of Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exhibit 8: Summary of the Crossing Guard Budget Over 5 Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Regular Guard Budget</th>
<th>Substitute Guard Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$1,757,712</td>
<td>$62,890</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$1,757,712</td>
<td>$64,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$1,837,704</td>
<td>$65,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$1,892,880</td>
<td>$67,720</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$1,462,680</td>
<td>$135,440</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Exhibit 9: Summary of Supervisor Budget Over 5 Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Supervisor Budget</th>
<th>Asst. Supervisor Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$37,174</td>
<td>$43,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$37,917</td>
<td>$44,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$38,865</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$40,031</td>
<td>$46,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$46,962</td>
<td>$46,962</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Limitations

Despite best efforts from the SPECS team, it was not possible to obtain all of the information that we sought for the drafting of this report. Inclusion of the data below is important for the goal of establishing and maintaining safe routes to school; future inclusion of this information could influence the implications of our findings and the refinement and implementation of subsequent consensus recommendations.

- The number of student walkers for the past 3-5 years in comparison to the number of students who receive transportation
- The number of guarded corners for the past 3-5 years. How many posts have been changed, added, or eliminated? Why have these posts changed: construction (more stoplights), layoffs, budget cuts, etc.?
- The number of crossing guards in the past five years.
- The number of accidents that have accrued at guarded posts over the past 3-5 years including those directly involving crossing guards
- A map of previously guarded posts for past 3-5 years
- Budgetary information prior to 2011.
- Information on how intersections were established and previous evaluations that led to the establishment of certain intersections.
- It was difficult to establish exactly how information about policies, procedures, and job responsibilities was given to new crossing guards. There was mention of a handbook, however the SPECS Team was unable to obtain this handbook.
**Implications and Recommendations**

**Overarching Implications**

1. The current number of 94 crossing guards (86 full-time and 8 substitutes) is clearly less than what is needed to cover the 108 identified intersections. In addition, police officers need to be pulled from their assignments to fill in for crossing guards on a daily basis, which is especially difficult in the afternoon hours. When referencing the 2015 budget, this is a less cost-effective deployment option for the city.

2. Currently there is no hiring during the summer months, which creates issues related to having guards ready for all intersections at the start of the school year.

3. The current process of new hire orientation appears to be variable and highly individualized. An orientation program with standard in classroom and in-vivo training is not provided, and there is not a handbook (i.e., hard copy or electronic) that is specifically designed for crossing guards.

4. Under the current system of the crossing guards, there is no formal review process following initial hiring. Furthermore, there is a 94:1 supervision ratio.

5. Through all of our data collection, it was difficult to identify a standard and uniform decision-making process, rubric, or metric which guided the identification and evaluation of intersections to determine if the intersection requires a guard.

6. Although crossing guards and the police officers work closely together on a daily basis, there is not a way for them to immediately communicate with each other. 77% of the crossing guards surveyed and interviewed think that they are not adequately equipped to communicate directly with the police in the event of an emergency. Public Safety representatives support more effective communication methods.

7. Several crossing guards reported feeling “disrespected” and “under-appreciated” by other public safety personnel. Solid regular communication between crossing guards and police officers is the key to encourage collaboration and teaming.

8. Crossing guards are highly respected in the communities that they serve. Their daily interactions with children provide opportunities for guards to teach and reinforce pedestrian safety skills, build positive, trusting relationships, and serve as mentors to children. Currently there is no formal professional development and education opportunities to enhance these already innate characteristics of most crossing guards.

9. The crossing guard program is currently funded through the Department of Public Safety; however this places their funding in a vulnerable spot, due to other competing high needs within this department. The current budget levels do not support fully the goal of creating safe routes and increasing communication between police officers and crossing guards.

The purpose of this study was to better understand how the City of Pittsburgh utilizes crossing guards and to identify improvements to the system for deployment, equipment/safety, and professional development/supervision. The result of the study can be used to better improve the conditions and safety of children and youth as they make their way between home, school, and out-of-school-time programs.

Additionally, the SPECS team investigated the unique support that crossing guards could provide as mentors and the professional development that would be needed for Crossing Guards to effectively mentor young children in their natural and daily interactions with both children and adult community members.

Based upon the results of this study, the implications and recommendations at left were generated by the SPECS team to guide consensus decision-making.
Snapshot of Recommendations

1. Establishing a Crossing Guards Work Group to read the report and associated recommendations; understand the challenges and issues identified; make improvements; advocate for implementation
   - Identify stakeholders for the CG Work Group. The working group should include various stakeholders from the city. Important stakeholders include representatives from the Mayor’s office, the city council, the Dept. of Public Safety, the schools, such as the Assistant Superintendent of Pittsburgh Public Schools, the Director of Transportation, community members, and others as determined by the CG Work Group members.
   - The Work Group shall be empowered to determine their own internal organization for completing tasks pertaining to the recommendations.
   - The stakeholders CG Work Group will then review the report and recommendations and will determine which recommendations will be their focus in full group meetings and which recommendations will be tasks assigned to subgroups, for more indepth exploration.

