

<p style="text-align: center;">East Haven Police Department</p> 	Type of Directive: Policies & Procedures		No. 419.2
	Subject/Title: School Resource Officers	Issue Date: July 29, 2014	
		Effective Date: September 1, 2014	
	Issuing Authority: Honorable Board of Police Commissioners	Review Date: Annually	
References/Attachments: N/A		Rescinds: 419.1	Amends: N/A

I. PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this directive is to set forth the policies and procedures of the East Haven Police Department regarding the School Resource Officer (SRO) program.

II. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the East Haven Police Department to support our educators, students and parents by deploying our SRO to foster a safe and secure learning environment in our schools, in adherence with the Memorandum of Agreement developed with the East Haven Public Schools.
- B. The primary function of the SRO is to promote a safe environment and provide youth a positive experience of police authority; the SRO is not expected to use law enforcement tactics for school discipline matters.

III. GENERAL GUIDELINES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The School Resource Officer program is a recognized policing model in which sworn law enforcement officers are assigned to a school or set of schools. Through their daily presence, police officers embody the community policing model in which they act as collaborative problem solvers, serve as a resource to schools and positive role models for students. SROs participate in school activities and work as part of a team with faculty and administrators to address issues in the school environment in adherence to a memorandum of agreement with the East Haven Public Schools. This team will clarify the boundaries between school discipline and criminal offending and the different responses of each team member to student conduct.

The goals of a School Resource Officer include the following.

- Developing relationships between police officers and young people to increase positive attitudes toward law enforcement.
- Teach the value of the legal system.
- Promoting respect for people and property.
- Reducing juvenile crime through close contact with students and by helping them formulate awareness of rules, authority and justice.
- Taking personal interest in students and their activities.
- Allowing students access to the legal system.
- Giving students a realistic understanding of laws and the legal system so they will have an investment in supporting and improving it.
- Teaching students how to avoid becoming victims through self-awareness and crime prevention.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. The Chief may assign an officer(s) to serve as SRO. The Chief shall assign the SRO to a school or schools.
 1. SRO recruitment and selection.
 - a. Officers who voluntarily apply for this position will be given priority for the assignment, after consideration of their work history in the Department and prior work experience. Those who volunteer for the assignment, rather than being assigned without choice, are more likely to have the kind of motivation necessary to make the program successful.
 - b. Selection criteria for SRO shall include the following.
 - 1) Demonstrated police experience working successfully with children and youth.
 - 2) Strong verbal and written communication skills.
 - 3) Ability to work effectively with community agencies and other law enforcement agencies.
 - 4) Knowledge of criminal justice system operations, criminal law, criminal procedure, rules of evidence, search and seizure, warrants, and police policy.

- 5) Ability to relate to a broad range of people with courtesy, tact, objectivity, and discretion.
 - 6) Ability to work with a minimum of supervision.
 - 7) Previous work history that demonstrates initiative and dependability.
2. SRO training.
- a. It is critical that the SRO receive adequate training and orientation to ensure that they can effectively meet his or her SRO responsibilities. SRO training programs and conferences provide new and experienced SROs with basic information about their roles and responsibilities, as well as the opportunity to network with colleagues and share challenges and successes.
 - b. When available, a formal course of classroom training on subjects applicable to SRO responsibilities should be undertaken. Informal training experiences of value to new SROs include pairing them with more experienced SROs for their first year of service.
 - c. SROs should be trained in the following areas.
 - 1) Special education law.
 - 2) Child/adolescent development.
 - 3) Development issues for compromised youth, i.e. youth with mental health issues.
 - 4) Development issues for youth chronically exposed to trauma.
- B. The primary role of School Resource Officer is to enforce the law and “keep the peace” in school(s) so students can learn and teachers can teach. In this role, the SRO will do the following.
1. Investigate complaints of criminal activity on the school campus.
 2. Assist law enforcement, probation, and social services agencies in follow-up investigations where a student was involved.
 3. Provide campus supervision.
 4. Participate in safe school planning.
 5. Serve as a liaison between law enforcement and school officials.
- C. Law-related counselor.
1. The SRO may participate in meetings with students, parents, and teachers to provide information and advice on the law.

2. The community-policing philosophy of the SRO requires that the SRO open lines of communication with representatives of community agencies and gain a clear understanding of the services they offer.
3. The School Resource Officer may also initiate contact with and provide referrals to community agencies on behalf of students and families requiring services.

D. Law-related educator.

1. School Resource Officer serves as a resource for schools in the area of law-related education. The SRO should teach law-related topics in the classroom and at group gatherings such as assemblies, PTA meetings, and student meetings.
2. The SRO may teach a variety of topics including texting and driving, sexual assault, bullying, and underage drinking.
3. The SRO should be involved with activities such as school athletics, student organizations, Police Explorers among others.

E. SRO job description.

1. The School Resource Officer is a certified law enforcement officer who is assigned to a school or schools. The SRO shall participate fully in school events and activities. The School Resource Officer remains an employee of the EHPD.
2. The SRO is not responsible for student discipline or enforcement of school rules.
3. The SRO must determine the best ways to address the needs of a particular school. The specific duties will vary depending on the problems that exist in the school(s) and other mechanisms that are in place to solve them. The SRO and a given school principal must work collaboratively and meet once per week to determine the goals and priorities for the SRO program in a particular school.
4. Length of assignment.
 - a. Continuity is an important aspect of a School Resource Officer program. To get full benefit from a SRO, the same officer must be present in a school or schools so he or she can form relationships with students and understand the school climate and influences that affect them. This enables SROs to better identify potential problems and intervene to prevent them from occurring. Therefore, officers should not be assigned to SRO responsibilities on a rotating basis.
 - b. The recommended minimum length of assignment for SROs is one school year, although many programs assign SROs for two or more years.

F. Office space and equipment.

1. To work most effectively in the school environment, the SRO should have office space and logistical support in the school and be included with other administrative personnel in phone lists, voice mail systems, and other communication channels.

2. The recommended space and equipment for each School Resource Officer includes the following.
 - a. Access to an office or meeting room with a door for conducting private conferences with students, parents, teachers, administrators and others.
 - b. Filing storage that locks for security.
 - c. Phone, desk, chair, and adequate workspace.
 - d. Access to office equipment such a copy machines, fax machines and printers.
 - e. Computer with Internet/e-mail access.
 - f. School Resource Officers should be linked with school administrators and security guards through a radio communication system or similar mechanism to provide instant, reliable communication during emergencies.

G. Work hours.

1. School Resource Officers' work hours should be adjusted to cover the hours of school operation and meet police department needs.
 - a. SROs cover the hours of school operation, adding time before and after school to fill a full-time work schedule.
2. Generally SROs are required to work on days when school is not in session.

H. Introducing SROs into school environments.

1. An important aspect of the School Resource Officer program is that it exposes community members to police officers who are working in helping and problem-solving capacities. To fully capitalize on this opportunity, school and police officials must take care to create a positive image of the SRO and his or her role on campus when introducing a new SRO into the school environment.
2. The SRO's commanding officer shall work with the EHPS administration to plan introductions of the SRO when a new officer is assigned and at the beginning of each school year.

I. Evaluating SRO programs.

1. The SRO's commanding officer and the EHPS administration shall establish a process for monitoring the SRO program and evaluating its impact on the school environment.
2. The evaluation program shall include the following techniques.
 - a. Collect data and compare with baseline and prior-year data.
 - b. Gather feedback from community members, teachers, students, and administrators on program effectiveness.

- c. Identify and implement program improvements.
- d. Document results.
- e. SRO program results shall be presented to school, police, and town officials annually for use in improving the program.