



**OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF**  
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY & THE CITY OF LEXINGTON

---

G.S. FUNKHOUSER, SHERIFF

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN THE  
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
AND THE  
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

**I. PURPOSE**

It is the policy of the Rockbridge County Sheriff's Office (RBSO) to endorse and support through staffing the creation of positive interaction between law enforcement and the school community.

This endeavor is a partnership between education and law enforcement which supports a collaborative, problem-solving approach to violence in schools.

This policy represents mutually agreed upon goals and objectives of the Rockbridge County Sheriff's Office and the Rockbridge County Public Schools (RCPS) for the School Resource Deputy (SRD) Program.

This Memorandum of Understanding will remain in force until such time either party withdraws from the agreement by delivering a written notification of such rescission to the other party.

**II. SCHOOL RESOURCE DEPUTY MISSION AND OBJECTIVES**

**Mission:**

The primary mission of the SRD is to create a partnership between the Sheriff's Office and the Schools. This program is intended to maintain a safe learning environment for our

youth, identify and prevent, through counseling and referral, delinquent behavior, and to promote positive relationships between students and law enforcement.

**Objectives:**

- a. Provide assessment of schools and provide identification of high risk or criminal activity on the school properties
- b. Provide timely, pertinent crime-related information to school personnel
- c. Coordinate student activities which promote a safe school environment
- d. Act as a liaison between the schools and law enforcement
- e. Be a resource for violence reduction and avoidance for students
- f. Serve as a juvenile mediator for law enforcement/school related problems
- g. Teach a class action type program
  - i. This program provides students with some working knowledge of the law and the criminal justice system

**III. UNDERSTANDING OF THE SCHOOL RESOURCE DEPUTY PROGRAM**

**What is a School Resource Deputy Program?**

A SRD Program places deputies in schools in an effort to create and maintain a safe learning environment for our youth. In its most successful format the SRD Program community-based at its foundation. It reflects a comprehensive community focus which integrates the officers and the SRDs stationed in the schools with the existing network of resources in the community. The SRDs are more than law enforcement officers in

schools. The schools are their communities, and the deputies in an SRD program fulfill three roles as they act as a resource for their communities, the schools:

- a. First and foremost, they are law enforcement officers whose primary purpose is to "keep the peace" in their communities, so that students can learn;
- b. Secondly, they are counselors who provide guidance to students and act as a link to support services both inside and outside the school environment;
- c. Thirdly, they are teachers who provide the schools with additional resources by sharing their expertise in the classroom.

Beyond these identified roles and, perhaps most important, SRDs are positive role models for many youth who are not exposed to such role models in today's society.

#### **What does a School Resource Deputy Program Provides?**

The bottom line associated with an SRD program is threefold:

- a. It is a mechanism through which safe learning environments can be created and maintained
- b. It provides the community with an efficient, effective program
- c. It saves money because the approach associated with it is one of prevention

#### **Who Benefits and How?**

Everyone! Specifically:

- a. Students benefit because their schools are safer, they have another resource available to them, and they are exposed to positive role models

- b. Parents benefit because their children are in safe learning environments, and they have an additional resource
- c. Teachers and school administrators benefit because they are working in safe environments, and they have another resource available to them
- d. Law-enforcement officials benefit because they are better able to serve and protect their communities in an efficient, effective, and community-based way
- e. The court system benefits because much of the time and money savings associated with SRDs are incurred by the court system
- f. Taxpayers benefit because their tax dollars are being used in an efficient, effective way which has cost savings associated with it
- g. The community benefits because the community foundation of the program brings the community together and allows it to address its own needs in a comprehensive, successful way

#### **IV. SCHOOL RESOURCE DEPUTY JOB DESCRIPTION:**

Abide by school board policies and shall consult with and coordinate activities through the school principal, but shall remain fully responsive to the chain of command of the law enforcement agency in all matters relating to employment and supervision.

Refrain from functioning as a school disciplinarian or administrator. If the principal believes an incident is a law violation, he/she shall contact the SRD who shall then determine whether law enforcement action is appropriate.

Present information such as the laws, the law enforcement officers, and the RBSO mission.