2. Standardizing Hiring, Orientation, and Supervision Process
   - Implement on-going hiring 12 months a year.
   - Develop a handbook specific to the role of crossing guards that can be reviewed upon hire.
   - Develop and implement standard orientation for all newly hired crossing guards.
   - Provide cross training between crossing guards and police cadets in traffic control and other cross-over topics.
   - Provide cross training between the school bus drivers and the crossing guards that covers the street etiquette and regulations for both positions.
   - Establish annual review process through virtual or face-to-face meetings.
   - Review and discuss the re-opening of the second supervisor position.

3. Ensuring the Safety, Security, and Welfare of Children in the Community
   - Establish a direct line of communication between the crossing guards and the police department through the provision and use of radios or cell phones.
   - Add a reflective stop sign on the back of the crossing guard vests.
   - Consider the pros and cons of requiring hand-held stop signs.
   - Develop standard method and metric to identify and prioritize intersections needing guards.
   - Create safe routes to school, disseminate geo-map or other interactive map to community members.
   - Establish bi-annual assessment plan for all intersections using the safe routes evaluation/rubric.

4. Enhancing Positive Relationships through Professional Development
   - Hold quarterly team meetings to allow guards time for continuing professional development, comradery, and mentoring between experienced guards and new guards.
   - Provide professional development for police, crossing guards (and perhaps other first responders) together on mentoring; strategies for building positive and trusting relationships; appropriate behavioral expectations for children of various age groups; and scripted communications that can have an impact — all specific to individual roles.
   - Keep guards post assignments consistent to build and maintain positive, trusting relationships.
   - Implement a community-wide Walk to School Day and other similar national safe routes initiatives.
   - Encourage crossing guards to teach and reinforce pedestrian safety skills to children in the community and in the classroom.

5. Ensuring the Adequate Funding of the Crossing Guards
   - Review current budget to assure that the goal of creating safe routes and keeping pedestrians safe can be met with established levels of funding.
   - Explore possible sources of additional or collaborative funding for the crossing guards.
The overarching recommendation of the SPECS for Allies for Children: Crossing Guards Study is the establishment of a “Crossing Guards Work Group” (CG Work Group) to discuss, explore, analyze and, by reaching consensus on the disposition of the recommendations, advocate plans for their implementation. The subsequent recommendations on more fine-grained topics and issues shall be considered by the Work Group as correlates of the central topics and tasks for the CG Work Group.

• **Identify stakeholders for the CG Work Group.** The working group should include various stakeholders from the city. Important stakeholders include representatives from the Mayor’s office, the city council, the Dept. of Public Safety, the schools, such as the Assistant Superintendent of Pittsburgh Public Schools, City Council, the Director of Transportation, community members, and others as determined by the CG Work Group members.

• The Work Group shall be empowered to determine their own internal organization for completing tasks pertaining to the recommendations.

• The stakeholders CG Work Group will then review the report and recommendations and will determine which recommendations will be their focus in full group meetings and which recommendations will be tasks assigned to subgroups for more indepth exploration.

**Topics and tasks that were determined by the evaluation to be central to subgroup activities include:**

• Developing a route safety plan for each neighborhood which prioritizes the safety of children and youth as they move to and from home, school, and other out-of-school time environments;

• Determining the role of the crossing guard within safe route plans;

• Formulating standard and uniform criteria and metrics for prioritizing which intersections require crossing guards;

• Developing a plan and process for annual assessment of safe routes; and

• Ensuring adequate funding streams to support the crossing guards.

2) **Standardizing, Hiring, Orientation, and Supervision**

• **Implement on-going hiring 12 months a year.** Summer, when school is not in session, is the peak time to hire new guards because they can be trained and ready to begin work as soon as school starts in September.

• **Develop a handbook specific to the role of crossing guards** that can be reviewed upon hire. It is recommended that a comprehensive employee handbook be created that highlights all of the standard practices and procedures expected of a crossing guard, including ethics, code of conduct, rules and regulations, appropriate attire, emergency procedures, etc.

• **Develop and implement standard orientation** for all newly hired crossing guards. It is recommended that during new hire orientation, the rules and regulations of the crossing guard position be covered in detail. Each guard will also be equipped to handle all types of intersections. In addition, they will all be taught special procedures for working at special events (city sports events, light-up night, etc.). It would also be beneficial to expand training to include topics such as: crisis training, and mentoring community members (more detail below on mentoring). Consider creating an online tutorial training that each guard could complete individually.

• **Provide cross training** between crossing guards and police cadets in traffic control and other cross-over topics and between the school bus drivers and the crossing guards that covers the street etiquette and regulations for both positions.

• **Establish an annual review process** through virtual or face-to-face meetings.

