

Staff Follow-Up: School Board Meeting of May 15, 2024, Agenda Item H-10, Metal Detectors in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS)

Board Workshop – July 31, 2024



Miami-Dade County Public Schools



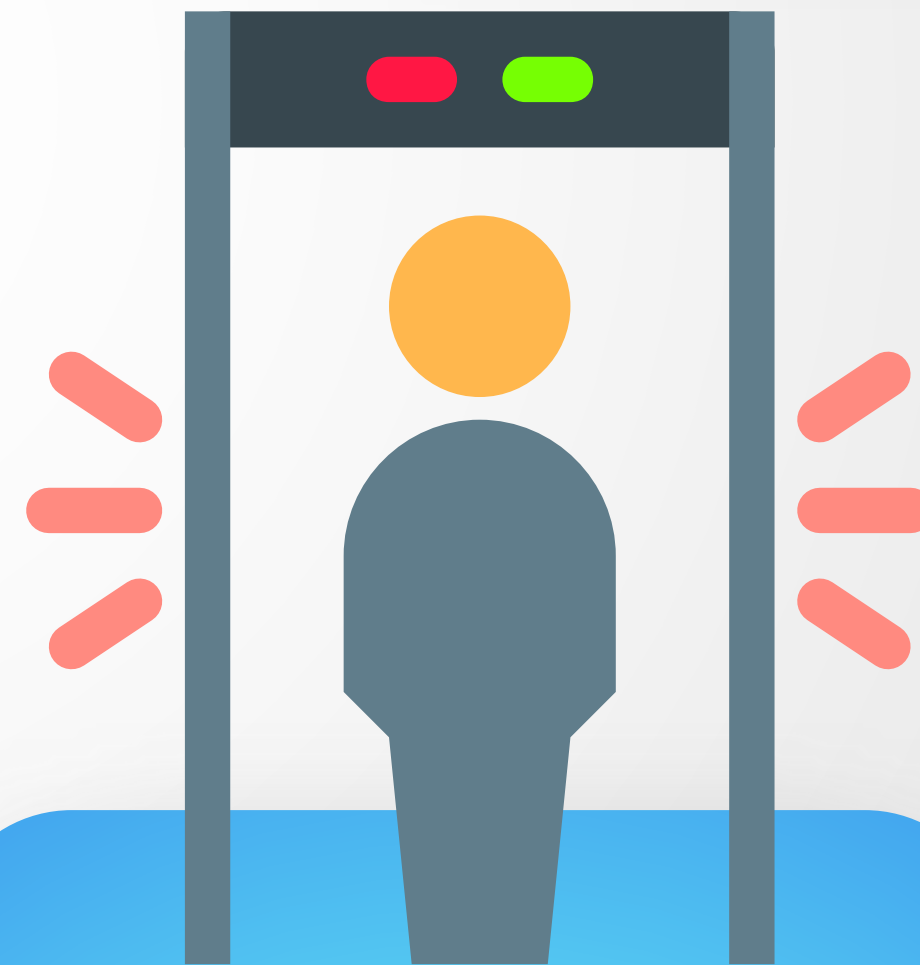
Implementation - Senior High Schools

Total Senior High Schools

Senior High Schools for implementation: **60**

Estimated Detection Devices

- ❑ Based on **60** senior high schools participating in implementation.
- ❑ Multiple entrances for morning ingress.
- ❑ **3** devices per school site: ~ **180**



Cost Considerations



Metal Detector Costs

Description of Metal Detector Expenditure	Cost
Metal Detector Devices Cost Range – National Leading Metal Detection Vendors Acquisition Cost (ONLY) (Maintenance not Included)	\$3,673,236.00 - \$5,490,000.00
Staffing Additional Security Monitors – Based on 5hr Daily Shift (Requires at a minimum a team of 4-6 based on vendor recommendation) Additional School Resource Officers (Staff multiple entry points – vendor recommendation)	\$17,658,000.00
Ancillary Costs Two (2) rolling tables at \$343 each and Two (2) metal detector wands at \$229 each	\$107,536.00 - \$265, 408.00 (Overall Start-up Costs Depending on Number of Devices Deployed)
Ongoing Operational Costs Maintenance, repairs, and the replacement of outdated equipment beyond the initial purchase expenditure	TBA



Potential Sources of Income

Grants

Available yearly through the U.S. Department of Justice are:

- COPS School Violence Prevention in the amount of \$500,000.
- Safety and Security Grant, allocation varies yearly (2022-2023 = \$2,249,161).

