

**STATEMENT OF
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ARNOLD S. WECHSLER
EMPLOYEE MANAGEMENT DIVISION
NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEES ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR
AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

OCTOBER 19, 2007

Good morning, Chairman Addabbo, Chairman Vellone, and members of the Council. I am Assistant Commissioner Arnold S. Wechsler of the NYPD's Employee Management Division. I am joined by Captain Daniel Mulligan, Executive Officer of the Resource Management Section of the Patrol Services Bureau, and Director Ramon Garcia, in charge of Patrol Operations for the School Safety Division. On behalf of Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly, we would like to thank you for this opportunity to speak to you about School Crossing Guards and School Safety Agents.

We would first like to point out that the role played by a School Crossing Guard is very different from the role played by a School Safety Agent, even though both function within a school environment. Last week, in the course of a joint oversight hearing on school safety held by the Council's Committees on Public Safety, Education, and Juvenile Justice, there was extensive discussion of the position of School Safety Agent. Therefore, some of the information which we will provide today will be familiar to those who attended last Wednesday's hearing.

School Safety Agents, or SSAs, are civilian employees assigned to the Department's School Safety Division. There are 4,899 SSAs currently assigned to the School Safety Division, within a rank structure consisting of seven levels. The majority of SSAs are in the entry level position of SSA Level I, with the primary duty of patrolling designated areas in and around schools and taking enforcement action for violations of law where necessary. Agents assigned to the next higher level, SSA Level II, conduct directed patrols in and around schools, respond to incidents, and perform scanning duties. SSA Level III, commonly referred to as Group Leader, is the first line supervisory role, responsible for supervision of SSA Levels I and II. The successive supervisory and managerial levels carry ever greater responsibilities, involving not only supervision of staff but also diverse duties such as training, community contact, devising strategies and initiatives to address crime and disorder in schools, and maintaining relationships with DOE personnel, parent associations, and Patrol personnel. The highest level, Director of Patrol Operations, is held by Director Garcia. Approximately 70% of School Safety Agents are women, and approximately 95% are black or Hispanic.

We are fortunate in having had a constant stream of applications for the position of School Safety Agent, with hundreds of resumes on file, so there has been no difficulty in recruiting candidates for the title. The Department has advertised for the position in the Chief and in other newspapers, has posted the position on the City's website, and has utilized a web-based recruiting tool in order to attract candidates.

The position of School Safety Agent was formerly a non-competitive title, with applications made by submitting a resume, but at the NYPD's request, the Department of Citywide Administrative Services established the position as a competitive civil service title, and application is now made through an open, competitive exam. The first such exam was given on June 9th of this year, and 1,380 applicants took the test. We are awaiting the establishment of the list, but in the meantime we continue to process applications which were made before the position was designated competitive. Anyone hired before the establishment of the list will be "rolled over" into the competitive title, including our current employees. Applicants who did not take the test but are hired after the list is exhausted will be considered provisional employees, and will need to take and pass the next test in order to retain their positions. Note that now that the position is competitive, DCAS will participate in the recruitment effort by announcing upcoming tests and publicizing their filing dates.

The requirements for the entry level position are a high school diploma or equivalent and the ability to meet the qualifications for appointment as a Special Patrolman within 90 days, which include being over the age of 21, a U.S. citizen, and a City resident. Candidates must pass a psychological and medical assessment, including drug screening, and an extensive background investigation. They must also pass a qualifying physical test, which requires them to perform simulated tasks designed to replicate stair climbing, victim rescue, emergency response, and struggle with a resistant individual. The starting salary is \$28,919, and increases to \$32,677 after two years. Note that the current salary is in fact higher than the figures provided to the Council last week, which reflected the prior contract. School Safety Agents receive the normal fringe benefits associated with full-time civilian City employment – vacation leave, sick leave, health benefits, and pension benefits. School Safety Agents are required to purchase regulation uniforms at the beginning of their careers, and receive a yearly uniform allowance of \$668 to help defray the cost of replacement. Newly hired School Safety Agents have a probation period of one year.