• **Review and discuss the re-opening of the second supervisor position** to manage the supervisory workload.
3) Ensuring the Safety, Security, and Welfare of Children in the Community

- Establish a direct line of communication between the crossing guards and the police department through the provision and use of radios or cell phones.

- Add a reflective stop sign on the back of the vests.

- Develop a standard method to identify and prioritize intersections needing guards.

- Consider the pros and cons of requiring the standard use of hand-held stop signs by crossing guards.

- Create safe routes to school avoiding hazards, disseminate geo-map or other interactive map to community members. The process of creating these safe routes would include: review evaluation or if not already done evaluate intersections; determine the safest route through neighborhoods to school using a geo-map or another type of interactive map (see examples in Appendices E and F). This may be the task of a subgroup as identified by the stakeholder working group. Members of this subgroup may include engineering department personnel, city zone commanders, community members, etc.

- Establish a plan and process for annual assessment of safe routes.

4) Enhancing Positive Relationships through Professional Development

- In addition to regular bi-weekly meetings, hold quarterly crossing guard team meetings with the specific purpose of allowing guards time for continuing professional development, comradery, and mentoring between experienced guards and new guards.

- Provide periodic professional development for police and crossing guards together, and perhaps even other first responders on mentoring; instead of, strategies for building positive and trusting relationships; appropriate behavioral expectations for children of various age groups, and scripted communications that can have an impact - all specific to individual roles.

- Keep crossing guards post assignments consistent to build and maintain positive, trusting relationships. Consistent interaction is beneficial when developing rapport and trust that is necessary to build relationships, especially with children. Consider re-evaluating the current process of seniority for assigning posts to meet this goal.

- Implement a community-wide Walk to School Day and other similar national safe routes initiatives. Walk to School Day is a national, community event that encourages children to walk to school as group, following safe routes and practicing proper pedestrian street skills. This would encourage collaboration between schools, the community, and the crossing guard branch.

- Encourage crossing guards to teach and reinforce pedestrian safety skills to children in the community and in the classroom. Crossing guards currently reinforce pedestrian safety skills to all community members while working at their intersections, but instruction is limited to the few moments a guard spends crossing a child at the intersection. Bringing the crossing guards into the classroom will increase the positive relationships. This would encourage collaboration between the schools and the Department of Public Safety.

5) Ensuring Adequate Funding of the Crossing Guards

- Review the current crossing guard budget to assure that the goal of creating safe routes and keeping pedestrians safe can be met with established budget.

- Explore possible sources of additional or collaborative funding for the crossing guards. Consider funding from multiple sources, possibly including schools, private foundations, or other student-centered organizations in the city.
REFERENCES


## Appendix A

### 2015 City of Pittsburgh Operating Budget for Crossing Guards Under the Bureau of Police

### City of Pittsburgh Operating Budget

#### Position Summary

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Appendix B

City of Pittsburgh Crossing Guard Job Description and Application Requirements

City of Pittsburgh
Department of Personnel & Civil Service Commission/ Attention: Applications Section Fourth Floor, City-County Building,
414 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, PA  15219 Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 7:30 A.M. through 4:45 P.M.
http://www.PGHJobs.net  Fax Number: 412-255-4736

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Employment Announcement for the position of: SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD, AS NEEDED
Applications will be accepted on a continuous basis from 03/24/14 until the position is filled.

APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

I. General Application Requirements:
You must submit or show proof of all of the following at the time of filing your application (unless otherwise indicated below) or your application will be disqualified. Disqualifications based on any of these General Application Requirements are not subject to a Civil Service appeal.

• A completed online City of Pittsburgh Employment Application, including your online Employment Profile Data. (Education and Work Experience).

• Pennsylvania Act 33/34 Clearance prior to appointment.

• Applicants must be at least 18 years of age at the time of filing application.

• Applicants are required to be City of Pittsburgh residents at the time of submitting the application and remain a resident at all times, up to and including throughout employment with the City of Pittsburgh. Your City of Pittsburgh residency will be verified.

• A current, valid Class C Pennsylvania Motor Vehicle Operator’s License is required at the time of submitting the application and will be verified prior to appointment to the position and must be maintained throughout employment. Written requests for a special accommodation on the basis of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act will be considered by the Department of Personnel and Civil Service Commission on an individual basis.

NOTE: The City of Pittsburgh, as a matter of policy, conducts pre-employment and promotional background investigations on all candidates being considered for positions. The background investigation includes but is not limited to criminal background, driver’s license and City of Pittsburgh real estate tax payments. Candidates may be disqualified from consideration from employment based on the results of their background investigation (as it relates to the job for which the applicant is being considered).

II. Qualifying Requirements:
Your City of Pittsburgh application will be reviewed and your work experience and education/training will be evaluated to determine if you meet the qualifying eligibility requirements listed below for this position. You will be sent an eligibility letter regarding your eligible/ineligible status.

• WORK EXPERIENCE: None required for this position.

