

## School Resource Officer Program

### 415.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

It is the policy of the Orange County Sheriff's Department to establish and maintain a School Resource Officer Program. The success of the program depends upon the respect and confidence deputies earn from the students, parents and staff. The integrity of each deputy, as well as the organization, is necessary for students, parents, teachers and school administrators to give the Department their trust. Without this trust, deputies cannot expect to form partnerships on campus. Fundamental to building trust on campus is the fair and equitable treatment of all individuals. Whether student, parent or staff, all persons must be treated with dignity and respect.

### 415.2 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER'S MISSION STATEMENT

To enhance a safe atmosphere in our community's schools, foster a positive relationship with our community's youth, and develop strategies to resolve problems affecting our youth.

### 415.3 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER'S VISION STATEMENT

The Orange County Sheriff's Department School Resource Officer Program will conform to a set of guidelines that describes a level of performance and service by all its members that supports both the school district's vision and the Department's vision in a manner that strives to leave all with the highest sense of satisfaction.

### 415.4 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Orange County Sheriff's Department School Resource Officer Program provides law enforcement services and law-related education to the schools serviced by the Orange County Sheriff's Department. The team members also act as liaisons between the schools, the community and the Department, as well as various agencies such as Child Protective Services, Social Services-Children and Family Services, Probation Department, Health Care Agency and other intervention and counseling resources. Goals and objectives include:

- To help maintain safe school campuses, so that teachers can teach and students can learn.
- Provide students with a positive role model through the exhibition of Department values.
- Interact with students in a setting that builds self-esteem and trust and reinforces the police as role models.
- Interact with students, faculty, community, parents, and civic leaders to promote positive relations.
- Educate students about the law and importance of individual responsibility as well as team building and cooperation within our community.
- Serve as a resource for the students, teachers, and parents.

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- Serve as a primary resource to students who are victims and suspects of unlawful or harmful activity in order to protect or deter them from further harm.
- Collaborate with the faculty and administrative team to teach the importance of proper safety practices through various educational programs.
- Provide an active law enforcement figure on campus to address law and safety/public order issues. Take appropriate enforcement action when necessary.

#### **415.5 AUTHORITY**

The Orange County Sheriff's Department recognizes and respects the authority of the principal, and their designee, to be the primary leader and manager of the school campus. The SRO, however, has the authority and responsibility to ensure proper decisions are made in reference to crimes, crime scenes, and any incidents that pose a threat to public safety.

- During any law enforcement-related event on a school campus, the SRO will advise the principal or designee of the law enforcement decisions being made to resolve the incident, when feasible. During any law enforcement-related event, it may become necessary for the SRO to temporarily take charge of the incident and/or school campus to protect the integrity of the investigation and/or crime scene, and ensure the safety of the students and staff, until properly relieved.

The School Resource Officer Program will be commanded by the School Resource Officer Program Captain and supervised by the School Resource Officer Program Sergeant.

All Orange County Sheriff's Department SROs will be sworn peace officers. As such, the SROs possess the same authority and powers of arrest as any other state or local law enforcement official regardless of whether they are on or off school property.

- When performing the duties of a SRO in the school environment, the SRO shall have an understanding of the administrative responsibilities the school has in resolving misbehavior.
- The SRO will be familiar with the student handbook of their respective schools.
- They will support the concept that teachers have the right to teach and students have the right to learn in a safe and respectful environment.
- When dealing with misconduct and disruptive behavior, the SRO will be mindful of the fact that respect for others is an extension of one's own self-respect.
- Conduct with students should be of quality that reinforces positive self-image, self-esteem, and professionalism.

#### **415.6 CHAIN OF COMMAND**

The chain of command for the School Resource Officer Program will be:

- Field Supervisor (Responsible for day to day operations)
- Contract City or Area Administrative Sergeant
- School Resource Officer Program Sergeant

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- Contract City Chief of Police Services or Area Captain
- School Resource Officer Program Captain - Southeast
- Commander - Southeast

#### **415.7 THE PROGRAM**

As a role model, the SRO will always present their self in a professional manner. Through their appearance and actions, the SRO leads by example through their day-to-day contact with students, parents and staff members. SROs will treat everyone in a positive manner that is respectful, fair and consistent regardless of race, national origin, citizenship, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status. The following outline is meant to be a guide that reflects the "philosophy" of the Orange County Sheriff's Department School Resource Officer Program. The program is based on the premise that the SRO serves the following basic functions:

The Department's SRO Program will adhere to the "Triad Concept" supported by the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO). The Triad Concept of SRO responsibility is: educator, informal counselor and law enforcer.

