

Staten Island Advance

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Borough could lose half of its crossing guards

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Staten Island could lose half the borough's force of school crossing guards in September under proposed citywide cuts, a Community School Board official warned yesterday.

That could leave Island schools with fewer than 50 crossing guards to cover busy intersections in all three police precincts, according to members of the school board's transportation advisory committee, who met with Police Department liaisons yesterday to map strategy for the proposed cuts.

Committee chairman Jerry Cammarata said the school board is outraged by the proposed cuts, adding that the Island is already "under-served." Slightly more than 100 crossing guards, out of the citywide force of more than 900, are assigned to the Island.

"If we must absorb these kinds of cuts, we would like some input in making decisions about where these cuts would occur," Cammarata said, addressing crossing guard liaison Officers Ellen Schreiber of the 120th Precinct, St. George; Amy Kennedy of the 122nd Precinct, New Dorp, and Jo Anne Doria of the 123rd Precinct, Tottenville.

The officers said "priority" crossings in each precinct would continue to be manned.

The 120th Precinct currently has crossing guards covering 37 posts, including 10 priority crossings: Targee Street and Narrows Road North, Concord; Forest Avenue and Manor Road, Castleton Corners; Bay Street and Hylan Boulevard, Rosebank; Clove Road and Foote Avenue, Sunnyside; Post Avenue and Clove Road, West Brighton; Broadway and Henderson Avenue, West Brighton; Victory Boulevard and Monroe Avenue, Tompkinsville; Victory Boulevard and Slosson Avenue, Castleton Corners, and Richmond Avenue and Forest Avenue, Port Richmond.

The 122nd Precinct currently has crossing guards

covering 45 posts, including six priority crossings: Clove Road and Targee Street, Concord; Willowbrook Road and Sunset Avenue, Willowbrook; Hylan Boulevard and Tysens Lane, and Richmond Road and New Dorp Lane, both New Dorp; Hylan Boulevard and Wiman Avenue, Great Kills, and Slosson and Lortel avenues, Castleton Corners.

The 123rd Precinct has crossing guards covering 20 posts, including three priority corners: Richmond and Genesee avenues and Richmond Avenue and Koch Boulevard, both Eltingville, and Amboy Road and Yetman Avenue, Tottenville.

Maryanne Kosyvich, president of the Staten Island Federation of Parent-Teacher Associations, said she has asked each public school's PTA president for figures on how many children benefit from crossing guards and what impact the loss of a crossing guard might have on their school.

"Some schools have other traffic controls, a stop sign or light. Some schools have temporary conditions, such as construction, that make an intersection dangerous," she said. Generally, schools report more traffic and difficulty with children crossing during the morning because of rush hour, she said.

Mrs. Kosyvich said PTAs would participate in a letter-writing campaign to Mayor David N. Dinkins and City Council members, urging that the crossing guards be retained.

Carol Angelino of District Council 37, American Association of Federal, State, and Municipal Employees, the union representing crossing guards, said members also would begin a letter-writing campaign to elected officials.

"The last time crossing guards were laid off en masse in 1975, there were more accidents and injuries throughout the city," Ms. Angelino said. "If we repeat these kinds of layoffs, we'd be taking a chance with kids' lives and safety."