Encourage individual and small group discussions about law enforcement related matters with students, faculty and parents.

Attend meetings of parent and faculty groups to solicit their support and understanding of the SRD Program and to promote awareness of law enforcement functions.

Make themselves available for conferences with students, parents, and faculty members to assist them with problems of a law enforcement or crime prevention nature.

Confer with the principal to develop plans and strategies to prevent and/or minimize dangerous situations on or near the campus involving students at school-related activities.

Perform duties as determined by the principal other than those regularly assigned to school personnel such as lunchroom or hall duty. (Nothing, herein, is intended to preclude the SRDs from being available in areas where interactions with students are expected.)

Take law enforcement action if necessary and notify the principal of the school as soon as possible, advise the principal before requesting additional enforcement assistance on campus, if possible, and undertake all additional law enforcement responsibilities at the principal's direction.

Give assistance to other law enforcement officers in matters regarding the duties of SRDs whenever necessary.

Promote citizen awareness of law enforcement efforts, assure the peaceful operation of school-related programs, build support with students, and whenever possible, participate in or attend school functions.

Reaffirm their roles as law enforcement officers by wearing their uniforms most days, unless doing so would be inappropriate for scheduled school activities.

- a. The standard RBSO or school polo shirt and khaki pants is authorized to be worn on a limited and minimal amount of days.
- b. The uniform will also be worn at events where it will enhance the image of the deputies and their ability to perform their duties.
- c. Any other clothing other than what is listed here must be approved by the Chief Deputy or Sheriff.

File reports as required by the VA Code and Agency Policy.

#### **V. SCHOOL PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

The principal of the school should ensure that a weekly meeting with the SRD is adhered to. The meeting may be delegated to other administrative staff

The principal shall ensure that effective communications exist between the SRD and the school staff.

All criminal activity that comes to the attention of the principal or school staff shall be reported to the SRD. If an active emergency situation exists, and the assigned SRD is not currently located at that specific school, the principal shall notify the Sheriff's Office by calling 911.

- a. Remember, another deputy may be on patrol and located closer to the specific school than any of the SRDs

If an active non-emergency situation is in progress, and the assigned SRD is not currently located at that specific school, the principal shall notify the Sheriff's Office by calling dispatch at 540-463-7328 (Non-emergency dispatch number).

- a. Remember, another deputy may be on patrol and located closer to the specific school than any of the SRDs

Information that is not of an emergency nature may be held for the SRD or reported to the Sheriff's Office by calling dispatch at 540-463-7328 (Non-emergency 24/7 dispatch number).

When principals need to request the assistance of SRDs to schedule meetings, plan future events, or for any other matter not currently in progress, the principal may contact specific SRDs via their cellphones or by calling dispatch at 540-463-7328.

Principals may also contact the Chief Deputy or Sheriff at any time via dispatch at 540-463-7328 (Non-emergency 24/7 dispatch number) or at the RBSO Administrative Office at 540-463-7329 (Non-emergency administrative office number - M-F - 08am-4pm).

The school shall provide a work area for the SRD that is equipped with a telephone and computer. It is recommended that the area has a locked storage area for securing contraband recovered in the schools by the school staff. The SRD shall transport the contraband to the RBSO and secure it in the property room before the end of the workday that the contraband was seized. The SRD shall be responsible for arranging for the destruction of any illegal substances that will not be used for prosecution.

The school system shall provide in-service training, when available, to the SRDs in areas that will increase the effectiveness of the deputies and their ability to accomplish their respective duties and responsibilities.

## **VI. GUIDELINES ON COMMUNICATIONS**

Good communications between the SRD and the administration of the school is essential for providing a safe learning environment.

- a. The SRD assigned to a school is considered a member of the school's staff and should attend meetings when possible, contributing their knowledge and expertise toward the solution of matters affecting the operation of the school.
- b. The SRD should keep the principal and administrators abreast of law enforcement related matters and receive input and advice in dealing with such matters.
- c. Every SRD should earn the trust and confidence of faculty, administration, and other employees of the community schools, parks, recreation areas, and other gathering places for youth.
- d. Classroom management rests with the teacher.
- e. SRDs are present to "provide a safe learning environment."

