



# BEST PRACTICES IN SRO PROGRAMMING

SLEP Subcommittee – October 25, 2023

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

# THEORY OF ACTION


School policing increases police presence and interaction with constituents in schools



Police presence deters crime and misconduct and police establish relationships with students and staff

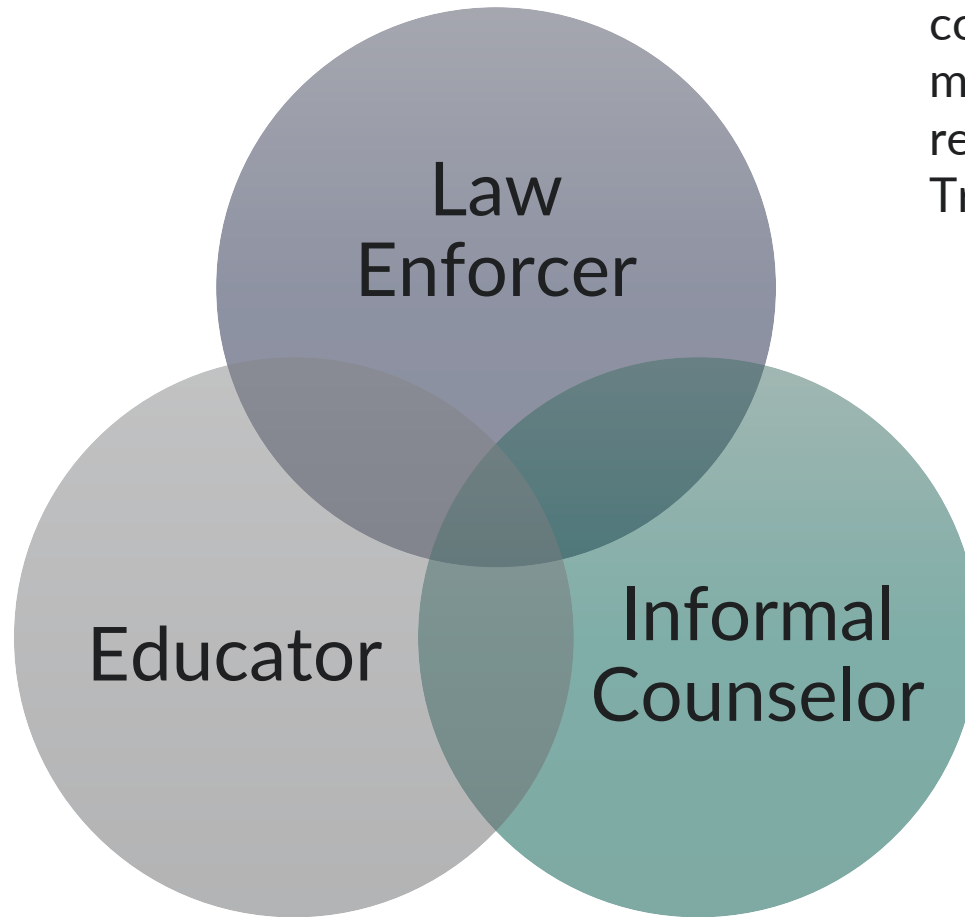


Misconduct declines and perceptions of safety improve while police and young people develop more positive relationships



Safer schools improve learning outcomes

# PRIMARY ROLES OF SROS



NASRO  
conceptualizes the  
main roles and  
responsibilities as the  
Triad Model

# OUTCOMES OF THE TRIAD MODEL

- Although empirical research examining the outcomes of the triad model appears to be limited, districts implementing the triad model report positive outcomes.
  - Research is related to the particular roles and responsibilities and not necessarily the triad model itself.
  - Fairfax County Public Schools - number of arrests by SROs declined by a total of 56.8 percent in the first two years following the adoption of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) aligned with the triad model.
  - A series of case studies published by the U.S. Department of Justice - students reported potential threats to SROs who were able to respond and prevent violence, suggesting that the positive rapport SROs build with students through their informal counselor role can improve safety outcomes.

# LAW ENFORCER ROLE

School resource officers enforce the law on school properties by addressing any offenses that occur and by maintaining a visible police presence to deter crime.

## This role encompasses:

- Direct law enforcement services (including participation in threat assessment)
- Crime prevention
- Using school and public safety expertise to support emergency preparedness

# EDUCATOR ROLE

SROs should collaborate with teachers to identify opportunities to integrate law-related education into classroom instruction, and be prepared to offer law-related education in response to incidents affecting the school.

Bullying

Aggression

Dating violence

Gang violence

Driving safety

Underage drinking

Drinking and driving

Drug use

Peer pressure

Fingerprint evidence

Internet safety

Search and seizure laws

Sex crimes

The rights of victims

# SPOTLIGHT – LOUISA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, VA

Louisa County Public Schools in Virginia provides an example of a school division with a structured law-related education curriculum. The Learn and Win (LAW) program includes instruction for both students and staff across Grades K-12:

- In Grades 6-8, SROS deliver a curriculum focused on student responsibilities, internet and vehicle safety, and gang and drug awareness.
- The high school program combines guest speakers, demonstrations, and classroom discussion
- SROs and other law enforcement personnel provide training for faculty and staff.