• EDUCATION/TRAINING: None required for this position.

• EQUIVALENCY: None required for this position.

III. Civil Service Examination(s):
If you meet the qualifying requirements listed above, you will be sent a letter of admission (when applicable) for the following examination(s). You must pass the written and/or performance examination(s) in order to have your name placed on the official Civil Service eligibility list for this position. Candidates who receive job offers must pass a medical examination (when applicable) prior to start date.
• Written: None required for this position.
• Performance: None required for this position.
• Medical: Required.

POSITION SUMMARY

Department: Public Safety/Police Bureau/School Crossing Guard
Section Salary: $67.72 to $71.70 per day subject to bargaining contract terms.

Union: This position is included in the Service Employees International Union, Local 192-B bargaining unit.

Union Bid Form: None required.

Civil Service Classification: Exempt, Non-Career

NOTE: School Crossing Guards are employed on an “on call” basis and must be able to fill temporary vacancies at various school crossings throughout the City.

Position Duties:
• Assists children and other members of the general public to cross streets at intersections.
• Directs traffic to allow emergency vehicles to proceed through intersections; controls movement of traffic when traffic signals are inoperative.
• Provides directions to motorists or pedestrians as requested.
• Reports traffic violations to the City’s Magistrates Court; testifies in court as required.
• Monitors assigned intersection for criminal activity, traffic hazards or other dangers to children using the intersection and notifies or reports information to supervisor.
• Submits accurate written reports for all accidents or other emergencies.
• Assists and directs children who may be lost or injured.
• Assists in training new school crossing guards.
• May instruct children, either informally or in a classroom setting, on pedestrian safety.
• Performs activities and functions of related lower-level personnel, and such other related tasks and duties that are assigned or required.

Knowledge/Abilities (At Full Job Performance)

Considerable knowledge of:
• Traffic regulations.

Some knowledge of:
• City and Bureau policies and procedures regarding the work.

Limited knowledge of:
• City geography.

Ability to:
• Relate well to children.
• Stand and walk outdoors in all weather.
• Anticipate and react appropriately to any emergency condition.
• Follow both oral and written instructions.
• Prepare accurate reports.
• Testify in court.
• Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
• Acquire CPR certification within six months of hire and maintain certification throughout employment.
• Maintain PA Act 33/34 Clearance throughout employment.
• Establish and maintain effective working relationships with supervisors, associates, outside agencies and the general public.

Position Working Conditions/Physical Demands
(Include but are not limited to)

Working Conditions/Exposed to as required by the job:
• Frequent - extreme cold, extreme heat, dryness, noise, fumes, dust, and mechanical hazards.

Protective Equipment Used:
• Frequent - arms/hands/fingers (gloves), legs/feet/toes (walking shoe), and body protection (uniform – raincoat/hood).

POSITION BENEFITS

Full-time City employees receive a comprehensive benefit package including:
• Health, Dental and Vision Benefits
• Pension
• Voluntary Deferred Compensation Plan
• Tuition Reimbursement
• Paid Holidays
• Paid Vacation
• Personal Days

(Benefits may be modified based on collective bargaining unit terms.)

ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER: A/026/14
Appendix C

Crossing Guards: Benchmarking Insights

Introduction to the Benchmarking

Allies for Children conducted benchmarking for the Crossing Guard study to understand how other cities use crossing guards.

We used the following criteria to identify four cities to benchmark:

- If they have done past studies on crossing guards specifically
- If they have clear crossing guard manuals
- If they had any particular policy or practice with crossing guards that stood out
- If information was easily accessible

Allies for Children picked the following four cities to benchmark:

- Springfield, MO, Population 160,000 - 35 crossing guards
- Newark, NJ, Population 277,000 - 165 crossing guards
- The Unified Government of Kansas City & Wyandotte County, Population 145,000 - 26 crossing guards
- Hartford, CT, Population 124,000 - 72 crossing guards

Benchmarking included a review of the city websites and publicly available documents as well as some follow up with crossing guard supervisors. Contact information is included in the Benchmarking spreadsheet provided.