## VII. SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER ARREST AND INTERVIEW PROCEDURES

### Law Enforcement Investigation and Questioning:

The SRD has been given the authority to stop, question, interview, and take law enforcement action without the prior authorization of the principal. However, the SRD should first discuss the initiation of law enforcement action or charges with the principal or designee unless immediate action is required to prevent personal harm, flight, or destruction of evidence. The investigation and questioning of students during school hours or at school events should be limited to situations where the investigation is related to school. Investigations and questioning of students for offenses not related to the operation of or occurring at the school should



ordinarily be limited to those in which delay might result in danger to any person, flight from the jurisdiction by a person suspected of a crime, or destruction of evidence.

The principal shall be notified as soon as practical of any law enforcement events. An SRD should coordinate his activities with school staff so that action between the agencies is cooperative and in the best interests of the school and public safety.

**Arrest Procedures:**

SRDs are expected to be familiar with school rules and their application within the school system. Routinely, rule infractions will not be handled as violations of law but rather referred to the principal for action. Any questions related to the enforcement of rules versus laws within schools should be discussed with the principal and Chief Deputy or Sheriff. This specifically applies to underage smoking and general standards of conduct.

The following procedures will be adhered to where arrests of students or staff become necessary:

- a. The arrest of a student or employee of the school should be coordinated through the principal, whenever practical.
- b. Persons who have been deemed as non-students or those whose presence on school grounds has been restricted or forbidden shall be arrested when possible. This action will be supported by the principals and employees of the school through court appearances when necessary.
- c. Arrest of students or staff during school hours shall be reported to the principal as soon as practical.
- d. Assault and Battery should be handled by the school officials and the SRD as a team. The parents of the student involved should be brought into the discussion

of whether or not the SRD pursues charges. RBSO and RCPS encourage charges being placed in most A&Bs.

- e. Underage Possession of Alcohol - 4.1.305 - will be handled by school policy and a court referral.
- f. Possession of Tobacco by Minors - 18.2-3712 - The school administration will handle offenses of possession of tobacco products by an underage person according to school policy and refer the matter to the SRD to determine if a court referral is needed.
- g. Drugs - Any person who possesses any illegal drug on school property shall be charged by the SRD. The SRD may wish to have the substance analyzed by the lab before placing charges. The SRD shall report all drug offenses to the principal. The school is allowed to follow all school policies regarding due process and student discipline.

#### **Search and Seizure:**

School officials may conduct searches of students' property and persons under their jurisdiction when reasonable suspicion exists that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or in violation of either the law or the rules of the school. The standards for the search are reasonable suspicion.

The SRD will not become involved in administrative (school related) searches unless specifically requested by the school to provide security, protection, or for the handling of contraband.

These searches must be at the direction and control of school officials.

At no time shall the SRD request that an administrative search be conducted for law enforcement purposes or have the administrator act as his agent.

Any search by a deputy shall be based upon probable cause, consent, or incident to arrest and, when required, a search warrant should be obtained.

Stop and frisk will remain an option when there is reasonable suspicion that a criminal offense has been committed or may be committed, and that the suspect may be armed

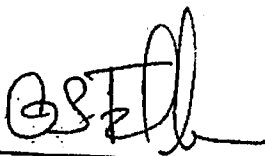
**Administrative Hearing:**

The SRD shall attend suspension and/or expulsion hearings upon request of the school principal. The SRD shall be prepared to provide testimony on any actions that were taken by the SRD and any personally observed conduct witnessed by the SRD. The SRD shall make available any physical evidence that is available. It will be the responsibility of the SRD to transport and safeguard any weapon that is needed at the expulsion hearing.

The SRD shall not provide any official law enforcement document or juvenile record to the school. Release of such information is prohibited by the Code of Virginia unless such documents are subpoenaed by the schools through the appropriate court.

This MOU shall be effective immediately when both parties have signed below. This MOU shall be reviewed annually.

Sheriff Steve Funkhouser:



Date: 3-4-22

Superintendent Phillip Thompson:



Date: 3/4/22