

RELATIONS WITH SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES

The Board of School Directors recognizes that a cooperative relationship with law enforcement authorities is desirable for the protection of students and staff and in maintaining a safe school environment. To that end, RSU 19 and the Newport Police Department have established a School Resource Officer (SRO) program. The Board of School Directors hereby officially designates the police officers assigned by the Newport Police Department to serve as SROs as the law enforcement unit of RSU 19. The purpose of the SROs is to enforce local, state, and federal laws against any individual or organization other than the school unit itself and to assist in maintaining the physical security and safety of RSU 19.

In keeping with RSU 19's mission, the primary roles of the SROs are to:

- Provide support and assistance to the school administration and staff to maintain a safe and constructive learning environment;
- Serve as a resource to administrators and teachers in planning and providing age-appropriate educational programs that foster respect for the law, an understanding of law enforcement, and safe and healthy behaviors;
- Serve as a resource to administrators and staff concerning law enforcement and child welfare issues;
- Assist individual students and their families in addressing issues related to law enforcement and helping students to have a meaningful school experience; and
- Serve as a liaison between the schools and the Newport Police Department in addressing issues of concern to both departments.

School administrators and staff have the primary responsibility for maintaining proper order in the schools and for disciplining students for violations of Committee policies and school rules. However, the Superintendent and administrators may seek the assistance of a SRO and/or law enforcement agency when they believe there is a threat to the welfare and safety of the schools, students and/or staff. The Superintendent and administrators shall also inform an SRO and/the Newport Police Department or other applicable law enforcement agency when they have reason to suspect that a student or staff member may have violated a state or federal criminal law.

In general, the Board of School Directors discourages SROs and other law enforcement authorities from using the schools as a venue to arrest and/or question students for activities not related to or affecting the schools. The Superintendent and administrators retain the authority to deny access to students for non-school-related investigations.

Under this policy, SROs are considered to be school officials with legitimate educational interests in reviewing educational records in order to perform their professional responsibilities.

The Board of School Directors authorizes the Superintendent to develop administrative procedures, in consultation with the Newport Police Department, to guide interactions between the schools, the SROs, and the Newport Police Department. Such procedures should safeguard the rights to students and parents and be consistent with the School Board policies. Administrators may also develop appropriate building-level procedures regarding the role and activities of SROs in their schools. All administrative procedures must be consistent with School Board policies and the SRO program agreement between RSU 19 and the Newport Police Department, and are subject to approval by the Board.

Legal Reference: 20 IL&C 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99

Cross Reference: KLG-R