School Safety Agents receive an initial, comprehensive 14-week training course, including instruction in the areas of Law, Police Science, Behavioral Science and Physical Education and Tactics. Because SSAs have limited peace officer powers through their designation as Special Patrolmen, the course is designed as a basic course for peace officers without firearms. However, in order to assist in preparing SSAs for their special role as part of the school community, DOE personnel also participate in the training as instructors, and address specific areas such as Special Education, school administration, school governance, adolescent suicide, conflict resolution, child abuse, and substance abuse prevention.

With respect to retention issues, the attrition rate for School Safety Agents was about 9% over the course of 2006, for an average of 37 SSAs per month. A class of 100 is scheduled to be hired and trained in November. School Safety Agents leave for a variety of reasons, including other opportunities available to them because of their training and experience.

We would now like to discuss the position of School Crossing Guard, a very different job.

School Crossing Guards are part-time civilian employees assigned to individual precincts within the Patrol Services Bureau. There are 2,266 School Crossing Guards, assigned to every precinct of the City, except for the Central Park Precinct. They are primarily responsible for protecting children at school crossings, and may regulate traffic as necessary to escort children safely across the street, in accordance with traffic signals. They are generally assigned to elementary schools, public and non-public, as well as to some middle schools, depending upon the traffic condition around the school. Assignments within the precinct are made based on seniority, at the beginning of the school year. School Crossing Guards are not peace officers and do not take enforcement action, and there is no promotional path for School Crossing Guards. Over 97% of School Crossing Guards are women, approximately one-third are white, one-third are black, one-third are Hispanic, and about 2% are Asian or American Indian. About half of the School Crossing Guards are over 50 years of age.

Because of its unique character, the job of School Crossing Guard is sometimes a difficult position to fill. It is part time work which requires the Guard to be at her post at the beginning and end of the school day, generally for two hours each time, plus an hour in the middle of the day if the school dismisses for lunch. School Crossing Guards are most likely to live in the vicinity of the school they are assigned to, and the position therefore has to be geographically targeted, which limits the number of potential applicants. In addition, the traditional pool of applicants, mothers who did not otherwise work outside the home, has greatly decreased over the last several years.

Attracting candidates for the position requires a sustained effort. The Personnel Bureau and Patrol Services Bureau work together to mount recruitment campaigns, publishing newspaper advertisements, distributing posters to all precincts, and posting the position on the City's website. The most direct and effective recruitment is, of course, done on the local level, through precinct personnel. Each precinct has a School Crossing Guard Coordinator, typically a uniformed member of the precinct's Highway Safety Unit, who is responsible for supervising the School Crossing Guards assigned to the precinct. The Coordinator and the precinct's Community Affairs Officer solicit candidates at Precinct Community Council meetings, PTA meetings, schools, and in the course of their other community contacts. They often enlist the help of School Safety personnel, and focus considerable attention on recruitment in May and June, when the Department is gearing up for the next school year. We stress the many positive aspects of the job: full health benefits, working close to home, working with children, flexibility during the day. Note that the Chief of Personnel periodically forwards the list of vacancies for School Crossing Guards to the Chief of Patrol, confirming where the vacancies are and encouraging Patrol personnel in their efforts to fill the positions.

Commissioner Kelly has also welcomed the City Council's help in this effort. We have brought with us a recruitment poster which we will be glad to supply you with, and we can provide background information regarding the position, if you would like to assist the Department in filling its vacancies.

The position of School Crossing Guard has no formal educational or experience requirements, and anyone interested in the position may simply visit their local precinct stationhouse to file a preliminary application. The applicant is interviewed by the School Crossing Guard Coordinator and the individual's information is forwarded to the Patrol

Services Bureau, the overhead command of the patrol precincts. The Department then periodically conducts a "processing day" for School Crossing Guard applicants. They come to One Police Plaza, fill out a more formal application package, receive a preliminary screening interview by my staff, and are then assigned a date for examination by the Medical Division.

