

School Resource Officers

811.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

A formal School Resource Officer (SRO) program was developed in conjunction with Urbana School District #116 staff to provide a variety of educational resources to the school community, provide law enforcement information and advice to students and parents, and provide a positive law enforcement presence in the school community. The school environment is a community unto itself; however, it remains an integral part of the larger community and society in general. Although the members of the school community are younger, the code of conduct in both communities remains the same. SROs should understand they are working in an educational environment and will work to instill a positive learning climate. When law enforcement action is taken, it will be done in the same unbiased and impartial manner as in the community at large.

811.1.1 POLICY

The police department is committed to enhancing the safety of students and faculty on campuses located in the department's jurisdiction by forming partnerships with the school administrators, faculty members, and students.

811.2 CHAIN OF COMMAND

The Services Division Lieutenant will supervise the SROs. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Chief of Police reserves the right to make supervisory assignments consistent with the operational needs of the Department.

811.3 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER QUALIFICATIONS, SELECTION, AND TRAINING

Officers appointed as SROs should be selected using criteria that includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) The ability of the officer to foster an optimal learning environment and educational community
- (b) Whether the officer has specialized training in:
 1. Child and adolescent development
 2. De-escalation and conflict resolution techniques with children and adolescents
 3. Behavioral health disorders in children and adolescents
 4. Alternatives to arrest and other juvenile justice diversion strategies
 5. Behavioral threat assessment methods

Officers appointed as SROs should be provided with SRO modeled training, such as provided by the National School Resource Officer Association (NASRO). The department should endeavor to maintain and continue training for SROs that incorporate updated models and information concerning best practices for SROs.

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811.4 ROLE OF SRO - TRIAD MODEL

The primary mission of the SRO is to maintain a safe learning environment and to build positive relationships with the school community. The SRO Program embraces the National Association of School Resource Officer TRIAD concept which adheres to the roles of Teacher, Informal Counselor, and Law Enforcement Officer.

811.4.1 Teacher - Formal Instruction and Presentation

Teaching may be in the form of classroom instruction, public educational instruction, or in-service school staff instruction. SRO in-class instruction will only occur under the supervision of a certified teacher. Instruction should be made available to these groups on any topic concerning the police, law, legal processes, crime prevention, courts, drug use, or other topics as appropriate. Whenever possible, officers shall follow class outlines approved by school personnel.

811.4.2 Informal Counselor - Informal Counseling/Consultation

SROs will provide information to school faculty concerning legal issues, as they relate to the school community. Such issues may include, but are not limited to, laws, consequences of infractions of the law, various aspects of the criminal justice system, availability of legal, educational, and mental health resources within the community, and police operations. SROs are expected to consult with school faculty concerning issues relating to the school community. Within the limits of state law and other applicable guidelines, SROs may discuss with school administration any activity of that school's students, which may affect the safety and welfare of the school members and community. SROs should work closely with district and school staff to solve problems, and are expected to make necessary referrals to support and resource agencies when appropriate. Referrals should be made when the need for professional attention is identified and/or when legal assistance is needed beyond the officer's scope. SROs should maintain a current list of referral services and support agencies. The intent of informal counseling shall not preclude the necessity for SROs to complete appropriate police reports if criminal offense information is developed. SROs will not create or maintain unofficial files on students based on non-criminal school conduct, speculation, or affiliation with other students.

811.4.3 LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

On-duty SROs shall be the reporting officers for criminal acts that occur when they are on an assigned campus when possible and appropriate. SROs will take appropriate police action to enforce local and state laws on the school campus. All arrests will be made pursuant to current departmental policy. SROs are encouraged to seek alternatives to enforcement actions they might normally take in other field situations. SROs shall be alert to intelligence information regarding criminal activity involving the school community. This information shall be shared with the appropriate resources (other police agencies, Patrol Division, Investigations Division, etc.). All Police Officers should strive to maintain contact with available resources to ensure they are aware of criminal activity involving the school community. Information involving pertinent juvenile activity should be forwarded to the appropriate SRO.

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811.5 SRO LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

- A. SROs shall follow department policy, procedure and training on matters of immediate incident interventions, the investigation of suspected criminal activity, arrests, affiliated actions related to incident reports, performance at special events or details.
- B. SROs are specifically prohibited from enforcing student discipline rules, policies and procedures. The school district has primary responsibility to maintain order in the school environment. SROs may, however, refer matters of student discipline to school officials to handle. This does not, however, prevent a SRO from independently investigating student conduct which involves violations of law.
- C. SRO shall not conduct or participate in searches of students or their belongings in school disciplinary matters unless their assistance is requested by a school authority. Under these circumstances, this request would be deemed a search by a school employee for Fourth Amendment purposes.
- D. SROs should not be involved in interviews of students conducted by school authorities unless requested by a school authority. Their purpose in becoming involved should focus on the safety and security of members of the school community.
- E. SROs should be involved in the development of school safety plans.
- F. SROs should be sensitive to student's privacy when taking law enforcement actions.

811.6 COORDINATION WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT

- A. The current principal at each school will serve as the point of contact for his/her school for the SRO. On a daily basis, SROs will collaborate with school and district administrators on many issues, including the disposition of various situations they may encounter.
- B. The SRO has the ultimate responsibility to carry out their duties as police officers, as expressed and interpreted through the Urbana Police Department chain of command. SROs are expected to take law enforcement and safety intervention actions, both with and without referral from school staff, when appropriate. These actions should be to ensure the immediate safety of persons in the school environment.
- C. If a situation arises where a SRO is involved in a physical altercation or restrains a school district student, the SRO shall provide a brief written summary to school district administration or building principal. A copy of the police report will meet this requirement. Secondary dissemination should be recorded by the department.
- D. If a SRO requests additional law enforcement officers for assistance on school district property, they will as soon as practicable advise the building principal or designee. This can be accomplished either verbally or through written correspondence.
- E. SROs are obligated to complete criminal investigations, interviews and arrests in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws and in keeping with all departmental policies.

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811.6.1 SROS TO COMPLY WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES

- A. SROs shall inform the building principal or designee when he/she seek to question a student on a criminal matter, as soon as practicable after taking a law enforcement action, and before serving a search warrant or subpoena.
- B. SROs are not authorized to conduct interviews of minor students without permission of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) unless legal process is presented or in an emergency situation. In circumstances where the student's parent/guardian is unable to come to the school, the school may designate a school staff member to act in place of the parent/guardian. Interviews should be conducted in private settings.
- C. SROs shall not remove minor students from the school campus unless the SRO has arrested the student, either with a warrant or upon establishing probable cause for an arrest, or by placing the student in temporary protective custody. The SRO shall provide the building principal or designee with a brief report, when requested, when a minor student is removed from the school campus for the above described arrest or protective custody.
- D. SROs shall not request that any school district employee act as any agent of the SRO or other law enforcement officer in any interview.
- E. SROs shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies concerning the searches of person and property while acting as a SRO. SROs shall provide a brief to the school district report concerning any search of a school student or staff member.

811.6.2 SRO ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

SROs may have access to certain student records or information to the extent allowed under various laws and district policies (FERPA, ISSRA, etc.). However, access to these records is not guaranteed simply because of a criminal investigation of a student's activity not related to the school.

811.7 REPORTS AND WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION

SROs will, from time to time, author various reports, field interview cards, or memorandum as related to their performance as an SRO. Those documents will satisfy any requirement by the school district for written reports. SROs will normally submit their reports to SRO supervisor for approval at the end of their shift. If circumstances dictate, any supervisor may approve and route reports. If the report includes an arrest, they must be approved and forwarded to a supervisor the same day as the arrest.