Major Themes Identified

- Training in and out of the classroom is required in the majority of the cities. Cities required a specific number of class time as well as specific number of hours trained in the field. Training must be completed before a crossing guard maintains a post alone.
- The Police Department is in charge of crossing guards. In three out of the four cities the Police Department was in charge of supervising the Crossing Guards. Most had a crossing guard supervisor within the Police Department. In Kansas City the Parking Control Department is in charge of directing crossing guards.
- Almost all cities provided stop signs and reflective vest. None of the four cities benchmarked give their crossing guards radios or other means of communication other than their personal cell phones. Some supervisors have said providing radios would be extremely expensive. All but one city provided a safety stop sign. All cities required an orange reflective vest. One city provides stop signs, vest, rain gear, winter jacket, baseball cap and a flashing baton for working in the dark early mornings. In an emergency crossing guards are supposed to use their personal cell phone or tell a by-stander to call for help.
- All cities require a background check. Some cities require hearing and physical exams as well before individuals were hired for crossing guard positions.
- Two studies have been conducted regarding crossing guards, one is similar to the one we would like to conduct. The first study was conducted in Hartford, Connecticut which was completed in 2005. This study looks at pedestrian injuries and how they relate to the deployment of crossing guards as well as injuries of crossing guards. The studies overall focus is on public safety. The other study was a statewide study completed in New Jersey. Crossing guard supervisors from each county were interviewed and focus groups were done with crossing guards. The study focused on who crossing guards are, safety, training, emergency, and performance review. The end result of the study was the creation of a statewide policy manual for crossing guard practice.
- There are certain requirements a location must have before a crossing guard is sent to that location. Cities do take into consideration request made by community members but other factors are often if the cross meets certain requirements including how many school children cross daily, traffic congestion, or crash history.
- Crossing Guards hourly wage ranges from $11-$13 per hour. Most crossing guard programs are funded through dollars given to the City Police Department. Monetary funds are then funneled through to the traffic department or other appropriate department.

Additional Lessons Learned

- Pittsburgh has a relatively low amount of crossing guards compared to the cities benchmarked. Newark, New Jersey has a population of 277,000 and has almost 200 crossing guards.
- Crossing guards clearly serve a role with children. What that role is can be determined by the city. Examples include crossing guards reinforcing safety to children or serving as a positive role model for children.
Appendix D

Map of All 108 Locations Currently Guarded throughout the Five Zones in the City of Pittsburgh
Appendix E

Example of a Safe Routes Map – Palo Verde Elementary School (City of Palo Alto, 2013)

Palo Verde Elementary School

WALK AND ROLL TO SCHOOL

SUGGESTED ROUTES

For more Safe Routes to School information, please visit: www.cityofpaloalto.org/saferoutes

The Palo Alto Safe Routes to School Partnership encourages parents to walk or bike with students and use this mapping tool to explore options for commuting from home to school. Parents are responsible for choosing the most appropriate route based on their knowledge of conditions on the route between home and school and the experience level of their child.

Courtesy of the City of Palo Alto - Safe Routes to School Program
Example of a Directional Geo-Map

Directional Map for the Hotel

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www.conceptdraw.com/samples/geo-maps

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### Appendix F

**Example of Intersection Assessment from the Florida Traffic & Bicycle Safety Education Program**

*(The Florida Traffic and Bicycle Safety Education Program, 1998)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intersection (or street segment for mid-block crossing)</th>
<th>Signage, Crossing Assistance or Conditions Observed (see Symbol Chart)</th>
<th>Number of Lanes or Street Width</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blair Road and Cherry Street (Example)</td>
<td>ZF, IG, j</td>
<td>Blair: 80ft Cherry: 60ft</td>
<td>Very wide intersection, S3 would help!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description of Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>School zone sign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZF</td>
<td>School zone sign with flasher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OZ</td>
<td>Overhead school zone sign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OZF</td>
<td>Overhead school zone sign with flasher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Intersection with traffic signal and no crossing guard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG</td>
<td>Intersection with traffic signal and crossing guard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Intersection with stop sign and no crossing guard (indicate direction that stop sign faces).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>Intersection with stop sign and with crossing guard (indicate direction that stop sign faces).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Road crossing (mid block) without pedestrian activated signal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Road crossing (mid-block) with pedestrian activated signal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Street with a large number of driveways intersecting roadway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Intersections where drivers do not yield to pedestrians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>Intersections with a high percentage of turning movements, including “right turn on red.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>Intersections where drivers speed up to make it through traffic lights or drive through red lights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>Streets with a high volume of truck traffic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Railroad tracks and other transport facilities that present obstacles to a safe way to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Intersection or crossing location is positioned by a blind curve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>Pedestrian signals that change too slowly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>Road that is too wide to cross during the time allowed by the pedestrian signal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>Crosswalks where drivers can’t see pedestrians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>Parked cars that block the pedestrian’s view of traffic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Trees or plants that block the pedestrian’s view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>Off road trail or other transportation facilities that would provide an alternate safe route for children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>Striping, pavement markings, elevation changes, texture changes that make crossing more visible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>Bulbouts and other facilities that reduce the crossing distance and help facilitate safe pedestrian crossings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>Refugee islands for pedestrians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S5</td>
<td>Midblock crossings with speed tables and median island.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G

Interview Questions

Chief of Police and Assistant Chief

1. What is your current involvement with the school crossing guards and how does that compare to your involvement with the branch in Madison?

2. We have not been able to determine if there is any kind of formula used to determine corners, do you have any knowledge about a possible formula?

3. How often were safety audits in Madison County, WI done?

4. In our conversations with the supervisor of crossing guards, we weren’t able to determine how corners are designated. One of the recommendations we were leaning towards is that there be a standard formula that can be used. Is this something that you could support?