# INFORMAL COUNSELOR ROLE

School resource officers engage students personally to establish rapport and provide informal counseling with the aim of supporting positive decision-making.

Setting clear limits for acceptable behavior

Providing a positive example of SEL skills

Providing accurate information about behavioral risks

Treating students with respect

Providing students with resources

Providing information on crime prevention

## SPOTLIGHT – LOUDON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, VA

- The LCSO and LPD are responsible for **recruiting and training SROs**.
- LCPS is responsible for providing SROs with a dedicated work area and providing school administrators with training on the role of the SRO.
- School leaders are responsible for reviewing the MOU with the SROs in their school every year and recommending operational and communications procedures for their individual schools.

# SPOTLIGHT – LAWRENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, KS

## Educator

- School Resource Officers present law-related curriculum to students, faculty, and parents. These presentations are offered by the School Resource Officers available to speak to classes and parent groups, and often provide information on an individual basis.

## Resource Provider/Problem Solver

- School Resource Officers provide informal, law-related counseling to students, teachers, and parents. This counseling can range from mediation of student conflicts to guiding students and parents to appropriate community services. School Resource Officers work closely with school social workers, counselors, and administrators to ensure students have access to all available resources.

## Law Enforcement

- School Resource Officers provide a positive law enforcement presence in the school community. Uniformed officers present a deterrent to violence, gang activity, vandalism, and theft. They also act as a positive role model for students. Officers investigate crimes which involve the school district or students and work closely with school administrators as a liaison between the school and the police department.

# **SUPPORTING SROS IN SCHOOLS**

# HIRING SROS

Law enforcement agencies are responsible for recruiting and selecting SROs.

COMPONENT	RECOMMENDATION
Law Enforcement Qualifications	It is recommended that the selected law enforcement officer has at least three (3) years of law enforcement experience. This level of experience will help the selected law enforcement officer obtain credibility among the school faculty, students, and parents. This level of experience will also allow the selected law enforcement officer to have a greater understanding of the local agency's policies and procedures.
Experience in Youth Development	It is recommended that the selected law enforcement officer has demonstrated their willingness to engage with youth to develop positive relationships.
Communication Skills	The selected law enforcement officer should have excellent verbal and written communication skills. The selected law enforcement officer will be communicating, both written and spoken formats, with a variety of audiences. The selected law enforcement officer should be capable of presenting their information in several formats to meet the varying circumstances when communicating to the school community.

# SUPERVISING SROS

The SRO Program employs an effective recruitment and retention program to attract and retain effective SROs, reduce turnover, and provide redundancy in coverage in case of SRO absence or vacancy

The SRO Program engages in a selection process designed to ensure that officers who become SROs are well-qualified and effective.

The SRO Program provides qualified supervisory guidance that facilitates successful implementation and operation of the SRO Program.

The SRO Program ensures that SROs are appropriately trained and have opportunities for continuing professional development.

The SRO Program establishes an SRO performance evaluation and recognition system for SROs that includes a review of information from multiple sources, supervisory observation, and a mechanism for collecting feedback from students, families, peers, and school administrators and staff.

# SPOTLIGHT – FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, VA

DOMAIN	RESPONSIBILITIES
Law Enforcer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adhere to federal, state, and FCPD guidelines for protecting schools from violence</li> <li>▪ Train school staff to address crisis situations</li> <li>▪ Use alternative conflict resolution strategies as alternatives to arrest where possible</li> <li>▪ Develop positive relationships with students</li> <li>▪ Document any criminal activity</li> </ul>
Educator (Note that the MOU specifies that law enforcement duties take precedence over classroom instruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assist school staff in presenting on law-related topics</li> <li>▪ Deliver law-related lessons to students (curricula must be approved by SRO supervisor)</li> <li>▪ Serve as a guest lecturer in elective courses</li> <li>▪ Provide presentations to school and community-based meetings such as parent teacher associations (PTAs) (presentations must be approved by SRO supervisor)</li> <li>▪ Coordinate with other sections of the FCPD that provide programs in schools</li> </ul>
Informal Counselor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Model handling stress, conflict resolution, and demonstrating respect for others</li> <li>▪ Clearly communicate high standards for acceptable and unacceptable behavior</li> <li>▪ Refer students who need additional support to school-based resources</li> </ul>

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Working with  
students with  
special needs

Mental health  
issues in  
childhood and  
adolescence

Dangerous and  
threatening  
students

Bullying

Establishing  
effective working  
relationships  
with parents



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Constitutional and State law

Armed response

Crime prevention and mitigation

Interview and interrogation techniques

Investigations

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Patrol operations

Advocacy within the juvenile justice system

Mandatory reporting

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS FOR EDUCATION

Crime prevention

School safety

Social media

Victimization

Law pertaining to students

Safe traffic stops

Driver safety

Law enforcement careers

Decision making

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS FOR INFORMAL COUNSELING

Mentoring

Crime prevention

Empowering youth

Resiliency and overall wellness

Adolescent brain development

Social and emotional development

Supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion

Improving youth decision-making skills

Trauma-informed practices

# REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What are some wonderings you have after reviewing all the reports provided to you?
- Where do you see alignment or misalignment with what is currently taking place in ACPS?
- What areas should be considered and explored further?



Thank you.

## CONTACT

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