Candidates must pass a medical assessment, including drug screening, and an extensive background investigation. They are not required to take a physical standards test. If the candidates are found eligible, they await the scheduling of a training class, which depends upon the availability of the Police Academy and also upon whether there is a vacancy in the precinct in which they will work. Classes of about 40 are usually scheduled every six to eight weeks. School Crossing Guards receive a six-day training course, generally introducing them to the Department's rules and procedures, and focusing on such subjects as traffic control, documenting their activity, integrity issues, safe control of intersections, first aid, and child behavior. One of the training days is devoted to field training, where the new School Crossing Guard works at her assigned precinct with an experienced School Crossing Guard.

The starting salary is \$9.13 per hour for new hires, increasing to \$11.92 after three years. School Crossing Guards receive health benefits and sick leave, as well as vacation leave which is paid out as a cash benefit, and they are eligible for a pension benefit. School Crossing Guards are not required to purchase full uniforms, and are required instead to wear "appropriate clothing." However, they do need to purchase certain uniform items: a regulation cap and reflective safety vest, white gloves, a traffic whistle, and a regulation yellow raincoat and cap. They must also carry a memorandum pad, similar to a police officer's memo book, in which they document their activities. School Crossing Guards receive a yearly uniform allowance of \$196, and have a probation period of six months. Most School Crossing Guards do not work during the summer months, and collect unemployment benefits until they return when school opens in September. Unemployment benefits are also paid during Christmas and Easter breaks.

With respect to retention issues, the attrition rate for School Crossing Guards was about 8.6% over the course of 2006, for an average of 16 employees per month. There are currently approximately 90 vacancies, and a class is scheduled for early November. The reasons that School Crossing Guards leave vary. Some obtain full-time positions, some leave because they find it too challenging to work outside in bad weather, and others leave because their age or health issues may prevent them from comfortably doing the job.

In closing, we thank the Council for your interest in the work of School Safety Agents and School Crossing Guards, who help to make the City's children safer, in very different ways. We will continue to do our best to recruit, hire and train School Safety Agents and School Crossing Guards, and would appreciate any help you can offer in filling our ranks with the best possible candidates. Thank you, and we will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

**LOCAL 372
NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES
DISTRICT COUNCIL 37**

**AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE,
COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES
AFLCIO**

**NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR COMMITTEE
and
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
OVERSIGHT HEARING ON SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS**

OCTOBER 19, 2007

**TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY
VERONICA MONTGOMERY-COSTA
PRESIDENT - LOCAL 372 AND DC 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO**

OCTOBER 19, 2007

Chairman Addabbo, Chairman Vallone, Committee Members:

Local 372 thanks the City Council Committees on Civil Service & Labor and Public Safety for this opportunity to once again publicly speak on behalf of the nearly 2,200 Local 372 School Crossing Guards in our membership of 26,000 Board of Education Employees.

Each and every year, we have had to appeal to the City Council to rectify a Mayor's budget which failed to fulfill its responsibility to our City's 1.1 million school children.

Those budgets also failed those who endure extreme weather conditions in winter and summer and risk their lives every work day to keep our children safe - our Local 372 School Crossing Guards.

Traffic Issues and the Student to School Crossing Guard Ratio Are Critical

We must not continue to ask the men and women who are Local 372's everyday heroes to risk their own lives because of unattended or poorly addressed traffic issues in intersections that have been proven hazardous and sometimes deadly.

We must not lose another hero like School Crossing Guard Betty Davis, who was killed in the line of duty before school opened on January 21, 2001— struck and thrown down to the pavement by a school minibus as she approached her post at the intersection of Linden Boulevard and Cross Island Parkway in Cambria Heights, Queens.

Near schools located by highways and major intersections, or in areas where traffic signs, signals and speed limits are frequently disregarded by drivers, children, parents and teachers have been needlessly injured or killed.

Local 372 would like to see up -to-date and complete data indicating at which of these pedestrian accident locations there was no School Crossing Guard assigned. Currently, there is no mechanism for combining accurate current data from DOT, the NYPD and the DOE. Perhaps, if there were such a comparison chart available, the assignment of School Crossing Guards would be done with greater effectiveness and tragic accidents could be prevented.

