

Policy Code: 5121 School Resource Officer

The district contracts with local police departments to provide School Resource Officers (SRO) for secondary schools because the Board believes safe schools are critical to creating a learning environment where students can succeed. School Resource Officers (SROs) contribute to positive, caring, and safe school environments. The SRO is a resource to teachers in the areas of law enforcement education that can be applied in the classroom. The SRO can also be a counselor and mentor, by listening and assisting students with various problems. This approach enables the SRO to be a positive law enforcement role model and use proactive prevention by modeling human qualities of law enforcement to our youth and give them a trustworthy adult upon whom to depend.

The purpose of the School Resource Officer (SRO) is to be a peace officer by maintaining order at the assigned school campus with the legal authority to arrest if required. The SRO shall be responsible for diverting minor law enforcement infractions through school disciplinary avenues and parent counseling as opposed to sending the student into the criminal court system. However, if the SRO feels that the criminal offense is serious enough to warrant action through the criminal court system, he or she will investigate and file charges against the student with local law enforcement if the charges are substantiated and filing charges is consistent with local law enforcement procedures. The SRO should follow the proper procedures to see that charges are filed and supply court personnel with complete documentation of the crime, victims, suspects, reports and other required information.

The SRO shall carry out arrest, search and seizure procedures for students in accordance with state and federal law and school board policy.

The SRO investigates criminal activity committed on school property or involving students assigned to the officer's school. SROs shall not be utilized as school disciplinarians. However, they may assist school administrators with these duties as requested. The assistance may include searching and seizing students with reasonable suspicion only when requested by school officials, unless search and seizure is otherwise authorized by law.

An SRO is expected to handle all situations professionally and ethically. Student information may be obtained from a variety of sources and the SRO is expected to use sound professional judgment in determining what information they should share or act upon.

The local police departments require an SRO to wear a full police department uniform including all required equipment. On some occasions, with approval of their police department supervisor, it may be appropriate for SROs to wear plain clothes attire. The SRO shall have in his/her possession, at all times, department issued identification and badge, a fully loaded firearm, handheld radio, pager, handcuffs and all necessary keys to the officer's assigned school. The required equipment may include a taser. When performing security functions at school events and, as circumstances dictate, the officers shall wear appropriate uniform or plain clothes attire.

The police departments provide training for the SROs. They are invited to attend district trainings and are given overviews of appropriate district trainings. The SROs are evaluated by the supervisor from the appropriate police department. The supervisor seeks input from the principal when completing the evaluation.

The SRO can serve on the school's Safe Schools Committee, but should not be the chair or the school's primary representative to the District Safe Schools Committee.

Adopted: November 18, 2010