General Funds



Legal Issues & Board Policies



School Board Policy 7440

“The Superintendent is authorized to install metal detectors and other security devices which would assist in the detection of guns and dangerous weapons in school buildings and/or on District property.”



School Board Policy 5771

“To deter individuals from bringing weapons to school, curtail the threat of violence, and foster a safe learning environment for students, staff, and visitors, metal detector searches are authorized without individualized suspicion pursuant to procedures established by the Superintendent.”



Legal Issues & Board Policies

● Florida's 3rd District Court of Appeal

This Board's policy authorizing random searches of students in high school classrooms with hand-held metal detector wands was constitutional, and further suggested that a policy authorizing administrative searches using magnetometers would likewise be constitutional.

This is because:

- 1) "public school students are subject to a greater degree of control and administrative supervision than is permitted over a free adult";
- 2) a magnetometer poses only "a minimal intrusion into students' privacy," especially when students are on notice that the magnetometer will be used; and
- 3) the School Board has an important, justified interest in "deter[ring] and curtail[ing] the presence of weapons in schools and promote a safe learning environment."



Legal Issues & Board Policies

● F.S. 1006.09(9)

Principals must “cause to be posted in each public K-12 school, in a place readily seen by students, a notice stating that a student's locker or other storage area is subject to search, upon reasonable suspicion, for prohibited or illegally possessed substances or objects,” but the statute “does not prohibit the use of metal detectors or specially trained animals in the course of a search for illegally possessed substances or objects.”

Note, however, that “any search of a student's personal belongings, including a purse, backpack, or bookbag, must be conducted discreetly to maintain the privacy of the student's personal items within such belongings,” and that “personal items that are not prohibited on school grounds must be immediately returned to the student's personal belongings.”



Considerations

Security Monitors



- ❑ According to the current Security Monitor job description, monitors are tasked with monitoring student activity under the direction of the school principal.
- ❑ The job description includes responsibilities for promoting a safe learning environment and ensuring adherence to conduct standards.

School Police



- ❑ School police is tasked with ensuring the safety of our school community while on campus. Officers respond to a variety of incidents within the schools including potential criminal acts, reported concerning behaviors, and instances of students in mental health crisis.
- ❑ In addition, officers conduct school-wide safety checks, participate in emergency drills, and are part of the school-based threat management teams.
- ❑ SROs will respond to metal detection screening without making the school vulnerable or compromising the safety and security of the campus overall.

Training

Initial training on metal detection devices would be conducted by vendor.

Miami-Dade Schools Police Department will assist in generating a Metal Detection training including:

- Guidelines for metal detection
- Laws governing metal detection
- Types of searches
- Screening guidelines and procedures



Awareness Campaign

If metal detector program is adopted, the following sampling of roll-out campaign tasks will occur:

Collaborate with the Office of Communications to develop messaging to be sent out via:

- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ SchoolMessenger
- ☐ Signage
- ☐ Media Outlets

Collaborate with the Office of School Leadership and Performance to develop:

- ☐ District-approved letter to parents/guardians (English/Spanish/Haitian-Creole)
- ☐ Present Information to :
 - ☐ Impacted District/Region Offices
 - ☐ School-Site Administrators
 - ☐ Teachers/Staff
 - ☐ Students
 - ☐ External Stakeholders (i.e. PTA/PTSA, EESAC, and other community stakeholders)



1 Metal Detection Stakeholder Workgroup

- ☐ Facilities Operations
- ☐ Financial Services
- ☐ Information Technology Services
- ☐ Maintenance Operations
- ☐ Miami-Dade Schools Police Department
- ☐ Office of Communications
- ☐ Office of District Operations
- ☐ Office of the General Counsel
- ☐ Office of Grants Administration
- ☐ Office of Labor Relations and Compensation Administration
- ☐ Office of Procurement Management Services
- ☐ Office of School Leadership and Performance
- ☐ Office of School Facilities
- ☐ Region Offices
- ☐ Select School Site Principals



Metal Detection Stakeholder's Workgroup

Findings on Effectiveness



- ❑ Research highlights the significant role of human factors in the effectiveness of metal detectors in school security.
- ❑ School personnel often lack adequate training in operating metal detectors correctly.
- ❑ Instances have been documented where metal detectors were operated improperly or allowed students to pass through when not functioning properly.