Local 372 contends that in order to insure ideal safety conditions around our schools, an improvement ratio of 460 to 1 must be met.

Local 372 conducted a citywide survey in SY 2006/07 of the assignment of School Crossing Guards. The final chart (*attachment 1*) shows our recommended increases in School Crossing Guard assignments by borough.

In SY 2006/07, three of the five boroughs fell far short of what would be considered a safer ratio of students to School Crossing Guards according to our survey.

Currently in SY 2007/08, we have 20 fewer School Crossing Guards citywide.

In Manhattan, last year the student to School Crossing Guard ratio was at 518 to 1. We needed at least 50 additional School Crossing Guards in Manhattan. In SY 2007/08, we lost 7 School Crossing Guards in Manhattan.

In the Bronx, last year the student to School Crossing Guard ratio was 684 to 1. A minimum of 160 additional School Crossing Guards were needed in the Bronx. In SY 2007/08, only 4 School Crossing Guards were added in the Bronx.

In Queens, last year the student to School Crossing Guard ratio was 532 to 1. At least 100 additional School Crossing Guards should have been assigned in Queens. In SY 2007/08, only 25 more School Crossing Guards were added in Queens.

In Brooklyn, last year the student to School Crossing Guard ratio was 371 to 1, the only borough which we consider to have an ideal safety ratio. In SY 2007/08, we lost 42 School Crossing Guards in Brooklyn.

In Staten Island, last year the student to School Crossing Guard ratio was 431 to 1. Staten Island was one of two boroughs to meet the improved ratio. In SY 2007/08, the ratio is unchanged in Staten Island.

**2008 Executive Budget Requests (attachment 3) Reflect the
Community Boards' demands for Additional School Crossing Guards.**

Requests by Community Boards for additional coverage at school sites are most often denied. The ratio of student to school crossing guards continues to present a danger to our students.

Community Boards in the five boroughs responded to the need for school crossing guards in their 2008 Executive Budget Register requests. (attachment # 3) Those requests were addressed in the 2008 Adopted Budget Register with the following boiler plate:

“OMB supports the agency’s position as follows:

The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.”

This boiler plate indicates that funding would be forthcoming for additional School Crossing Guards. Yet, in SY 2007/08, we have 20 fewer School Crossing Guards than last year. Clearly, any increased City Council funds were not spent on additional School Crossing Guards.

**City Hall — the Mayor and City Council — still choose to save money
by not annualizing School Crossing Guards, now a 12-month necessity.**

Our School Crossing Guards are still hourly employees limited to twenty hours of work per week at \$10.23 per hour. When schools are closed, they are not paid. Most School Crossing Guards are still laid off at the end of the school year.

The City must not continue to neglect brave and dedicated workers like Sallie Roberts who has served as a School Crossing Guard for more than three decades— even through her bouts with ovarian and breast cancer. Among the lowest paid City employees, her annual salary is little over \$12,700 (including unemployment benefits).

Each school year, School Crossing Guards like Sallie could be laid off during the summer months. When Summer School is in session, about 580 School Crossing Guards are

selected to work. The remaining 1,600 pay 10% of her own health insurance benefits while subsisting on unemployment insurance and sacrificing their own family's quality of life. The remaining 90% of the cost of these premiums is funded by employee contributions to our welfare fund. This is an expensive administrative nightmare for the union, the NYPD and the NYC Office of Labor Relations.

This intollerable injustice has been perpetrated because the City cannot find or will not fund the money to annualize our School Crossing Guards' benefits.

Local 372 estimates that the total cost to the City of providing health insurance to the 2,200 families involved is less than \$1.5 million. We have provided tables indicating the Cost Estimate of Annualization of Health Insurance. (*attachment 4*)

Their Should Be No 4-hour Cap on SCGs Hours of Service

The choice to withhold coverage of more than 4 hours per day is absolutely indefensible, when there is a real need for expanded hours of service, and for coverage throughout the calendar year. At schools which will serve later meals, or which remain open for late afternoon recreation programs, children will be staying later, throughout the entire year. Additional hours of coverage by School Crossing Guards are absolutely vital.

