

	SUFFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE GENERAL ORDER	Distribution	General Order Number
		ALL PERSONNEL	6.11
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Order Title: SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER		Accreditation Standard:	Section
		POSTC: 2.5.21; 3.4.8	6
		Section Title INVESTIGATIVE FUNCTIONS	
Rescinds: Previous Version Dated 09/21/2023		 James Canon, Jr., Chief of Police	

This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish the proper guidelines to be followed by Suffield Police Officers assigned as School Resource Officers (“SRO”) in any of the schools within the Suffield school district. The Police Department and School District will maintain a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the SRO’s responsibilities and interactions with staff and students (POSTC 3.4.8 (e)). Members of the Suffield Police Department, its officers, and particularly the Suffield Police Department SRO, will seek every opportunity for positive, non-law enforcement interactions with the schools, their staff and students and the community as a whole (POSTC 2.5.21).

II. POLICY

Suffield Police Department (“Department”) personnel shall strictly adhere to this directive in order to maintain safety and order in the school environment to which they are assigned as an SRO.

III. DEFINITIONS

School Resource Officer (SRO): A school-based police officer who serves as a counselor and educator. The SRO interfaces closely with administrators, parents, and teachers to achieve and meet the needs of the position.

School Employee: "School employee" means (A) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional, or coach employed by a local or regional board of education, or working in a public elementary, middle, or high school; or (B) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional board of education. C.G.S. § 10-222d, includes a police officer assigned to a school in within this definition.

Designated Personnel: "Designated Personnel" shall mean both the sworn and non-sworn members of the Suffield Police Department.

Investigation or Behavioral Intervention: A circumstance in which a School Resource Officer is conducting (i) a fact finding inquiry concerning student behavior or school safety, including, but not limited to, emergency circumstances, or (ii) an intervention to resolve violent or nonviolent student behavior or conflicts. Behavior intervention includes those situations related to a student whose behavior has caused a serious disruption to the instruction of other students, or caused self-harm or physical harm to a teacher, another student or a staff member.

Emergency Situations: "Emergency Situation" means a situation that poses an imminent threat to the life, safety, health, or property of the Board of Education, its students, its staff, and other occupants of a Board Facility, including, without limitation, fire, threatened or actual use of firearms or other deadly or seriously injurious weapons, hostage-taking, burglary, an event necessitating a school lock-down, and health-related emergencies.

Regular School Hours: "Regular School Hours" shall be scheduled school days from 7:00AM until 9:00 PM, or the conclusion of any activities occurring on school grounds, whichever is later. In addition, "Regular School Hours" shall include those times when a school based activity (such as, but not limited to, an athletic event, athletic practice, or extracurricular activity) is occurring on school grounds.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Selection and Assignment of the School Resource Officer

The Chief of Police shall make the final decision on who to assign as a School Resource Officer (SRO), if one is assigned. In making that decision, the Chief of Police will only consider officers who have demonstrated the ability, interest, and skills necessary to work with youth, school staff, and the public. The Chief of Police shall consult with the school superintendent and principal prior to making a final selection in order to determine any specific concerns of the school district.

B. Qualifications and Training

1. Qualifications for appointment:

- a. Minimum of three years of service as an Suffield Police Department officer. (This may be waived by the Chief of Police if required).
- b. “Satisfactory” or higher rating on the most recent performance evaluation
- c. No disciplinary actions for a minimum of one year prior to being considered
- d. Effective teaching, writing, and organizational skills
- e. Effective conflict resolution skills
- f. Knowledge of juvenile laws and juvenile court procedures

2. Training:

- a. The officer will satisfactorily complete an approved course of instruction for School Resource Officers
- b. The officer will complete an approved course of training for D.A.R.E., if they are assigned this responsibility
- c. The officer must be familiar with the school district’s current safe school climate plan
- d. Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-220a(4), the officer shall complete annual training in school violence prevention, conflict resolution and prevention of bullying, as defined in subsection (a) of C.G.S.10-222d.

C. General Duties and Responsibilities

The primary function of the SRO is to enhance the safety and security of the learning environment for students, staff, and the school community. In addition, the SRO is expected to provide law-related education to the students, act as both a counselor and mentor (POSTC 3.4.8 (c)), and provide guidance on ethical issues in a classroom setting (POSTC 3.4.8 (b)).

The presence of a sworn officer on the campus of Suffield schools also provides a unique opportunity to develop and maintain a continuing relationship between the SRO and the students, their parents, and the staff. In addition, the SRO should be involved in a variety of functions and duties that include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Serve as a classroom instructor or resource for law and safety education using approved materials.
2. Explain the role of law enforcement in society (POSTC 3.4.8 (d)).
3. Strengthen safety measures and prevent delinquent behavior on school campuses through heightened police visibility.
4. Act as a resource for teacher, parents, students, and staff.
5. Appear before PTA/PTO and other groups associated with the school and speak on a variety of topics.
6. Document activities on and off school grounds and provide the school district and police department with periodic reports.
7. Assist all local law enforcement and state agencies conducting formal police interview, interrogations, and arrest of students on school property.
8. Maintain familiarity with all Town of Suffield and State of Connecticut agencies that offer assistance to dependency and delinquency prone youths and their families. Referrals should be made when necessary in accordance with school, department, and state policies and regulations.
9. Develop plans and strategies to prevent or reduce dangerous situations.
10. Coordinate law enforcement actions on Suffield school grounds with the principal.
11. Act as a resource with respect to delinquency prevention by providing crime prevention presentations on a range of subjects including (POSTC 3.4.8 (a)):
 - Drugs and the law
 - Alcohol
 - Driving
 - Sexual Assault
 - Family Violence
 - Personal Safety