5. In the past there were three supervisors sharing the work of supervision, but after two retired those positions were not re-opened. Is the re-opening of the supervisor positions a recommendation that you could see yourself supporting?

6. Who has the ultimate say in the budget of the crossing guards? Who decides how the money gets spent and how many guards are available?

7. One of the other things we have been discussing is the safety equipment they have. After speaking with Commanders and through other interviews, there are several recommendations for radios or a direct line to the police. Commanders have said, guards are the eyes and ears of the police. What are your thoughts on this?

8. In the past there were 237 full time guards and 37 substitutes. There are now 86 guards and 8 substitutes. Not sure of how the drastic decrease came about, could you clarify?

9. We’d like to find more information about traffic congestion as we are looking to make recommendations and potentially increase the number of guards. We want to make sure we have evidence to support our recommendations. Could you provide for us any contact information that will connect us to the correct people in the traffic department?

10. Another recommendation we are looking at is creating safe routes to school. We might look at a layout of the city and see which is the best path for children to be taking and then the majority of children would take the highlighted path through neighborhood to school. This might require more guards but would also require us being able to gather information necessary to recommend routes. If we made a recommendation to have a task force go out, evaluate, and work to develop routes would the police department be willing to share information on different social hazards within the neighborhoods?

11. Training for school crossing guards is not extensive. Would you be in support of adding a supervisor so that training could be more extensive? We had also looked at some cross training with the police department: safety and traffic, community relations. Is this something that you think the budget could support?

12. Our hope is to tap into a natural resource that is already there in regards to getting kids excited about school and encouraging building community relationships. Crossing guards play an essential role in the community of Pittsburgh. Being a natural mentor could be a possible cross training recommendation, what are your thoughts?

13. Another idea was utilizing crossing guards to help community members, mainly young kids, to help them understand pedestrian safety. We are considering bringing them into schools for safety week. What are your thoughts on this?

14. Do you utilize bike and foot officers at any special time of day?

15. How does it impact police when they have to sub for a crossing guard position?

16. Why were all of the 102 crossing guard positions budgeted for in 2014 not filled? Why is hiring not done in the summer?
Manager of the Chief of Police’s Office

1. Describe your job and its connection to the school crossing guards?
2. Do you often have to pull police officers to cover crossing guard’s posts?
3. What new practices is the Chief trying to implement
4. Are there new training procedures?
5. What is your interaction with the school crossing guards in response to an emergency situation?
6. How are requests for guards made?
7. How do you determine what corners get school crossing guards?
8. What role do foot patrol and bike officers play in crossing students?
9. When a police officer takes on the role of a guard, is their duty as an officer on hold?
10. Have there been issues with police officers going off duty to cross children at corners?
11. How do you choose which police officers are sent to monitor corners?
12. Have there been accidents involving guards?
13. Do you provide guards with equipment?

Zone Commanders

1. Do you interact with crossing guards frequently?
2. Do you think there are an adequate number of crossing guards in your zone? If not, do you think it affects how you deploy police in the area?
3. Do you think crossing guards should have better means of communicating with the Department of Public Safety (radios/cell phones/special number to call)?
4. What are your recommendations for crossing guard training/hiring?
5. How often, if at all, do you receive calls from crossing guards regarding incidents?
6. Do you think crossing guards could be more a part of the Department of Public Safety, perhaps if they were cross trained?
7. How do you think crossing guards should be equipped when working in high needs/risk communities for safety purposes?
8. Do you strategically place guards at intersections or is it a lottery system?
   a. Would you suggest any adjustments to the current placement system?
9. Would you suggest there are certain areas of the city that the guards are more involved?
   a. If so, where?
   b. If so, what do you think motivates their involvement?
10. Are more experienced guards placed in high risk areas?
   a. Should this be the case?

Director of the Department of Transportation

1. How many student walkers are there? (public and non-public)
2. How many students are using bus transportation? (public and non-public)
3. What is your opinion in regards to safe routes? Has the city provided safe routes? Are there enough crossing guards out there?
4. Can you give us a summary of the transportation office?
5. Please describe what classifies hazardous routes.
6. What is the walking criterion for students in regards to mileage?
7. Can a parent call and ask for transportation to be provided at their corner?
   a. How often are the parents’ needs met in regards to transportation requests?
8. Do you have any information regarding the school police and their interaction with the student population (accidents, etc.)?
9. What happens when a bus is involved in an accident?
10. What is the protocol for reporting an incident?
11. In special cases of emergencies involving students, would the city police or school police be called first?
12. Are there a lot of calls?
13. Do you have information on crossing guards and what they would do in an emergency situation?
14. Do you have any thoughts on what the city needs?
15. Do you have a general number of guards in mind?
16. How have you seen the city working to provide safer routes?
17. Do you have any last thoughts that you would like to share with us?