Additional School Crossing Guards will be needed for Summer School 2008.

It is also critical that there be better co-ordination between the DOE and the NYPD, to ensure that a full complement of School Crossing Guards is available to cover these programs, in public, private, parochial and charter schools. Local 372 is calling upon the City Council to urge the Mayor and Chancellor to identify the Summer School 2008 sites by June 1st to give guards adequate notice to plan for personal obligations during the summer.

In Conclusion:

Local 372 once again urges the City Council to help ensure that our children travel to and from school unharmed and that those who risk their lives to protect them are properly compensated to improve the quality of life for their own families.

Local 372 Testimony Attachments

Veronica Montgomery-Costa
President

School Crossing Guards Assigned In 2006/07 School Year

Borough	Student Population	No of Precincts	No of SCG	Ratio of SCG to Students
Manhattan	165,867	21	320	518 to 1
Bronx	223,803	12	327	684 to 1
Brooklyn	328,964	23	885	371 to 1
Queens	276,688	16	520	532 to 1
Staten Island	60,664	3	141	431 to 1
Totals	1,055,986	75	2193	

School Crossing Guards Assigned In 2007/08 School Year

Borough	No of SCG	Change	Ratio of SCG to Students
Manhattan	313	-7	540 to 1
Bronx	331	+4	676 to 1
Brooklyn	843	-42	390 to 1
Queens	545	+25	507 to 1
Staten Island	141	NC	141 to 1
Totals	2173	-20	

School Crossing Guards Needed For Interim Ratio of 460 to 1						
Borough	Student Population	No of Precincts	No of SCG	Additional SCG Needed	Adjusted Ratio of SCG to Students	
Manhattan	165,867	21	370	50	448 to 1	
Bronx	223,803	12	487	160	460 to 1	
Brooklyn	328,964	23	885	0	371 to 1	
Queens	276,688	16	620	100	446 to 1	
Staten Island	60,664	3	141	0	431 to 1	
Totals	1,055,986	75	2193	310 Additional SCG Needed		

Fiscal Year 2008 Executive Budget Register

http://www.nyc.gov/html/omb/pdf/cbrboro4_07.pdf

BRONX

Community District 4

Request: Provide Funding for Additional School Crossing Guards.

Explanation: Fund the total number of slots of School Crossing Guards available to Community District 4, at present, we are experiencing a deficiency of 6 unfilled slots.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

Community District 6

Request: Provide Funds to Hire Additional School Crossing Guards.

Explanation: There is a strong need for additional school crossing guards. At present, some schools in our district lack crossing guards, others have to share their crossing guards with neighboring schools. We ask that sufficient funding be provided to hire additional crossing guards for our district so that every eligible school may be assigned at least one crossing guard.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

Community District 12

Request: Provide additional school crossing guards to be assigned to schools.

Explanation: Assign additional crossing guards to schools.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows:

The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

BROOKLYN

Community District 7

Request: Allocate Funds for Additional Crossing Guards.

Explanation: Many of our schools are located along truck routes, especially 4th Avenue. Larger vehicles and higher traffic volume (real and projected) require us to be proactive for children's safety.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

Community District 14

Request: Fund Additional Crossing Guards for 70th Precinct

Explanation: Fund additional crossing guards for 70th Precinct. Currently there are 26 crossing guards with an anticipated cutback of at least 50%. There is a critical need for crossing guards at each of the schools within community district 14.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

MANHATTAN

Community District 1

Request: Provide two crossing guards for PS/IS 89 at West/Chambers and West/Warren Streets.

Explanation: Many complaints from parents about the safety of crossing the streets especially with all of the construction going on and the excessive amount of traffic in this area.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

Supported by: Manhattan Youth Recreation and Resources

Community District 12

Request: Purchase cell phones for School Crossing Guards.

Explanation: Providing cell phones to School Crossing Guards and allowing them greater communication to local schools, Police Precincts, 911, and the City's 311 System, and will enhance public safety for thousands of Washington Heights-Inwood school-age children.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

The agency has not submitted a proposal to increase funding for this project. Therefore, OMB does not take any position.

