

School Safety and Security Services Program

At the beginning of each school year, if the district has safety and security staff working on school property, the district must present to and discuss with students, and distribute to students' families, information about the role and responsibilities of safety and security staff.

"Safety and security staff" means a school resource officer, a school security officer, a campus security officer, and any other commissioned or noncommissioned employee or contractor, whose primary job duty is to provide safety or security services for a public school.

"School resource officer" (SRO) means a commissioned law enforcement officer in the state of Washington with sworn authority to make arrests, deployed in community-oriented policing, and assigned by the employing police department or sheriff's office to work in schools to build positive relationships with students and address crime and disorder problems, gangs, and drug activities affecting or occurring in or around K-12 schools. School resource officers should focus on keeping students out of the criminal justice system when possible and should not be used to attempt to impose criminal sanctions in matters that are more appropriately handled within the educational system.

Purpose

The purpose of the Ephrata School District safety and security services program is to improve school safety and the educational climate at the school. The safety and security staff shall be integrated into the school community through participation in faculty and student meetings and assemblies as appropriate. They shall support a positive school climate by developing positive relationships with students, parents, and staff, and by helping to promote a safe, inclusive, and positive learning environment. Safety and security staff are valuable team members of School Based Threat Assessment Teams, which are preventative in purpose. They are encouraged to participate consistent with Policy and Procedure 3225 – School Based Threat Assessment.

Limitations

The primary responsibility for maintaining proper order and conduct in the schools resides with school principals or their designee, with the support of other school staff. Principals or their designee maintain order and handle all student discipline matters consistent with Student Discipline Policy and Procedure 3241. A school resource officer is prohibited from becoming involved in formal school discipline situations that are the responsibility of school administrators.

Requests for Intervention

Teachers and school administrators may ask safety and security staff to intervene if a student's presence poses an immediate and continuing danger to others or an immediate and continuing threat of material and substantial disruption of the educational process or in other emergency circumstances consistent with Policy and Procedure 3432 – Emergencies. Safety and security staff do not need to be asked before intervening in emergencies.

Law Enforcement Activity and Immigration Enforcement

As a general rule, law enforcement activity should take place at a location other than school premises. However, there are circumstances where law enforcement intervention/activity at school premises is warranted. These law enforcement activities may include interviews and interrogations; search of a student's person, possessions, or locker; citations, filing of delinquency petitions, referrals to a probation officer, actual arrests, and other referrals to the juvenile justice system, consistent with Policy and Procedure 3226 – Interview and Interrogations of Students on School Premises and Policy and Procedure 3230 – Searches of Students and Student Privacy, and effective January 1, 2022, consistent with state law regarding a juvenile's access to an attorney when contacted by law enforcement.

The SRO duties do not extend to immigration enforcement and the SRO will not inquire into or collect information about an individual's immigration or citizenship status, or place of birth. Neither will the SRO provide information pursuant to notification requests from federal immigration authorities for the purposes of civil immigration enforcement, except as required by law, consistent with Policy and Procedure 4310 – Relations with Law Enforcement, Child Protective Agencies and the County Health Department.

Annual Review and Adoption of Agreements with Law Enforcement Agencies or Security Guard Companies

If a law enforcement agency or security guard company supplies safety and security staff to work on school property when students are expected to be present, the district must annually review and adopt an agreement with the law enforcement agency or security guard company. The agreement must:

A. Include a clear statement regarding safety and security staff duties and responsibilities related to student behavior and discipline that: prohibits a school resource officer from becoming involved in formal school discipline situations that are the responsibility of school administrators; recognizes that a trained safety and security staff knows when to informally interact with students to reinforce school rules and when to enforce the law; clarifies the circumstances under which teachers and school administrators may ask safety and security staff to intervene with a student; explains how safety and security staff will be engaged in creating a positive school climate and positive relationships with students; and describes the process for families to file complaints with the school and, when applicable, the local law enforcement agency or the company that provides the safety and security staff on contract related to safety and security staff and a process for investigating and responding to complaints;

B. Include a jointly determined hiring and placement process and a performance evaluation process; and

C. Either confirm that the safety and security staff have completed training series documentation provided by the educational service district or describe the plan for safety and security staff to complete the training series required by law.

The agreement review and adoption process must involve parents, students, and community members.

The superintendent or designee will develop additional procedures to implement this policy.

Cross References:

2121 - Substance Abuse Program
2145 - Suicide Prevention
2161 - Special Education and Related Services for Eligible Students
2162 - Education of Students With Disabilities Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
3143 - Notification and Dissemination of Information about Student Offenses and Notification of Threats of Violence or Harm
3225 - School-Based Threat Assessment
3226 - Interviews and Interrogations of Students on School Premises
3230 - Student Privacy and Searches
3432 - Emergencies
3241 - Student Discipline
3246 - Restraint, Isolation and Other Uses of Reasonable Force
4210 - Regulation of Dangerous Weapons on School Premises

4310 - District Relationships with Law Enforcement and other Government Agencies

Legal References:

RCW 10.93.160 – Immigration and Citizenship Status
RCW 26.44.030 Interviews of children
RCW 26.44.050 - Abuse or neglect of child — Duty of law enforcement agency or department of social and health services — Taking child into custody without court order
RCW 26.44.110 Information about rights — Custody without court order — Written statement required — Contents
RCW 26.44.115 Child taken into custody under court order — Information to parents
RCW 28A.300.640 - 645 – School based threat assessment program
Chapter 28A.320.124 – School resource officer programs
20 U.S.C. 1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
SHB 1140, Chapter 328, Laws of 2021 Law Enforcement Contact with Juveniles – Access to Attorney

Management Resources:

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