Loudoun County Public Schools
21000 Education Court
Ashburn, VA 20148
571-252-1020

School Board

November 8, 2026

Sheriff Mike Chapman
Loudoun County Sheriff's Office
P.O. Box 7200
Leesburg, VA 20177

Dear Sheriff Chapman,

For the last year and a half, Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS), the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) and the Leesburg Police Department (LPD) have been collaboratively working on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in regard to how law enforcement and schools work together to keep our students, staff and families safe. By definition, an MOU is a mutual agreement—meaning it requires two or more parties to express and memorialize a shared understanding or partnership. MOUs document the mutually agreed-upon goals, roles, and terms of cooperation between distinct entities.

On Friday afternoon, Dr. Aaron Spence, the Superintendent of LCPS, shared that he met with you earlier that morning and that in that meeting, you provided him with a copy of a new draft version of an MOU that you had signed, and which was created without any input or awareness from the school division or LPD. It is my understanding that you also conveyed that the document sets forth the only plan you would be agreeable to as the baseline agreement between our two organizations, and that LPD would need to enter into a separate MOU with LCPS—a practice that would be contrary to the past practice of having one agreement among all three entities.

Circulating a new version of the MOU that you drafted and signed through Dr. Spence to have me execute does not constitute mutual agreement, and I find that this approach denigrates the collaborative process and efforts LCPS, LCSO, and LPD have taken to collaboratively and transparently address respective questions and concerns in an endeavor to finalize and execute a comprehensive MOU.

As elected officials, we have an obligation to ensure that we are always providing our community with our best intentions and our best efforts, especially when we are working on matters of public safety to protect our students and the educators who support them. I routinely center my positions around evidence-based best practices and hearing from the constituents I serve. As has been brought to me by many concerned parents, national studies show that the presence of law enforcement officers in schools disproportionately impacts discipline outcomes for students of color and students with disabilities. With this as context, I find it critical that every single process, including our MOU negotiations, be analyzed for effectiveness and be transparent to the public so that the community could be confident in the decisions we are making on their behalf.

To that end, in February of this year, I asked the School Board to create the Select Committee of the School Board Regarding MOU between LCPS, LCSO, and LPD with the goal of further improving our working relationship and allowing all stakeholders to participate in an open and transparent discussion process. At the October 22, 2026 meeting of that Committee, in which your team participated, I asked for the Sheriff's Office to bring forward its proposal to expand the SRO program, with the expectation that all parties could then enter into a productive dialogue about what's best for our students, our teachers, and the community.

The Select Committee is meeting on Thursday, November 12, 2026, and as always, you are more than welcome to join the upcoming meeting so that we can continue our collaborative process.

Virginia law views these MOUs as being the result of a collaboration between school boards and their law enforcement partners. Negotiations between our organizations require compromise; no party should feel another coerced the terms and conditions that will eventually govern both organizations. Similarly, unilaterally creating an MOU of this significance in private without allowing for any public input would undermine the hard-earned trust that has been cultivated between our organizations and with the community we serve. While the MOU executed in 2025 remains in place, so as to ensure the parties' existing responsibilities and practices are followed, and which provides us the flexibility of time, I look forward to the continued joint work of the LCPS, LCSO, and LPD teams to reach an agreed-upon MOU that meaningfully addresses the particular needs of our community.

Thank you,

April M. Chandler

April Chandler
Chair | Member for the Algonkian District

CC: Chief Thea Pirnat, Leesburg Police Department
Dr. Aaron Spence, Superintendent, Loudoun County Public Schools
Rae Mitchell, Chief of Schools
Loudoun County School Board