**Law Enforcer:** The SRO's primary role on campus is that of a law enforcement officer. They will enforce all applicable laws in a fair and consistent manner. Generally, SROs will not investigate or enforce school rule violations unless there is a violation of law, as well.

- The SRO will conduct investigations for crimes that occur on their designated school campus.
- The SRO, when available, may offer assistance in conducting investigations for other crimes off campus that may have a direct effect on a student or the school community.
- The SRO, when available, should be the "case deputy" for most crimes committed at their designated school. This means the SRO will then complete the investigation and all the necessary follow-up unless an investigation unit is required. This may include the collection of evidence and interviewing victims, witnesses and suspects.
- When necessary, the SRO may arrest, detain and or hold suspects in-custody as prescribed by law and Department policy.

Some serious crimes require specialized expertise or logistical support to investigate. Under these circumstances, an appropriate investigator will be assigned as the case investigator. The SRO will then assist the investigator, and function as the liaison between the victim, the school staff, and Department.

- The SRO can address parking and traffic concerns that affect the school and surrounding community, and should consult with school officials and city/county traffic engineers as needed.
- The SRO may conduct and/or coordinate traffic enforcement details to encourage compliance with State and local traffic laws.

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- The SRO will coordinate with school staff to promote crime prevention programs and enhance the police/community relationship with the surrounding neighborhoods. This may be accomplished through foot and vehicle patrol of the school grounds and adjacent areas.
- The SRO will work with the District to address truancy issues.

**Teacher:** As a guest teacher, the SRO can present a diverse curriculum in the area of Law-Related Education (LRE) to the students, parents and the staff. LRE includes classes in the areas of personal safety, wellness, and criminal and traffic law. Presentations developed by SROs will be approved in accordance with department policy and procedure.

**Counselor:** As an informal counselor, the SRO can act as an advisor, mentor and mediator to students, parents and staff. They may use their professional experience to counsel and educate people on law-related issues. When a higher level of expertise is required, the SRO should refer the person seeking aid or guidance to the appropriate agency or resource.

#### **415.8 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Conduct classroom instruction on prevention and education on appropriate subjects for students, faculty and staff, in accordance with the SRO and Department mission statements, utilizing approved lesson plans.
- Take appropriate action for any on-site situations requiring police attention.
- Act as a liaison and resource between the law enforcement community, other governmental agencies and the school.
- Maintain availability to all students in the schools via office phone, e-mail, or other electronic medium that may be accessed by the SRO Sergeant for quality control purposes. All School District Internet/Computer Policies will be adhered to at all times. In cases of conflict, the SRO will consider the device being used and apply the respective policy of the organization that owns that device. SROs will not directly engage with students via the SRO's personal cell phone, e-mail or social media accounts, and will always adhere to our Code of Professional Conduct and Responsibility for Peace Officers as stipulated in Policy 1001 of this manual.
- Interact with students to promote and reinforce the development of basic life skills and personal control and responsibility for one's actions.
- Conduct or assist the school with investigations involving the school or students. The main function of the SRO is to be on their assigned campus(es) during school hours. Follow-up investigations requiring the deputy to be off campus may be conducted; however, these should generally be conducted after school hours (Overtime requires supervisor approval).
- Only under exigent circumstances should SROs be absent from their designated campuses during school hours on follow-up investigations.
- The SRO may have input into intervention and preventive strategies and community resources available.

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- The SRO should participate and be the point of contact for any departmental activities related to major school events.
- Inform the school administration of current student criminal involvement and criminal trends that affect the safe environment of the school, as needed and allowed by law. Privacy and case integrity will be paramount.
- Perform preventive patrol around school campus for students traveling to and from school. Attention will be directed to observations pertinent to the safety and wellbeing of children.
- Interact with uniform patrol in order to share information and work together on matters of mutual concern.
- Attend special events, with the permission of the Shift Supervisor, as necessary to interact and prevent problems.
- Participate in various Department-sponsored and endorsed activities that foster a positive relationship between the students and the SRO.
- Maintain contact with the SRO Administrative Sergeant in order to facilitate administrative needs.
- Attend scheduled meetings established by the supervisors for information exchange and resolution of special problems.
- Transport students in patrol cars in accordance with the law and Department Policy.