- ❑ Effectiveness concerns aside, the cost implications of deploying metal detectors are substantial.
- ❑ The time required for screening, though not directly tied to cost, is a crucial consideration in implementing metal detectors.
- ❑ The screening process can be slow, especially in larger schools, potentially impacting school schedules.



- ❑ Solutions such as delayed starting times or staggered schedules may be necessary to manage screening delays.
- ❑ School districts contemplating metal detector use should weigh these factors when making decisions about implementation.

Metal Detection Stakeholder's Workgroup Findings on Disadvantages

Implementing metal detectors in senior high schools can have several disadvantages:

- **Cost:** Installing and maintaining metal detectors can be expensive. This includes the initial purchase of the equipment, ongoing maintenance, and employing staff to operate them.
- **False Alarms:** Metal detectors can sometimes trigger false alarms, which can be disruptive and time-consuming to resolve. This may lead to unnecessary searches and interruptions to the educational environment.
- **Privacy Concerns:** Metal detectors may raise concerns about privacy, as students may feel uncomfortable or violated by the screening process, particularly if it involves physical pat-downs or searches.
- **Focus on Symptoms, Not Causes:** Metal detectors address the symptom of potential violence or contraband possession, rather than addressing the root causes of such behavior. This could detract from more holistic approaches to school safety and student well-being.
- **Inconvenience:** Metal detectors can create delays and inconvenience for students and staff as they enter the school. This can disrupt daily schedules and potentially cause frustration.
- **Normalization of Security Measures:** The presence of metal detectors may create a perception that violence or threats are commonplace in schools, potentially normalizing a culture of fear or suspicion among students.

Metal Detection Stakeholder's Workgroup Findings on Disadvantages

Implementing metal detectors in senior high schools can have several disadvantages:

Impact on School Culture:

Metal detectors can contribute to a tense or authoritarian atmosphere within the school environment, which may detract from creating a positive and nurturing educational setting.

Potential for Discrimination:

The implementation and enforcement of metal detectors could inadvertently target certain groups of students, leading to feelings of discrimination or bias based on race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.

Focus on External Threats:

While metal detectors aim to prevent external threats from entering the school, they may not address internal issues such as bullying, mental health issues, or social tensions among students.

Negative Perception:

The presence of metal detectors can create a negative public perception of the school, potentially affecting its reputation and attractiveness to prospective students and families.

Metal Detection Stakeholder's Workgroup Recommendations

AI Gun Detection

- ZeroEyes, an AI gun detection technology software, identifies brandished firearms.
- Identification alerts are sent to the ZeroEyes Command Center, where analysts determine if the detection is lethal or non-lethal (e.g., Orbeez water gun).
- Notifications are then sent to predetermined individuals based on the type of detection.
- In cases of non-lethal items like water guns, MDSPD is immediately notified, and emails are sent to MDSPD personnel.
- For firearm detections, the 911 center is notified first for dispatching law enforcement, followed by notification to the Miami-Dade Schools Police Department. Simultaneously, multiple electronic alerts are sent to school police personnel.
- Monitoring is done 24/7.
- If there's uncertainty about the object detected, the alert is treated as a potential lethal firearm alert.



Metal Detection Stakeholder's Workgroup Recommendations

Random Metal Detection Wanding

Three (3) teams:

- ❑ Nine Security Specialists (3 per Team)
- ❑ District Issued Vehicles
- ❑ Transportation Costs
- ❑ Vehicle Maintenance
- ❑ Approximate Cost: \$518,391.81 per year





Questions or Comments