

Bowie City Police Department - General Orders



TITLE: SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER		NUMBER: 604
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Chief John K. Nesky	44.2.3 44.2.4	5

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Order is to provide guidance for the School Resource Officers (SROs) in the performance of his/her duties. The SROs will be assigned to increase police visibility and to initiate proactive intervention strategies in a collaborative effort with students, staff, parents and the community within the Prince George's County Schools located in the City of Bowie.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Bowie Police Department to deploy resources to provide a safe environment for students and employees at selected schools within the City of Bowie.

III. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SROs are first and foremost a law enforcement officer. This responsibility shall take precedence over any other duties. The SROs however, shall make every effort to ensure that his/her time is balanced to include law enforcement, teaching and counseling.

A. The SRO Program incorporates, at a minimum, the following: (CALEA 44.2.4)

- a. Attempt to make the schools learning environment as safe as possible;
- b. The SROs will act as a resource with respect to delinquency prevention;
- c. The SROs will serve as a role model to students; and,
- d. The SROs will explain the law enforcement role in society to students.

B. General Operation Guidelines

1. The SROs will primarily work Monday through Friday. The work schedule may fluctuate to meet the operational needs of the Police Department and the School System.

2. Officers assigned to the SRO function shall work in full uniform (to include portable radio) at their assigned schools, unless otherwise authorized by the Investigative Services Division Commander. An inspection of the SROs uniform, equipment and vehicles will be conducted at least once per month by the CSS Supervisor.
3. Officers assigned to the SRO function shall record and report programs conducted, classes taught, counseling and/or mediation contacts, arrest and other formation required by the CSS Supervisor on a monthly activity report. Monthly activity reports must be submitted to the CSS Supervisor by the 5th day of the following month. (Officer(s) on planned leave must turn in their monthly report prior to the scheduled absence).
4. All SROs are to remain on their assigned school campuses or adjacent properties unless excused for official police business or with approval of the CSS Supervisor.
5. SROs will notify Communications and school administrators prior to leaving the school grounds
6. When school closes due to inclement weather or other circumstances, the SROs shall notify their immediate Supervisor.

C. Law Enforcement Duties:

1. The SROs shall be responsible for the preliminary investigation of all criminal incidents which occur on their campus during their duty hours. The SROs may be relieved by a member of the Criminal Investigations Section (CIS) or the on-duty Shift Supervisor.
2. Supplemental reports assigned for follow-up shall be completed by the assigned due date, for misdemeanor property crimes, crimes against persons or felonies, regardless of the status of the investigation.

D. Reporting Procedures:

1. The SROs shall notify the on-duty Shift Supervisor of any incidents which may have an impact in the surrounding school community to include, but not limited to:
 - a. Abduction;
 - b. Arson threats;
 - c. Assault (serious);
 - d. Breaking and entering;
 - e. Bomb threats;
 - f. Child abuse/sex offense;
 - g. Robbery;
 - h. Vehicle theft;
 - i. Potential for disturbance or fights;

E. School/Community Incidents Requiring Notification to an SRO:

1. All reports of incidents that occur on school property will be forwarded to the CSS Supervisor, who will coordinate follow-up responsibility.
2. Any reports that could impact the school community should be forwarded to the CSS Supervisor.

F. Notification Responsibility: Communication and cooperation must exist between all Departmental components in order to successfully manage criminal and non-criminal incidents. This requires prompt notification to various components on a case-by-case basis.

1. The SROs will notify Communications, on the police radio, when going in service for the day.
2. The SROs shall notify the Investigative Services Division Commander of any extraordinary or unusual events or situations involving his/her schools.

G. Arrest: In certain situations, the SROs may be required to effect a physical arrest. This will be conducted consistent with Department policy and procedures. The school's principal will be notified of any arrest on school property during school hours.

H. Truants:

1. An officer may not take a juvenile into custody simply because he/she are truant.
2. Officers, however, have an obligation to safeguard juveniles from harm. Every attempt should be made to have the juvenile identify him/herself, his/her age and his/her school. If the information can be obtained, the officer shall notify the school principal.
3. If any action is taken by an officer (voluntary transport, escort back to school, etc.), they shall initiate a field observation report and document their actions.

I. Search and Seizure:

1. The SROs will not initiate administrative searches of any area of the school system or of any student.
2. The SROs may assist the school system when they initiate a search as articulated in the Annotated Code of Maryland:

“A principal, assistant principal, or authorized school security officer of a public school may make a reasonable search of a student on the school premises, or on a school-sponsored trip, if she/he has a reasonable belief that the student has in his possession an item, the possession of which is a criminal offense under the laws of this state, or has committed a violation of any other State law or a rule or regulation of the County Board of Education. The search must be made in the presence of a third party. A principal, assistant principal, or authorized school security officer of a public school may make a search of the physical plant of the school and every other appurtenance including the lockers of students. The right of the school official to search the locker shall be announced or published previously in the school.”

3. The SROs may conduct searches of school premises or students on school premises consistent with constitutional guidelines if probable cause exists that criminal activity

has occurred and that the student possesses items that relate to the commission of that crime.

J. Interviews:

1. The SROs may interview students on school premises in connection with a crime committed on the premises or in connection with an investigation which, if not immediately conducted, could compromise the success of that investigation or endanger the lives or safety of the students or other persons. A school official should be present throughout that questioning (COMAR 13A.08.01.13 State Board of Education).
2. The SROs may attend interviews of students/faculty on school premises which are initiated by the school's administration. Officers must be aware that information brought out in these interviews may relate to criminal offenses and in order to establish that the interview was non-custodial, an immediate arrest cannot be made.
3. All interrogations/interviews shall be conducted consistent with Departmental rules and regulations.
4. The SROs will ensure that timely notification is made to the student's parent or guardian.

K. Information Dissemination:

1. The SROs shall be a source of information to the Department regarding criminal activity.
2. The SROs will exchange information with police officers when that information will support the law enforcement mission of the Bowie Police Department.
3. The SROs will observe the rules of confidentiality as outlined in Maryland State Law 3-828:

Confidentiality: A Police Record concerning a child is confidential and shall be maintained separate from those of adults. Its contents may not be divulged, by subpoena or otherwise, except by order of the court upon good cause shown. This subsection does not prohibit access to and confidential use of the record by the Department of Juvenile Justice or in the investigation and prosecution of the child by any law enforcement agency.

A juvenile court record pertaining to a child is confidential and its contents may not be divulged, by subpoena or otherwise, except by order of the court upon good cause shown. This subsection does not prohibit access to and the use of the court record in a proceeding in the court involving the child by personnel of the court, the State's Attorney, counsel for the child, or authorized personnel of the Department of Justice.

L. Teaching and Instructional Duties:

1. All audio visual aids and lesson plans shall be approved, prior to use, by the appropriate school official and the Investigative Services Division Commander via chain of command.
2. When teaching, the SRO shall have the regular classroom teacher present whenever possible.

M. Counseling Duties:

1. The SROs may provide informal counseling based on his/her expertise as a law enforcement professional.
2. If further resources are needed to assist with a problem, the SROs may make a referral to a professional counselor, such as a school guidance counselor or other mental health professional.
3. The SROs will document significant incidents and forward a memo to the Investigative Services Division Commander via chain of command detailing the contact and the referral to either school based or community based resources.