

# Carroll County Public Schools

## School Resource Officer Program

### Roles and Authority



The Safe to Learn Act of 2018 requires each public school in Maryland to have either School Resource Officers (SRO) or adequate law enforcement coverage. To meet this requirement, a collaborative partnership has been established by Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS), the Carroll County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) and the County Board of Commissioners to assign School Resource Officers (SROs) in CCPS schools.

The new law requires that the roles and authority of the SRO be posted on each school system's website. The chart below outlines the role and authority of the SRO as it relates to the school administration. Some frequently asked questions have also been posted to help provide clarity to the CCPS community.

<b>The SRO</b>	<b>The School Administration</b>
Is a specially trained deputy of CCSO, who is a certified sworn law enforcement officer in the state of Maryland, trained to the standards set forth in the Safe to Learn Act of 2018 and by the Maryland Police Standards and Training Commission.	Is a principal, assistant principal, or other administrator employed by CCPS to supervise and manage the operations of a school.
Is responsible for all law enforcement functions that may arise at the school, including investigating school threats and crimes that occur on school property that would not typically be resolved through normal school discipline.	Is responsible for managing the day to day operations of the school, including instruction and maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment.
Shall follow all pertinent policies of the CCSO.	Shall follow all policies, regulations, and procedures of CCPS.
Shall not be used in any way to impose or in lieu of school discipline and will not conduct investigations of violations of the student code of conduct unless there is a criminal violation.	Shall be responsible for administering all forms of student discipline in accordance with CCPS polices, regulations, and Code of Student Conduct.
Notifies the school administrator or appropriate CCPS staff member of any student who is in crisis, requires assistance, in need of counseling or any other resource that falls outside of their authority and expertise.	Notifies the SRO whenever a situation arises at the school that requires a law enforcement response.
Collaborates with school administrators, the Supervisor of School Security, and Emergency Management to provide security for the schools and responds to threats at schools.	Collaborates with the SRO, the Supervisor of School Security, and Emergency Management to implement the CCPS security program and responds to threats at the school.
Is familiar with the school Critical Incident Plan and helps coordinate emergency responses during a critical incident.	Implements the school Critical Incident Plan and serves as the incident commander in an emergency situation.
Has a working knowledge of the CCPS Student Services Manual and other applicable CCPS policies	Implements the CCPS Student Services Manual.
Makes recommendations to improve school security and responds to critical incidents.	Consults the SRO on recommendations to improve school security.
May serve as a guest speaker on subjects related to their expertise if requested by the school.	Supervises the instructional program and approves all supplemental material and presenters.
Acts as a role model and establishes positive relationships with students, parents and school staff.	Acts as a role model and establishes positive relationships with students, parents and school staff.

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### Frequently Asked Questions



#### ***Does the law require a SRO in every school?***

No, the law does not require an SRO in every school, but it does require that schools have adequate law enforcement coverage. However, the most common practice of providing adequate law enforcement coverage in Maryland is through the use of SROs.

#### ***What types of specialized training do SROs receive?***

The Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS) has developed a specialized curriculum for School Resource Officers, which has been accepted by the Maryland Police Training Standards Commission. This training includes various topics to include but not limited to response to active assailants, de-escalation, disability awareness, maintaining a positive school climate, constructive interactions with students, implicit bias, and disability and diversity awareness with specific attention to racial and ethnic disparities.

#### ***Are SROs armed?***

Yes, SROs are certified sworn law enforcement officers, who are employed by the Carroll County Sheriff's Office. The SRO's primary responsibility is to provide security to the schools in which they are assigned. This security includes the act of intervening in an active assailant event.

#### ***Who is responsible for supervising the SROs in the schools?***

The CCSO Safe Schools Unit is staffed with a two supervisors, who are responsible for the direct supervision of SROs. These supervisors ensure that each SRO is adhering to CCSO Policy and Procedure and working collaboratively with school administration. The supervisors are also responsible for handling any complaints on SROs and backfilling schools in an SRO's absence.

#### ***Are SROs allowed to discipline a student?***

No, school administrators are responsible for all student discipline. SROs are prohibited from being involved in or used in lieu of school discipline procedures.

#### ***Are there times when an offense can lead to both a criminal investigation and school discipline? If so how will this be handled?***

School administrators have the discretion within the confines of the COMAR, CCPS policy and administrative regulations to handle some minor offenses without involving law enforcement. SROs would be involved in offenses that school administrators would previously had contacted 911 for an officer's response. When an SRO conducts an investigation for a crime that has occurred in a school, the administrative investigation will be conducted secondary and may not interfere with the criminal investigation. The decision to charge a student will be the responsibility of the SRO and will be completely separate of any school discipline imposed by the school administrator.

#### ***Will SROs teach classes?***

SROs may act as guest speakers in classes on law enforcement related topics that are associated with specific curriculums; however, all requests for SROs to guest speak must be approved by the school administrators through regular CCPS protocols.

#### ***Will there be a police presence at elementary and middle schools?***

Elementary and middle schools will continue to receive routine patrols by law enforcement officers.