

## **School Resource Officers (SROs)**

### **DEFINITION**

"School Resource Officer" or "SRO" means an officer whose primary job function is to work with youth at a school site who has specialized training to work with youth at a school site and is:

- (a)
  - 1. A sworn law enforcement officer certified under [KRS 15.380](#) to [KRS 15.404](#); or
  - 2. A special law enforcement officer appointed pursuant to [KRS 61.902](#) and certified under [KRS 15.380](#) to [KRS 15.404](#); or
  - 3. A police officer appointed as a certified SRO; and
- (b) Employed:
  - 1. Through a contract between a local law enforcement agency and the District;
  - 2. Through a contract as secondary employment for an officer, as defined in [KRS 16.010](#), between the Department of Kentucky State Police and the District; or
  - 3. Directly by the District as part of the JCPS Police.<sup>1</sup>

### **PURPOSE AND GOAL: SAFER SCHOOLS AND SAFER STUDENTS**

The Board is responsible for the general management and control of schools in the District<sup>2</sup>, including promoting and fostering a safe environment for students, staff, and visitors. Every student should have access to a safe, secure, and orderly school that is conducive to learning.<sup>3</sup> Central to that responsibility is the implementation of a fair and equitable system of behavior supports and interventions for all students. School administrators are expected to develop and implement a plan with teachers to ensure that expected behaviors are intentionally taught, modeled, learned, and reviewed to ensure understanding and success by students, school staff, and SROs.

The District's commitment to achieving racial equity through awareness, action, and accountability must be embedded in all school and District practices, to ensure that all students are treated fairly and without discrimination. Critical to school safety and student success is the importance of building and sustaining positive adult-to-student relationships that: celebrate and recognize positive student behavior; incorporate cultural competence; use age- and developmentally-appropriate strategies; and are based on mutual respect and two-way communication.

A central goal of implementing this system of strategies to develop positive relationships in schools is reducing the number of students who become engaged with the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems.

**School Resource Officers (SROs)****PURPOSE AND GOAL: SAFER SCHOOLS AND SAFER STUDENTS (CONTINUED)**

The purpose of the SRO program is not to enforce or administer matters of school discipline and student conduct. Such matters are the responsibility of other District or school personnel. The purpose of the SRO program is to: promote and foster a safe environment in schools, at school-sponsored events, and on school transportation; provide a law enforcement presence on school property and at school-sponsored events; enhance educational programs relating to safety and positive behaviors; build positive relationships with students to support academic success and personal growth; provide a liaison to community and law enforcement agencies, and contribute to the District focus on building trusting relationships in school communities through approaches such as restorative practices, positive behavior interventions and supports, social-emotional learning, and trauma-informed practice. ~~The primary domain of activity for an SRO is outside the school building, except when called to respond to an incident or emergency by the principal or District administrator.~~ An SRO shall work to develop strong working collaborative relationships with principals; other school administrators; and with School Safety Administrators, ~~whose primary domain of activity is within school buildings.~~

The goal of the SRO program is to promote safer schools and safer students by employing law enforcement officers with high levels of specialized school-specific and student-focused training to work proactively with others in the school community to create a safer and more supportive learning environment for all students. SROs shall work as a team with administrators and teachers to develop strategies to protect and support all children so they can reach their fullest potential. Administrators will work to facilitate opportunities for SROs who have mentoring relationships with students to maintain those relationships.

The SRO program is one component of a broader effort within schools and the District central office to promote and foster a safe learning environment for students, staff, and community. Schools are safer when administrators, teachers, and staff work intentionally to:

- Actively engage students in authentic learning that matters to their sense of self and personal development.
- Build a culture and climate that foster and sustain attitudes, beliefs, values, and practices that promote success for all students.
- Make racial equity foundational to all school systems and practices.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive system of supports to address student mental health, social, and emotional needs, and the roots of disruptive behavior.
- Collaborate closely with appropriately trained and equipped law enforcement professionals – SROs – to promote and foster a safe environment for students, faculty, staff, and the school community.
- An SRO will have such training, certification, and commission as is required by provisions of KRS Chapters 15, 61, and 158.