Council Districts: 7, 10

QUEENS

Community District 3

Request: Hire Traffic Enforcement Agents.

Explanation: Additional Traffic Enforcements are urgently needed to address double parking on Astoria Blvd. from 96th - 104th Streets, speeding on Astoria Blvd., 31st Avenue, 32nd Avenue, Northern Boulevard, 34th Avenue and Ditmars Boulevard. Further, school crossing guards are required at both public and private schools.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

City funding was provided to hire 100 additional Traffic Enforcement Agents. Some personnel maybe allocated to accommodate your request.

Community District 4

Increase School Crossing Guard Quota

Explanation: In FY 2007 the 110Pct. has a quota of 25 crossing guards of which 22 are assigned. Within the last few years many of our schools have added additions, thus increasing student capacity. New schools have opened such as PS 28 and new schools are being constructed, such as PS/IS 260. For the safety of the students attending these schools the quota of crossing guards must be increased to reflect the actual student population. With the rapid population increase in CB #4Q comes more traffic making the crossing guards more of a necessity.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

Community District 5

Request: Hire Traffic Control Agents, School Crossing Guards and Additional School Safety Officers.

Explanation: The City should earmark funding to hire additional traffic control agents: (Traffic Enforcement Agents-Level II), so that heavily traveled Queens Intersections can be staffed. This will diminish the need to assign police officers, who are paid more. In consideration of dangerous traffic conditions, funding is needed to hire at least 5 additional school crossing guards for District 5, Queens schools. Most elementary schools have only 1 or 2 School Safety Officers; intermediate schools only have 3 officers.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

City funding was provided to hire 100 additional Traffic Enforcement Agents. Some personnel maybe allocated to accommodate your request.

Community District 6

Request: Recruit Local Precinct Crossing Guards.

Explanation: Additional crossing guards are necessary to ensure safety.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible

Community District 7

Request: Fund Additional Personnel For The 109th Precinct.

Explanation: Support funding for additional Police Officers to address Quality of Life complaints, maintain the DARE program (workshop on drug education for school children), additional civilian personnel to relieve officers assigned to the 109th Precinct, school crossing guards. Additional Traffic Enforcement Agents are needed to intensify enforcement coverage. In addition, the K-9 Unit dogs are capable of sniffing-out drugs and bombs.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The uniformed staffing level is dependent on the annual funding allocated and the availability of candidates to fill the funded positions. The deployment of uniformed personnel is scheduled by NYPD after graduation of Police classes from the Academy. City funding was provided to hire four hundred additional civilian personnel as part of the Civilianization Program. Some civilian clerical personnel may be allocated to accommodate your request.

Community District 8

Request: Provide Funds to Hire School Crossing Guards.

Explanation: School Crossing Guards need to be hired.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

Community District 10

Request: Assign Additional Uniformed Police Officers to the 106th Police Precinct, and Sufficient Off Street Parking for Additional Personnel. Increase Transit Police in District 23.

Explanation: Necessary when school crossing guards need help at major intersections; when enforcement of changed traffic patterns needs a uniformed presence; when traffic jams, double parkers, driveway obstructions, bus stop parkers, etc. know there will be no enforcement. Needed when many other quality of life conditions cannot be addressed, resulting in personal injury and property damage. Personnel are at an all time low and additional manpower is necessary to preserve our quality of life.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: NYPD total staffing levels depend on decisions made in the Preliminary and Executive budget process. Allocation of uniformed personnel is scheduled by the NYPD only after graduation of Police classes from the Academy. Availability of civilian personnel is limited due to recent reductions to the civilian headcount.

Community District 13

Request: Increase Funding for Additional School Crossing Guards (for 105 Pct.)

Explanation: This is an area of need.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

STATEN ISLAND

Community District 1

Request: Hire Additional Crossing Guards.

Explanation: To insure the safety of the school children due to the increased traffic on the North Shore.

Responsible Agency: Police Department:

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

Community District 2

Request: Increase the Number of Crossing Guards Hired City-Wide to Provide Additional Guards for Staten Island.

