

POLICY FOR SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

Resolution 07—5-18 School Committee Approval May 22, 2007

SUMMARY

This Policy will state the purposes of the School Resource Officer (SRO) Program, and give specific guidelines for the SRO, and their supervisor(s) to follow.

PURPOSE

This policy will state the purpose of the School Resource Officer program.

This policy will state the duties and responsibilities of School Resource Officers in the High School and the Middle School.

This policy will state the duties and responsibilities of the School Resource Officers' Supervisor(s).

PURPOSES OF THE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM

The SRO program is intended to balance the need for a secure environment with that of a learning environment. It is the policy of the Johnston Police Department to promote a safe and orderly environment in the Town's public schools. The School Resource Officer (SRO) Program is funded by the Johnston Police Department and is designed to provide school administrators and staff with law enforcement resources and expertise in order to maintain safety, order, and discipline in the school environment. The SRO Program is intended to be a proactive model, to ensure that no student's right to receive an education is abridged by violence or disruption. To accomplish this end, the Johnston Police Department will employ an SRO in the High School and in the Middle School, in order to encourage working relationships between police, the schools, and students. The program intends to promote safety and education, while furthering the principles and philosophies of community policing directly into the school environment.

The program funding originates from the Johnston Police Department and the Johnston Public Schools is under no obligation to continue the program if discontinued by the Johnston Police Department due to the lack of funding.

DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

The SRO is expected to be highly visible and serve as a liaison between the Police Department and the School Department. The SRO will wear the regulation police uniform, including firearm, except for special events, with prior approval from his or her supervisor. The SRO will be accountable at all times and will duly log out of the School building anytime it is necessary to leave school grounds. The Schools administrator log out policy, as determined by the schools' Principal, will be followed and adhered to by the on duty SRO. The SRO will report directly to the school principal or their designee, upon any absence from duty, so that school officials may make the necessary arrangements during the absence of the SRO.

The SRO will be required to work Monday through Friday on a 5 and 2 work schedule, to coincide with school hours. The hours will be primarily between 7:00 AM and 3:00 PM,

with flexible hours, with prior approval from the SRO supervisor. When school is not in session, such as during the summer vacation period, the SRO's workweek will revert to a 4 and 2 schedule, with days off rotating, however, flexible hours will remain, with approval of the SRO Supervisor.

The SRO is expected to attend advance training and keep abreast of developments in juvenile delinquency, child abuse, adolescent sexual assault, substance abuse, interview techniques and any other training deemed appropriate by their SRO Supervisor or the Chief of Police.

The SRO is responsible for establishing an open relationship and strong communication between the school administrators and the Police Department, and shall attend weekly school administration meetings, when set up by the school Principal. The SRO should be in frequent communication with the designated school administrators for the purpose of exchanging information about current crime trends, social problems, or areas of concern having the potential for disruption in the school. The SRO is to familiarize them self with the school's "code red" operational plan and be instrumental in any revisions to the plan. Designated school administrators include, but not limited to:

- The School Superintendent
- The Principal of the School
- The Assistant Principal
- The Director of Facilities and Transportation

The SRO may also become involved with the school's curriculum and provide instruction that will enhance the student's understanding of the police mission and the responsibilities of citizenship. However, responding to incidents or conducting investigations will always take precedence over instructing in the classroom. Lesson plans for all formal, organized presentations, will be forwarded to the school Principal and SRO supervisor for review and approval prior to presentation.

The SRO will be responsible for monitoring the social and cultural environment to identify emerging youth gangs. Gang prevention and early intervention strategies will be coordinated with the Juvenile Division Detective and or Criminal Investigations Division.

When it is in the best interest of the Department and the school, SRO's may make a formal presentation to, or participate in school-based community organization meetings such as Parent Teacher Association and School Advisory Council meetings. The SRO Supervisor must approve the participation in activities such as panel discussions, mentoring programs, community coalitions, Task forces, and after school activities in advance. The SRO will keep their Supervisor(s) informed of the status of such additional activities.

The SRO's assigned school grounds, school building, and surrounding area will be the equivalent of the SRO's patrol area. The SRO will assume primary responsibility of handling all calls for service and coordinating the response of other police resources while on duty. In an emergency situation, the school may call 911, and also notify the

SRO. The SRO shall be given a master key to the school facility, and the alarm code, and shall be the primary contact person for getting access to the building during a crisis. The master key and alarm code to be used only in the event of an emergency.

The key shall remain the property of the Johnston Public Schools and is not to be reassigned in the event the SRO officer is transferred or leaves the position unless approved by Superintendent or designee.

In circumstances when there is only SRO working, that SRO will be responsible for both the High School and Middle School and will float between both schools as much as is practical. The two SRO's are also responsible for the safety of the elementary schools and will make themselves available to those schools upon request of those school officials.

SRO's will submit daily written activity reports on a weekly basis to the SRO Supervisor(s) and to the school Principal, or their designee.

The SRO will notify school authorities and their immediate supervisor of all arrests that occur on school grounds. SRO's will also notify the parents of juvenile offenders who are placed under arrest, as soon as practical.

Student lockers are considered the property of the Johnston Public School system and as such they are subject to the schools authority to search randomly. The administrative searches of school lockers are to be performed by school officials (i.e. principal or his/her designee). The SRO may be present at the search to provide extra security and to reinforce the combined efforts between the Johnston Police Department and the Johnston School Department in providing for a safer learning environment.

SRO's shall not transport students in their department vehicles except when the students are victims of a crime, under arrest, or are involved in some other emergency situation. When students are suspended from school and attempts to arrange for a parent to provide transportation has been exhausted, the SRO may provide transportation of the student so long as the school administrator assists, and providing the SRO's Supervisor is informed. The school truancy officer may also assist with such type of transport. SRO's shall not transport students to any location other than one where a student's parent(s) or legal guardian is present. SRO's shall notify the school principal before removing a student from school. SRO's shall not transport students in their personal vehicles.

SRO's shall maintain a professional oriented relationship when speaking with school administrators and students and shall carry themselves as sworn members of the Johnston Police Department. SRO's are reminded they are role models, mentors, and advocates of young people and are accountable for their behaviors on and off duty.

SRO's are prohibited from fraternizing or cultivating personal relationships in the course of their duty, as an SRO.

SRO's shall immediately report any and all issues to their immediate supervisor that may arise in the course of their duties that could be misconstrued, or misinterpreted, by students, school administrators, or parents.

DUTIES OF THE SRO SUPERVISOR

The SRO Supervisor will ensure that open lines of communication are in place between the school and the Police Department. A weekly meeting with each SRO should be arranged.

To the extent that the schedules permit, the SRO Supervisor should meet with each principal at the beginning of each school year to review the schools and police department's expectations and clarify any operational procedures. A second meeting should occur mid-year and involve a preliminary evaluation of the SRO's performance as well as the identification and resolution of any developing issues. The SRO Supervisor should address any concerns regarding the performance of the SRO. A final meeting with the school Principal shall occur at the end of the school year to evaluate the success, and any failures of the SRO program.

The SRO Supervisor will apprise the Uniform Division Commander (Major) of any exceptional or unusual matters affecting the school.