**School Resource Officers (SROs)****ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS**

- In addition to requirements established under state law for SROs, an SRO employed by the District shall meet all additional training and other requirements established by the District in the SRO job description and in procedures to implement this policy.
- Per [KRS 158.4414](#), an SRO who fails to successfully and timely complete SRO training requirements shall lose their SRO certification and shall no longer work in the District as an SRO. An SRO who fails to meet other requirements established by the District shall be subject to the provisions of the policies and procedures governing employee discipline.
- An SRO shall also obtain training on the use of physical restraint and seclusion including additional training applicable to “core team” school personnel designated to respond to dangerous behavior.
- An SRO is vested with law enforcement jurisdiction and authority as described in [KRS 61.902](#) to [KRS 61.930](#) and other applicable law, including, but not limited to, investigating and responding to possible criminal offenses and to health or safety threats to students or school personnel.
- As authorized under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), SROs and all staff within the JCPS Police Department, are designated as the District’s “law enforcement unit” possessing law enforcement authority and exercising safety and security functions as described in state law and referenced above. Records created and maintained by an SRO for a law enforcement purpose do not constitute education records under FERPA.<sup>3</sup> District staff other than law enforcement personnel are not responsible for the creation of law enforcement records and are expected to observe restrictions on access to such records. An SRO is expected to provide guidance and insight to District officials and staff on such restrictions.

**NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT**

An SRO is a classified employee. An SRO is therefore generally covered by District classified employee policies, including, but not limited to, policies regarding terms and conditions of employment; fringe benefits; employee discipline; and reductions in force.<sup>4</sup> However, as applied to an SRO, such general District classified employee policies may be subject to the terms of their contract with the District; their job description; and their authority to carry out certain law enforcement functions as permitted by law. Police officers shall be granted with the protections provided in [KRS 15.520](#) and shall be certified in accordance with [KRS 15.380](#).<sup>6</sup> In accordance with [KRS 61.926](#), 527.020, and 527.070, as applicable, each SRO shall be armed with a firearm, notwithstanding any provision of Board policy, school council policy, or memorandum of agreement.<sup>5</sup>

**School Resource Officers (SROs)****ASSIGNMENT**

The Board shall ensure, for each campus in the District, that at least one (1) certified SRO is assigned to and working on-site full-time in the school building or buildings on the campus. If sufficient funds and qualified personnel are not available for this purpose for every campus, the Board shall fulfill the requirements on a per campus basis, as approved in writing by the State School Security Marshal, until a certified SRO is assigned to and working on-site full-time on each campus in the District.

**BOARD MAY AUTHORIZE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

[KRS 158.471](#) provides that the Board is authorized to establish a police department for the District, appoint police officers and other employees, prescribe distinctive uniforms for the police officers of the District, and designate and operate emergency vehicles. Police officers appointed shall take an appropriate oath of office in the form and manner consistent with the constitution of Kentucky.

If the Board establishes a police department, the Superintendent/designee shall develop standard operating procedures governing the department.

**TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

All SROs shall successfully complete forty (40) hours of annual in-service training that has been certified or recognized by the Kentucky Law Enforcement Council for SROs, as well as all other additional training requirements for SROs established by the District. Any SRO who fails to successfully complete the state-mandated training requirements within the specified time periods, including approved extensions, shall lose their SRO certification and shall no longer serve in the capacity as an SRO. An SRO who has lost SRO certification due solely to the officer's failure to meet state training requirements may regain certification status as an SRO upon completion of the training deficiency, and may resume service in the capacity as an SRO. An SRO who fails to meet other training requirements established by the District shall be subject to the provisions of the policies and procedures governing employee discipline.

As set forth in [KRS 158.4414](#), the course curriculum for in-service training certified or recognized by the Kentucky Law Enforcement Council for SROs, shall include but not be limited to:

- (1) Foundations of school-based law enforcement;
- (2) Threat assessment and response;
- (3) Youth drug use and abuse;
- (4) Social media and cyber security;
- (5) School resource officers as teachers and mentors;
- (6) Youth mental health awareness;
- (7) Diversity and bias awareness training;
- (8) Trauma-informed action;
- (9) Understanding students with special needs; and
- (10) De-escalation strategies.

**School Resource Officers (SROs)****TRAINING REQUIREMENTS (CONTINUED)**

Course curriculum for additional District-mandated SRO training shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) Bullying;
- (2) Cross-cultural communication and bias awareness training;
- (3) De-escalation strategies;
- (4) Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (MTSS and PBIS);
- (5) Restorative Practices;
- (6) Safe Crisis Management;
- (7) Student Support and Behavior Intervention Handbook;
- (8) Trauma-informed action;
- (9) Understanding students with special needs;
- (10) Youth mental health awareness;
- (11) Weapon qualification;
- (12) Drug rehabilitation resources;
- (13) Suicide prevention;
- (14) Use of trained interpreters when engaging with a student, family member, or other individual whose first language is not English;
- (15) Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); and
- (16) All trainings required by the District for classified employees

Principals and School Safety Administrators shall be given training and guidance regarding positive and effective relationships with SROs, including the circumstances under which requesting support from an SRO is appropriate, and when it is not appropriate.

**DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, REPORTING, AND PROGRESS MONITORING**

1. The SRO Standard Operating Procedures Manual, as described below, shall include detailed guidance for the reporting of incidents by SROs, including but not limited to: the types of incidents that must be reported; the information required; the form of documentation; and the delivery, storage, and maintenance of incident reports.
2. The Chief of Police shall create a Data Review Team to establish program goals and metrics to assist in measuring progress toward meeting those goals. The Chief of Accountability, Research and Systems Improvement/designee shall assist the Data Review Team in establishing metrics and data collection and analysis protocols. The Data Review Team shall include the Chief Equity Officer/designee, the Assistant Superintendent of Culture and Climate/designee, Chief of Exceptional Child Education/designee, and three mental health professionals, who may include, but are not limited to, a school psychologist, counselor, or mental health practitioner.

**School Resource Officers (SROs)****DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, REPORTING, AND PROGRESS MONITORING (CONTINUED)**

3. The Chief of Police shall prepare regular reports for the Superintendent and the Board outlining program implementation activities, progress towards meeting goals, challenges, next steps, and program needs.
4. The Chief of Police shall establish an SRO Community Data Review Team, which shall meet at least quarterly to review and analyze aggregate data regarding incidents reported by SROs and make recommendations to the District regarding the SRO program. The SRO Community Data Review Team shall include individuals with knowledge and expertise regarding data analysis, violence prevention, justice-involved youth, racial equity in the school setting, and other pertinent matters.
5. As Racial Equity and Culture and Climate are two of the three pillars of the District, the Data Review Team shall closely monitor, consistently report, and actively work to reduce both racial disproportionality in and the overall number of citations, arrests, and other law enforcement involvement with students.
6. The Chief of Police/designee shall establish a process whereby authentic student feedback regarding the School Safety Program and SRO is collected, analyzed, and shared with District leadership and the Board.
7. The Chief of Police/designee shall notify the Superintendent, Chief of Staff General Counsel, and all Board members, as soon as possible and within three (3) days, of all incidents in which an SRO:
  - a. Detains a student under the age of eighteen (18) into custody under [KRS 610.190](#) for an offense for which an adult could be arrested, including a physical detention to another location and a detention that results in the issuance of a citation and release;
  - b. Arrests an adult student including a physical arrest to another location and an arrest that results in the issuance of a citation and release;
  - c. Arrests an individual who is not a student;
  - d. Unholsters a firearm or Taser; or
  - e. Discharges a firearm or Taser.

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL**

The Superintendent/designee shall prepare an SRO Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual to provide operational guidance to the JCPS Police Department and SROs. The SOP Manual shall provide written processes that describe in detail how to perform tasks specific to the SRO program to meet statutory, regulatory, and Board policy standards; establish expectations for high quality operations; and to create a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

**School Resource Officers (SROs)****STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL (CONTINUED)**

Using national best practices and procedures for school resource officer programs, the District shall establish an SOP Manual Team, including members from District departments and the community, to develop SRO SOPs.

The manual shall be reviewed and updated by a reconstituted SOP Manual Team at least once every two years, and as needed.

**SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT**

No later than November 1 of each year, the Superintendent shall report to the Center for School Safety the number and placement of SRO in the District. The report shall include the source of funding and method of employment for each position.

**GUARDIANS**

Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, the Board, if unable to meet the requirement for each campus in the District, that at least one (1) certified SRO is assigned to and working on-site full-time in the school building or buildings on the campus, may in consultation with and approval by the State School Security Marshal, employ one (1) or more Guardians to provide safety and security measures for schools within the District. The use of Guardians shall not be used to replace the certified SRO, but only to provide safety and security resources until a certified SRO is available.

Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, if the District that has met the requirement for each campus in the District, that at least one (1) certified SRO is assigned to and working on-site full-time in the school building or buildings on the campus, the District may employ one (1) or more Guardians to provide additional school safety and security measures within the District.<sup>7</sup>

**REFERENCES:**

<sup>1</sup>[KRS 158.441](#)

<sup>2</sup>[KRS 160.290](#)

<sup>3</sup>20 U.S.C. 1232(g)(a)(4)(ii); 34 C.F.R. § 99.8

<sup>4</sup>[KRS 161.011](#)

<sup>5</sup>[KRS 61.902](#) – [KRS 61.930](#); [KRS 527.020](#); [KRS 527.070](#); [KRS 70.290](#)

<sup>6</sup>[KRS 158.471](#)

<sup>7</sup>[KRS 158.4414](#)

[KRS 15.380](#) to [KRS 15.404](#); [KRS 15.520](#)

[KRS 158.440](#) – [KRS 158.4461](#)

[KRS 158.471](#); [KRS 158.473](#); [KRS 158.475](#); [KRS 158.477](#); [KRS 158.479](#); [KRS 158.481](#)  
[704 KAR 007:160](#)

**RELATED POLICIES:**

02.311; 09.14; 09.2211; 09.227; 09.422; 09.425; 09.4361

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