Explanation: Additional crossing guards are needed.

Responsible Agency: Police Department

OMB supports the agency's position as follows: The City Council has provided funding annually for additional school crossing guards. After the receipt of additional funding, the Patrol Services Bureau surveys precincts for the need of additional school crossing guards and those requests are met when possible.

Cost of Annualization of Health Benefits of School Crossing Guards

Average Annual Salary	\$ 9,709.60
Number of School Crossing Guards	2,172
*Number of School Crossing Guards selected to work for Summer '06	583
Number of SCGs in need of summer coverage	1,589
Number of weeks needed for year round health coverage (Summer)	9 weeks

****RATES FOR SUMMER HEALTH PLAN COVERAGE (see enclosed)**

Bi-weekly rates for SCGs with individual coverage

GHI -CBP / EBCBS \$64.35

HIP Prime HMO \$71.75

Bi-weekly rates for SCGs with family coverage

GHI -CBP / EBCBS \$167.45

HIP Prime HMO \$175.75

Estimated cost to the City to pay for summer health coverage

Number of SCGs with individual coverage (based on Summer '06) 512

Weekly Rates

GHI -CBP / EBCBS \$32.18 X 9 weeks = \$289.58

Total cost for 512 individuals if covered by GHI \$148,262

HIP Prime HMO \$35.88 X 9 weeks \$322.88

Total cost for 512 individuals if covered by GHI \$165,312

Number of SCGs with family coverage (based on Summer '06) 1,660

Weekly Rates

GHI -CBP / EBCBS \$83.73 X 9 weeks = \$753.53

Total cost for 1,660 families if covered by GHI \$1,250,852

HIP Prime HMO \$87.88 X 9 weeks \$790.88

Total cost for 1,660 families if covered by GHI \$1,312,853

Total cost to City for all SCGs (including 583 SCGs hired for Summer '06

If covered by GHI \$1,399,114

If covered by HIP \$1,478,165

* SCGs selected to work for summer receive health coverage from City.

** City subsidizes 90% of COBRA premiums for all SCGs in the summer

Prepared by Henry A. Garrido

NYC HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM

SCHOOL "X-ing" GUARD 2006 SUMMER HEALTH PLAN COVERAGE

Total Employee Contributions Required for 5 Bi-Weekly Periods

	INDIVIDUAL COVERAGE			FAMILY COVERAGE		
	Contributions for			Contributions for		
	Basic Health Insurance (A)	Optional Rider Benefits (B)	Grand Total (A) + (B)	Basic Health Insurance (C)	Optional Rider Benefits (D)	Grand Total (C) + (D)
GHI - CBP / EBCBS	\$64.35	\$16.10	\$80.45	\$167.45	\$39.90	\$207.35
HIP Prime HMO	71.75	7.00	78.75	175.75	17.20	192.95
Aetna HMO	168.25	None	168.25	641.60	None	641.60
Aetna QPOS	929.30	None	929.30	2,269.40	None	2,269.40
CIGNA	358.55	None	358.55	1,079.40	None	1,079.40
Empire EPO	606.05	None	606.05	1,543.80	None	1,543.80
Empire HMO New Jersey	89.00	None	89.00	203.35	None	203.35
Empire HMO New York	179.50	None	179.50	563.50	None	563.50
GHI HMO	195.90	None	195.90	564.00	None	564.00
HealthNet	471.20	None	471.20	1,305.35	None	1,305.35
HIP Prime POS	259.30	None	259.30	635.50	None	635.50
Med Team	71.75		71.75	175.75		175.75
Metroplus	71.75	None	71.75	175.75	None	175.75
Vytra	221.25	None	221.25	705.10	None	705.10

Optional rider not available with this plan

**TESTIMONY OF GREGORY FLOYD,
PRESIDENT OF TEAMSTER LOCAL 237.
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR
OCTOBER 19, 2007**

Good morning. I am Gregory Floyd, President of Teamsters Local 237. I speak here today on behalf of the 4,300-plus NYPD School Safety Agents represented by Local 237. I thank the Committee and Chairman Addabbo for the opportunity to testify.