#### **415.9 TRAINING**

School Resource Officers work in an educational environment with school administrators. School Resource Officers must build positive relationships with both students and staff to ensure a safe learning environment. It is recommended SROs complete the following training prior to being assigned as an SRO when feasible but no later than one year of assignment.

- Basic SRO
- Patrol Rifle/MACTAC
- Annual SRO Summer Summit (OCSD)
- Threat Assessment training
- Advanced officer training
- Attend annual professional development conferences

#### **415.10 SCHOOL ENFORCEMENT**

**Truancy** - In most instances, truancy will be handled at the school administrative level. The SRO may participate in student interventions, especially when potential delinquency is a factor.

**Searches** - The SRO must follow Departmental Policy, applicable law and respect the school's policy in conducting searches. The rules of criminal evidence apply in school the same as they apply under normal circumstances. The school administration cannot be used as an agent of law

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enforcement to search a student's locker or person. The school administrator has the authority to search prior to the SRO knowing a crime has been committed.

**Interviews and interrogations** - SROs will adhere to Department Policy and applicable law on juvenile investigations when conducting interviews and interrogations.

**Emergency/Non-Emergency Calls** - The criteria set forth is designed as a guide. In most cases, the SRO will handle a call for service on their designated campus. However, when an arrest is necessary or imminent, a patrol deputy may be dispatched to the campus to handle the arrest and transportation of the juvenile to Juvenile Hall.

**Immediate Police Response:** Schools should call 9-1-1 and then call the SRO. Examples include:

- Immediate life-threatening emergency
- Large or serious fight in progress
- Unruly crowd
- Disruptive parent who will not leave or calm down
- Bomb threats
- Child abuse
- Crime in progress where the protection of evidence is essential, or the apprehension of the violator is possible
- Safety hazards (i.e. chlorine, natural gas leaks)

**Police Services Not Immediately Required:** Schools should call the SRO assigned to the school. If the SRO is not able to respond, the school should call dispatch for an on-duty patrol deputy. Examples include:

- Burglary (where the school is the victim and evidence may be present)
- Vehicle burglaries with the victim standing by
- Assaults (which are over and under control with little or no injury, or where students are not on campus, no suspects, no witnesses)

Where police services are required, but where time is not of the essence, the school should call the SRO assigned to the school and advise them of the situation. Examples include:

- Theft (no suspects, no witnesses)
- Threats or intimidation (no suspects, no witnesses)
- Criminal damage (no suspects, no witnesses)
- Any other incident of minor nature, status offense, City Code violation, etc.

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#### **415.11 SRO WORK HOURS**

SRO work hours may be varied according to individual school needs. SROs will work four days a week, ten hours per day, 0600 hours to 1630 hours, unless prior approval has been obtained from the Shift Supervisor or as directed by the city/area Captain.

Work schedules should remain flexible based upon the needs of the school on any given day/event.

SROs are required to obtain prior approval from a Supervisor for any overtime. This can be accomplished by calling the SRO Administrative Sergeant.

Although not mandatory, SROs are encouraged to take vacation when school is not in session.

When sick leave/family sick leave is necessary, the SRO must also notify the Shift Supervisor per department policy. The SRO should also inform the Principal or the Principal's designee by telephone of their absence prior to the start of school. The SRO and Shift Supervisor will ensure notification is made to the school.

#### **415.12 GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

**Uniform Procedures and Dress Code** - The SRO standard dress and appearance is set by Department Policy. Each deputy is responsible for the professional image of the Department by assuring their appearance is in accordance with these guidelines.

**Radio Procedures** - SROs shall check in and out of service on their police radio. SROs shall be required to check out with a location by police radio during school visits or other police business.

**Cellular Phone Use** - All SROs will be assigned and issued a Departmental cellular telephone.

- The Principal should be informed that the cell number is confidential and not to be released to any office staff, teachers, or parents without the SRO's permission.
- Each call received by the SRO should be answered as soon as possible during school/work hours.
- The SRO's cellular telephone will only be used for work related purposes.

**E-Mail** - Each SRO will check their e-mail accounts daily per Department Policy.

**Monthly Activity Log** - Activity Logs will be due to the SRO Administrative Sergeant on the Monday following the last day of the month.