- School Violence
 - Internet and Social Media Safety
12. Avoid acting as a disciplinarian to students. Disciplining students should continue as a school responsibility and only when the officer and/or principal believes an incident is a criminal violation should the SRO take law enforcement action.
 13. To perform all other duties as may be prescribed by the Chief of Police or their designee.

D. Memorandum of Understanding

1. Under Connecticut General Statutes § 10-233m and §10-16b, each board of education that assigns a school resource officer (“SRO”) to its schools must have a memorandum of understanding (“MOU”) with the SRO’s local law enforcement agency outlining the SRO’s role and responsibility in the school. This MOU will address the duties concerning and procedures for:
 - a. restraint of students,
 - b. use of firearms,
 - c. school-based arrests and
 - d. reporting of any investigations and behavioral interventions of challenging behavior or conflict that escalates to violence or constitutes a crime.
2. In addition to the reporting requirements in this General and General Order 5.15: Report Writing, SROs must submit a report to their police chief for each investigation or behavioral intervention of challenging behavior or conflict that escalates to violence or constitutes a crime, no later than five school days after conducting such investigation or behavioral intervention. The SRO’s report must include:
 - a. the date and time of the incident/investigation
 - b. location of the investigation or behavioral intervention;
 - c. the name and badge number of the SRO;
 - d. the race, ethnicity, gender, age and disability status of each student involved;

- e. the reason for and nature and disposition of the investigation or behavioral intervention; and
- f. whether any involved student was
 - 1. searched,
 - 2. informed of their constitutional rights,
 - 3. issued a citation or a summons,
 - 4. arrested, or
 - 5. detained and the length of the detainment.

- 3. The MOU must be maintained in a central location in the school district, posted on the school district's website and the website of each school in which SROs are assigned.

E. School Security Cameras

The dispatch center has the ability to monitor Board of Education provided cameras in schools. The cameras are an added layer of security to the school building and its' occupants. They are available to assist emergency personnel responding to, or investigating, an incident in the schools. The cameras are to be used for official purposes only.

- 1. Designated Personnel who are authorized to view live streaming video from the cameras may activate the live video feed during Regular School Hours if such personnel believe that there is an Emergency Situation and it is necessary to access the school camera system to protect the health or safety of students or other persons. Designated Personnel will actively monitor the applicable camera(s) and provide real-time intelligence to the responding emergency personnel.
- 2. An Emergency Situation commences when the Suffield Police Department receives a signal, alarm, information, or request from the on-site school staff, the school administration, the Superintendent's Office or the Board of Education that necessitates a response to the Emergency Situation. This response does not terminate until the Suffield Police Department personnel assigned to respond to the Emergency Situation have departed from the affected school facility.

3. Once the Emergency Situation concludes Designated Personnel will stop monitoring the live streaming video from the cameras. The Designated Personnel who activated the live streaming video from the cameras will report to the Operations Commander the use of the system. The Chief of Police, or their designee, will in turn notify the Superintendent of Schools of the access within 24 hours.
4. The MOU between the Board of Education and the Suffield Police Department will detail the process for the requesting and granting of permission to view video from non-emergency situations. The Suffield Police Department may need access to video footage in furtherance of investigative activity for late reported on non-emergency incidents.
5. Designated Personnel may monitor the live stream video from the cameras at any time outside “Regular School Hours” without an Emergency Situation. These periodic reviews will monitor the live stream video from the cameras outside Regular School Hours to ensure the system is functioning properly.
6. Visitors (tours, contractors etc.) to the dispatch center will not be allowed to view the cameras for any reason. Technicians from Suffield Information Technology or other contracted technicians required to provide service on the camera system will be allowed to view video to ensure that the system is working properly.

F. Supervision

The Operations Lieutenant will ensure that open lines of communication are in place between the school and the police department. The Operations Lieutenant will be responsible for conducting a minimum of weekly meetings with the SRO to evaluate the current needs of the SRO and the school. The Operations Lieutenant will meet with the school principal at least once each semester to secure feedback from the school regarding any issues involving the SRO or the SRO program, both positive and negative. The Operations Lieutenant is responsible for completing the performance evaluation(s) of any officer assigned as an SRO.

G. Program Review

A review of the School Resource Officer program in each school will be conducted annually by the Operations Lieutenant to determine the continued effectiveness of the program and to make recommendations to the Chief of Police. The program review will include a restatement of the basis for the initial implementation of the SRO program and a justification for its continuation. The review will take place between the end of the school year and the beginning of the next.