The topic of these hearings – the retention of School Safety personnel – is crucial to our City. In recent months, there has been heated debate over School Safety, and the quality of the protection our force provides the schoolchildren of New York. The Chancellor's own statistics show 20% of students fear for their safety, an unacceptable result. In this setting, some have criticized School Safety's performance. I and Local 237 contend our members do a superb job under difficult circumstances.

But I assume everyone agrees that retention of experienced Agents is a problem that must be addressed to make schools safe. The problem is in fact a crisis. As School Safety Chief James Secreto revealed to City Council last week, some 40 School Safety Agents leave the force every month, producing a loss of as many as 500 agents per year. A senior graduating from New York City schools likely has seen 60% of the School Safety Agents around him vanish during his high school career!

This is necessarily a bad result. It is simple common sense that an Agent who becomes a familiar, known face to youngsters through their school years acquires respect from students, and a personal relationship with them, that is productive of order in schools and irreplaceable. We might say School Safety Agents fulfill the old neighborhood function of the "adults on the block" who once watched out for each other's children. Due to the departure of hundreds of Agents annually, this protective function of School Safety is breaking down.

Apart from the consequences for any one school, the loss of skills from the force through departure of experienced personnel is devastating. As with any form of police/patrol work, School Safety veterans have picked up skills of observation, detection, and negotiation not available to them on the first day of the job. New York City can't afford to lose these skills of hundreds of experienced Agents through the annual odyssey to the Department of Corrections (primarily) and other law-enforcement jobs.

Why do School Safety Agents leave? The bottom line is money. As Chief Secreto points out, School Safety Agents are by far the lowest-paid of the special police forces of this City. As our exhibit shows, the Special Officers who guard New York City's office buildings, juvenile justice facilities and homeless shelters, are paid at a incumbent rate fully 20% higher than School Safety. Even so-called School Safety Agent Level IIIs – men and women who function as

Sergeants, with significant supervisory responsibilities – are paid some \$4,000 per year less than Special Officers.

	<u>SCHOOL SAFETY</u>	<u>SCHOOL SAFETY III</u>	<u>SPEC. OFFICER HRA, DJJ, DHS</u>
Incumbent salary	\$32,552	\$35,318	\$39,138

Local 237 does not by any means deprecate the bravery and professionalism of the Special Officers. In fact, these capable men and women are our members as well. We simply contend that protection of our city's children – our future – is no less important a function than police work at the other public facilities policed by our members. Once again, I can't imagine any principled disagreement with this statement.

The unfairness of School Safety Agents' lower pay rate is more obvious in light of recent developments. As the result of Local 237's campaigning – with the assistance of this Committee – School Safety in the past year became a competitive Civil Service title. Now Agents must qualify for the force through the same system of written examinations taken by Special Officers. Presenting the same qualifications for hire, and performing equally challenging police work, School Safety Agents deserve the same final (incumbent) pay as Special Officers.

Accordingly, Local 237 calls on the Council, the Mayor and Office of Labor Relations to take the necessary steps to bring School Safety's incumbent pay schedules in line with their fellow law-enforcement officers, New York City's Special Officers.

The expense associated with this pay upgrade is not great in light of the important stakes involved. Indeed, it may be mitigated entirely by savings that result from retention. Currently, NYPD incurs the exorbitant annual expense of training 500 new Agents to replace those departed. Agents go through two months of training while on payroll. Instructors, facilities and other components of training also require money. These thousands of dollars in training costs for each new School Safety Agent are thrown away each time an Agent is forced to abandon his/her job for more lucrative opportunities elsewhere. Significant improvement in retention would eliminate these costs.

In any event, cost alone shouldn't deter action to retain our School Safety Agents. Problems associated with School Safety have been the subject of heated debate for months. Councilmen, parents and our members have all expressed their concern over trends in our schools, especially the perceived lack of safety. There can be no dispute that improved morale, professionalism and retention of School Safety Agents will contribute to solving these problems that have been addressed. The way to improved morale and retention is through pay increases for our hard-working force. The time is now.