Supervisor of the Crossing Guards and Union President

1. What are the training procedure and the hiring process for a crossing guard?
2. How long is the hiring process?
3. How has the job changed over the years?
4. What does the 2-week training period for a newly hired crossing guard look like?
5. Is there a profile of characteristics that is preferred in a guard?
6. Describe your relationship with the families of the children.
7. Is it typical for guards to stay in the position long term?
8. When the guards are newly hired, what equipment are they given?
9. Is there a handbook that the guards receive upon hire?
10. Tell us about your experiences
11. Is there a positive relationship between you and the city police and school police?
12. How are crossing guards trained to respond to emergency situations?
13. What is your connection with the school police?
14. How do you designate what corners get crossing guards?
15. What is the average age range for a school crossing guard? What are the male to female dynamics?
16. How do you make connections with the children and parents?
17. What is the protocol for when a guard calls off?
18. What does the supervision process look like?
19. What are the needs of the crossing guard department?
20. What are your thoughts on the needs of the kids? Could school crossing guards be trained to be a mentor to a child/family member?
21. How often do guards work at special events?
22. Do the guards feel safe with the materials and resources provided?
23. How often are there accidents involving guards?
Supervisor of Crossing Guards (Second Interview)

1. How is the crossing guard division funded?
2. Where were guards posted in the past 5 years and what changes in posts have occurred over the past five years?
3. What’s the average age of the crossing guards? Age Range?
4. Has the age range changed in the past 5 years?
5. Is there a personnel file or report that lists the name of a crossing guard, hire date and birth date?
6. When was the newest guard hired?
7. Which guards currently have the most seniority?
8. Describe the supervisory structure for the crossing guard branch under the department of public safety?
9. Do you complete yearly reviews with the guards?
10. Which skills or characteristics are most vital for the role of crossing guard?
11. Does seniority bidding cause any difficulties or tension?
12. Are crossing guards on call throughout the day?
13. Do you have any other input that would be useful to us?

Individual Crossing Guard Interview

1. What prompted you to choose to be a crossing guard?
2. What do you like most about being a crossing guard?
3. Are there any parts of your job that you would describe as challenging?
4. What would you change in regards to providing safer routes? What training policies or procedures would you like to see implemented or changed?
5. What percentage of your work is non-school related, like special events for example?
6. Please explain the process of seniority in detail.
7. What benefits does the company provide?
8. What type of equipment are you provided? Do you feel adequate equipment is provided?
9. What kind of training are you required to undergo before and during your time as a crossing guard?
10. Do you think crossing guards should be more deeply rooted within the Department of Public Safety?
11. How are you trained to handle an emergency situation? (School Police, City Police, CG Supervisor)
   a. Are you provided with any materials?
   b. Are you given the process to report traffic violations to the City’s Magistrates Court? Pittsburgh CG job description says this is a requirement.
12. Do you feel secure completing your job? Have you ever felt unsafe or unprepared to respond to a situation?
13. How do you feel that you have developed mentorship during your time as a crossing guard?
14. Is there a difference in your interactions with the older children vs. the younger children: connectedness, respect, and parental engagement?
15. How often do you generally engage with parents of children, and what do those interactions typically look like?
16. Can you describe the supervision process in detail?
Appendix H

Community Survey

1. Do you feel comfortable with the children in your neighborhood walking to school or do you believe that the bus is a safer option?
   - Yes, I feel comfortable allowing them to walk
   - No, I prefer them to take the bus over walking
   - There is no option to take the bus in my neighborhood and I feel comfortable with them walking
   - There is no option to take the bus in my neighborhood and I am not comfortable with them walking

2. Please explain your response to the previous question.

3. As a parent, I feel that walking to school has value.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

4. If your child does not currently walk, what conditions would need to be in place for you to allow and encourage your child to walk to school? (list & rank)
   1  2  3  4  5  6
   - More crossing guards
   - Less traffic
   - Sidewalks
   - Age of child
   - Distance between residence and school
   - Other

5. Do you feel that events like Walk Our Children to School Day are helpful to encourage students to walk to school on a regular basis?
   - Yes, these events are helpful and encouraging
   - No, these events do not make much of a difference
   - I am unaware of any events, including Walk to School Day, that are used to encourage children to walk to school

6. Has your experience with school crossing guards been, in general, positive, negative, or neutral? (Explain, describe)
   - Positive
   - Neutral
   - Negative

7. Please explain your response to the previous question.

   ______________________________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________________________

8. Do you feel that there is an adequate number of guards in your neighborhood?
   - Yes
   - No

9. Are there any intersections in your neighborhood that you feel should have a crossing guard but do not currently have one? (Yes, no, list location)
   - Yes ________________________________
   - No ________________________________
10. Please list locations that you feel need more guards or type none if you answered no to the previous question.

