



NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL

CHAPTER: 1.20

TITLE: SCHOOL INCIDENTS, SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

EFFECTIVE: 08/26/2018

REVISED: Replaces Policy 473

PURPOSE

This Chapter establishes guidelines for school resource officers and other NOPD officers in handling incidents occurring on school property and incidents involving truant students. When handling school incidents, officers will be mindful of the school administrator's responsibility for student discipline separate and apart from the responsibility of officers for the investigation of crime and law enforcement.

For incidents involving children outside of school, please refer to **Chapter 44.2 – Juveniles**, **Chapter 44.3 – Juvenile Warning Notice** and **Chapter 44.1.4 – Temporary Custody of Juveniles**.

DEFINITIONS

Caretaker—Any person legally obligated to provide or secure adequate care for a child, including a parent, tutor, guardian, legal custodian, foster home parent, an employee of a public or private day care center, or other person providing a residence for a child (Louisiana Children's Code Art. 603).

Child—A person under eighteen years of age who, prior to juvenile proceedings, has not been judicially emancipated.

School Resource Officer (SRO)—SROs are sworn law enforcement officers, specifically assigned by the Department, to providing security, educational training, and relationship building services in assigned schools.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. The SRO is expected to be a law enforcer, educator, and informal counselor.
2. The SRO should strive to employ non-punitive techniques when interacting with students.
3. Custodial arrests of students should be used only as a last resort (see **Chapter 44.3 – Juvenile Warning Notice**).

4. During normal school hours, the SRO will investigate all calls for service at the school where he/she is assigned.
5. The SRO will complete an electronic police report, if required by the incident, and notify the principal or assistant principal about the incident.
6. If an SRO is unavailable, a District unit shall be assigned to respond to the call for service and if required by the incident, investigate and complete an electronic police report. The responding officer shall forward the police report or item number to the SRO.
7. No call for service shall be “held” waiting for an SRO to respond if it is a Code 2 or higher. The next available District unit shall be assigned to respond rather than waiting for an available SRO.
8. No officer shall respond to minor misbehavior that can be appropriately addressed administratively through the school’s disciplinary process. Police officers are not the enforcement arm of the school administration. Minor misbehavior includes:
 - (a) Disobedience to school authorities,
 - (b) Disruption of class,
 - (c) Disorderly language,
 - (d) In-school fighting which would be a simple assault or simple battery (when no weapon is used or serious injury occurs),
 - (e) Dress code violations¹,
 - (f) Cell phone violations, and
 - (g) Tardiness.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

9. The SRO, as an informal counselor, should build relationships with students, their families, and staff and reinforce positive behavior.
10. When possible, the SRO will assist with school/student problems such as drug abuse, child abuse, and will assist students in finding school and community resources for their families.
11. The SRO will be available to confer with students, parents, and staff regarding law enforcement related issues or problems.
12. The SRO must reflect a positive role model for students and parents.
13. The SRO shall be involved in the implementation of Department-sponsored and -approved programs that help to build trusting relationships with the students and the Department.
14. The SRO will assist with emergency preparedness, lock down drills, and safety awareness education.
15. School administration is responsible for day-to-day student discipline, and SROs shall not be utilized in such a manner unless there is an imminent safety issue or a crime is thought to be involved.
16. There will be times when it is appropriate and necessary for the SRO to take a student into custody from the school setting. Arrest procedures involving students shall be in accordance with appropriate state law and Department policy. See **Chapter 44.2 – Juveniles**, **Chapter 44.3 – Juvenile Warning Notice** and **Chapter 44.1.4 – Temporary Custody of Juveniles**.

17. The SRO will document his/her daily activity on the police radio with Communication Services or by MDC for Daily Activity Reports, including when the SRO:
- (a) Provides counselling to a student;
 - (b) Conducts a structured youth engagement activity session;
 - (c) Participates in any structured school activity that builds trust and relationships with the school staff and students;
 - (d) Refers a student to a school counsellor;
 - (e) Conducts or participates in a parent-teacher conference;
 - (f) Transports a student:
 - i. To school if truant, or
 - ii. Juvenile Intake Unit, or
 - iii. Truancy center;
 - (g) Collaborates with school staff, students, parents, etc. to solve a problem;
 - (h) Conducts an arrest;
 - (i) Distributes any departmentally approved materials to the school or students; or completes a Juvenile Warning Notice consistent with **Chapter 44.3 – Juvenile Warning Notice**.

RESPONDING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

18. An officer responding to a complaint or call for service (CFS) on school property shall:
- (a) Enter the school grounds via normal access points and conduct his/her self in a professional manner.
 - (b) Avoid unnecessary disruption of the normal school routine.
 - (c) Notify the school's principal or assistant principal of his/her presence, and the nature of the call for service.
 - (d) Seek the school official's cooperation.
 - (e) Notify the on duty SRO if working.
19. The responding officer shall:
- (a) Request his/her supervisor to respond to the scene.
 - (b) Notify the appropriate school official.
 - (c) Inform the school official, alleged victim, and alleged perpetrator that a copy of the incident report will be available through the NOPD Records Section and provide each with the report item number, responding officer's name, and where to obtain the incident report.
 - (d) Take appropriate law enforcement action.

OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES RELATIVE TO USE OF FORCE BY A SCHOOL EMPLOYEE OR CHILD

20. An officer investigating a complaint by a student alleging improper use of force by a school employee shall contact Communications Services to notify the on duty platoon commander of the Child Abuse Unit if the child is a person under 18 years old as defined in Ch. C. Art. 603 (5).
21. A member of the Child Abuse Unit shall assume the investigation. The initial responding officer shall remain at the scene and assist the child abuse detective(s) as needed.
22. The responding officer shall document a complaint (CFS) by a school faculty member alleging improper use of force by a school employee or use of force by a student on a faculty member in an incident report (EPR).

RESPONDING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES RELATIVE TO STUDENT INTERVIEWS

23. An officer who interviews a student must comply with the requirements for interviews set forth in **Chapter 44.2 – Juveniles**. Officers should be mindful that formal interviews should be conducted pursuant to **Chapter 42.10 – Interviews** while protecting the rights of the juvenile being interviewed. If the officer considers the juvenile a suspect, the officer must proceed in accordance with **Chapter 44.2 – Juveniles** and **Chapter 42.11 – Custodial Interrogations**.
24. Absent exigent circumstances, if an interview with a student by an officer is to be conducted at a school, the officer must notify school officials and caretaker prior to the interview.
25. The interviewing officer will notify the school official that the officer needs to interview a student pursuant to an official police investigation, identify the student, and request the school official to produce the student for the interview.
26. The investigating officer shall request that school officials notify the parent/guardian of a student to be interviewed by a police officer if the student is a juvenile. The officer shall not interview a juvenile student prior to contacting and receiving the consent of a parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, the officer may proceed with the interview if the school official grants permission (in loco parentis), unless the officer is aware of limitations on the school administrator's authority to act in such a capacity.
27. If the student is an adult, the school officials may notify the student's parents if the school policy requires it but this does not require the officer wait for parental permission prior to interviewing the adult student if the student consents to speak with the officer.
28. If the parent/guardian of the juvenile student has been contacted by school officials and objects to the interview, the investigating officer will not begin the interview if it has not started, or, if the interview has started with the school official's permission, the officer will discontinue any interview with the juvenile student and the officer will attempt to speak directly with the parent/guardian to request permission prior to beginning or continuing any interview. An adult-age student may choose to speak with the investigating officer or not.
29. School officials and caretakers may be notified after initial contact has been made with a student if the exigency, emergency, time or circumstances do not allow for prior notification. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, situations involving an imminent threat of serious bodily injury, death, or violence.
30. If a school official asks to sit in on an interview with the student, this will be denied if the incident involves the school administration and/or a faculty/staff member, puts the student at risk, or could otherwise hinder the investigation.
31. In case of a conflict over the request, the officer will notify his/her supervisor. The supervisor will attempt to resolve the conflict through appropriate contact with a school administrator.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

32. Supervisors shall:
 - (a) Ensure all necessary information relating to this Chapter is contained in reports.
 - (b) Ensure that officers are using body worn cameras during school incidents.
 - (c) Respond to the scene on school property when requested by SROs or

- investigating officers.
- (d) If supervising an SRO, randomly review Daily Activity Logs to assess SRO interaction with students.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

33. The School Resource Officer Program is administered by the police District in which the school is located.
34. Officers regularly performing duties as SROs shall be assigned to the District in which the school is located and are under the direction of the District Commander or his/her designee.
35. Each District shall designate at least one officer as an SRO.

SELECTION AND TRAINING OF SRO

36. NOPD shall select officers to serve as SROs based on the following criteria:
- (a) The SRO should have particular experience or expertise relevant to positive interactions with youth; enjoy working with children; have a demeanor appropriate for interacting with children (e.g., is calm, even-tempered); and is able to work with both children and caretakers cooperatively and respectfully.
 - (b) A SRO shall be a sworn POST certified police officer. SRO personnel shall be a Police Officer with permanent status and at least two years of experience after completion of the Field Training Program.
 - (c) The SRO should be capable of conducting in-depth criminal investigations, and be proficient in written and oral communication skills.
 - (d) The SRO should possess the ability to function effectively in public forums, possess positive interpersonal skills, and demonstrate a high degree of moral conduct in order to portray a positive role model for students and parents.
37. Each SRO shall successfully complete the appropriate training curriculum designed by the NOPD Education and Training Division for the School Resource Officer Program prior to assignment as an SRO. An emphasis in SRO training shall be placed on relationship-based policing, conflict resolution, and laws affecting children. SRO training shall include childhood development, interacting and communicating with children, bias-free policing and cultural competency, mentorship and counseling, best practices for school-based officers, and how to apply juvenile statutes and laws in schools.
38. SROs shall be certified, and maintain certification in, crisis intervention techniques and shall be a member of NOPD's Crisis Intervention Team.