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

11. Does your child view crossing guards the same way they view a police officer?
   □ Yes
   □ No

12. Would your child go to a crossing guard with a problem?
   □ Yes
   □ Maybe
   □ No

13. Please describe an experience your child has had, if any, where she has gone to a crossing guard with an issue.

14. In what ways does the crossing guard in your neighborhood act as a mentor for children?

15. Do you feel that your child’s pedestrian safety awareness has improved through interactions with crossing guards?
   □ Yes
   □ No
   □ Negative

16. If you answered yes to the previous question, please give an example of how your child’s awareness has improved.

17. Do you have any other input, stories, recommendations for our study?
Crossing Guard Survey

Q1 Why did you choose to be a school crossing guard? Choose all that apply.
- I wanted a job that kept me connected to my child.
- I needed the money.
- It was recommended to me by a friend.
- Other. Please explain: _____________________________________________

Q2 What is your favorite part of being a school crossing guard?
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Q3 Do you feel that you receive adequate training to reach your fullest potential as a school crossing guard?
- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q4 Do you believe that you are provided with adequate equipment?
- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q5 Which of the following equipment, if added to your uniform, would make you feel safer? Choose all that apply.
- Stop Sign
- Radio
- Secure phone line to police

Q6 How often do you generally engage pedestrians such as parents or children themselves?
- Rarely
- Weekly
- Daily (one or two times a day)
- Multiple times a day

Q7 When you engage with parents and children, what do those interactions typically look like? Choose all that apply.
- Smile
- Say hello
- Address people on a first name basis
- Talk to parents/children about personal issues (school, family, social)
- Physical contact (hugs, high five)
- Provide clothing to children (gloves, hats, jacket)
- Provide money to children (lunch, dress down day)
- Personal relationship with parent/child outside of guard duty (coffee, lunch, holidays, etc.)
Q8  Do you feel that school crossing guards work as a team with the Department of Safety?

☐ Strongly Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Agree
☐ Strongly Agree

Q9  Are there any other comments about your experience as a school crossing guard or suggestions to providing safer routes that you would like to add?

Community Focus Group

1. Do you feel your child is safe while walking to and/or from school or the bus stop? If not, what are your concerns?
2. Are there an adequate number of crossing guards in your neighborhood?
   Please answer yes or no and which neighborhood you live in.
3. What experiences have you or your child had with crossing guards?
   Have those experiences been positive, negative, or neutral, in general?
4. Do you and your children view a crossing guard the same way you would a police officer?
   Would your child go to a crossing guard with a problem?

Crossing Guard Focus Group

Safety/Training

1. What would you change in regards to providing safer routes?
2. In your opinion, how effective is the current orientation and training procedure?
3. What training policies or procedures would you like to see implemented or changed?
4. In what ways is it important to be trained to work with children in regards to administering proper street safety tips?
5. How do you decide which intersections you patrol? If not already assigned, how would you feel if intersections were assigned to you?

Supervision

1. Please describe your relationship with your supervisor? (How often do you communicate? Do you feel that you can go to your supervisor with an issue?)
2. When you have an urgent need, are you able to reach your supervisor in a timely manner? How long does it typically take for you to get a response? (immediately, 15 minutes, 30 minutes, an hour, longer than an hour)
3. How often do you have an individual meeting with your supervisor?
   a. Once a week
   b. Biweekly
   c. Monthly
   d. Once a year
4. For those of you who worked as a School Crossing Guard under the supervision of multiple supervisors, how has the elimination of one supervisor position affected your ability to receive feedback and communicate with management?
Mentoring

1. What prompted you to choose to be a crossing guard?

2. Do you feel that being a mentor is part of your job? In your opinion, what does being a mentor look like? Examples of skills include: positive communication, consistent interactions to build relationships, active listening, emotional support, act as a resource and guide, respect children and families, accept and relate to children, establishing trust, positive role model, advocate for children. Please add any other skills that you feel fall under mentoring.

3. How would you rate your current ability and skills to be a mentor in the way that you described?

4. Would you value further professional development to increase mentoring skills?

5. Describe your most positive experiences with children and families during your time as a school crossing guard?

6. Are there any parts of your job that you would describe as challenging?

Police

1. What do you see as the pros/cons of the current relationship between the school crossing guards and the city of Pittsburgh police?

2. Do you think crossing guards should be more deeply rooted within the Department of Public Safety? If yes, what ideas do you have to increase your connection with the police? If no, why not?

3. How often are you in a situation where you feel that a direct line to the police would be beneficial to you? (multiple times a day, once a day, almost every day, once a week, less than once a week)

4. Please give us a detailed example of when you would have used the direct line to police in the case of an emergency.

Budget/Pension

1. What changes, if any, would you like to see made in regards to the pension and the benefits package?

2. What is Act 47 and how does it directly affect the school crossing guard branch?
The Crossing Guards Study
An analysis of the positive roles for child safety and mentoring

Conducted by the University of Pittsburgh
Office of Child Development/Early Childhood Partnerships

ocd.pitt.edu
earlychildhoodpartnerships.org