



2A Maryland

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**Senate Bill 819
Public Schools – School Resource Officers – Firearms Required
FAVORABLE**

Senate Bill 819 appears to be a legislated resolution to conflicting directives relating to the duties of School Resource Officers within the Baltimore City School System.

Maryland's Safe to Learn Act of 2018 mandates either the assignment of a School Resource Officer (SRO) or adequate law enforcement coverage for each individual school within each of Maryland's twenty-four local school systems. It is the decision of each local school system to determine how they will fulfill this mandate.

Source: <https://news.maryland.gov/mcss/2020/10/08/the-many-roles-of-a-maryland-sro/>

School Based Officer Updated Responsibilities:

1. Law enforcement officer- although a less performed role, the school police officer is still law enforcement officer with the authority to handle crimes and make arrests and diversions when necessary. It is important to differentiate between routine school discipline and criminal behavior. School police officers should not be involved in routine discipline, but *should take the lead on serious criminal violations*. (Emphasis added) (Part I offenses such as homicide, robbery, rape, aggravated assault, theft, stolen autos and Part II crimes in progress such as common assault, trespassing and disorderly conduct.

Source: Officer Responsibilities – Baltimore City Public Schools

<https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/school-police>

The school system cannot have it both ways. An SRO is either a police officer assigned to the school to protect the students or a quasi police officer/guidance counselor. In the current environment, it is unrealistic to expect the SRO to fulfill both roles. An unarmed RSO is nothing more than another unarmed victim in an already target rich environment of defenseless victims. The SRO deserve better for it is they and not the academics who will be in the line of fire.

We respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 819.

John H. Josselyn
2A Maryland
02/28/2024

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MEMO

To: All School Police Sworn Personnel
From: Akil L. Hamm, Sr. Acting Chief of School Police
Date: November 29, 2016
Re: School Based Officer Updated Responsibilities

SCHOOL BASED POLICE OFFICERS AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCHOOL POLICE AND SCHOOLS IS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN INCREASING SCHOOL SAFETY. THE CONCEPT OF HAVING A SCHOOL POLICE OFFICER IN OUR SCHOOLS STEMS FROM THE PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY POLICING. COMMUNITY POLICING UTILIZES THE ASSISTANCE OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS FOR IDENTIFYING AND PRIORITIZING PROBLEMS AND DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS. THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY MAY INVOLVE THE CEO, CHIEFS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS, PRINCIPALS, ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF, CUSTODIANS, NURSES SOCIAL WORKERS, CUSTODIANS, CAFETERIA WORKERS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS. AS A SCHOOL POLICE OFFICER MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY PARTNER WITH US TO CREATE A WELCOMING SETTING THAT IS SAFE AND SECURE, WITH A FOCUS ON PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION THROUGH QUALITY RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND RAPPORT.

Attachment #1_SB_819_2A_Maryland
<https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/school-police>

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL POLICE VARY FROM SCHOOL TO SCHOOL. A DIVERSE RANGE OF DUTIES CAN BE INCORPORATED INTO THE SCHOOL POLICE OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION. SOME FUNCTIONS SERVED BY THE SCHOOL POLICE OFFICER INCLUDE: LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, PUBLIC SAFETY SPECIALIST, COMMUNITY LIAISON, PROBLEM SOLVER, LAW-RELATED EDUCATOR, AND POSITIVE ROLE MODEL.

- 1. LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER-** ALTHOUGH A LESS PERFORMED ROLE, THE SCHOOL POLICE OFFICER IS STILL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER WITH THE AUTHORITY TO HANDLE CRIMES AND MAKE ARRESTS AND DIVERSIONS WHEN NECESSARY. IT IS IMPORTANT TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN ROUTINE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR. SCHOOL POLICE OFFICERS SHOULD NOT BE INVOLVED IN ROUTINE DISCIPLINE, BUT SHOULD TAKE THE LEAD ON SERIOUS CRIMINAL VIOLATIONS. (PART I OFFENSES SUCH AS HOMICIDE, ROBBERY, RAPE, AGGRAVATED ASSAULT, THEFT, STOLEN AUTOS AND PART II CRIMES IN PROGRESS SUCH AS COMMON ASSAULT, TRESPASSING AND DISORDERLY CONDUCT.
- 2. DUTIES-** ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL POLICE OFFICERS SHOULD HAVE A CONVERSATION AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH YEAR OR ASSIGNMENT ABOUT THE TYPES OF BEHAVIORS THAT WILL BE HANDLED BY ADMINISTRATORS. (NORMAL DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS) AND THOSE INVOLVING CRIMINAL BEHAVIORS. WORKING TOGETHER, THE ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL POLICE SHOULD COMMUNICATE CONTINUOUSLY. IF A SITUATION OCCURS, AND BOTH THE PRINCIPAL AND

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SCHOOL POLICE ARE ON THE SCENE, THE PRINCIPAL CAN INDICATE THAT HE/SHE WILL HANDLE THE SITUATION OR REQUEST POLICE ASSISTANCE. IF THE SCHOOL POLICE DETERMINES THAT A SITUATION REQUIRES “POLICE” INTERVENTION, ADMINISTRATORS ARE NOT TO INTERFERE. TO DO SO, IS AGAINST THE LAW. IF AN ADMINISTRATOR IS IN DISAGREEMENT WITH THE OFFICER’S DECISION, A POST-CONFERENCE IS IN ORDER. AN ADMINISTRATOR CAN ALSO CONTACT A PERMANENT RANK SUPERVISOR AND HAVE THEM TO RESPOND TO THE SCHOOL. MEET WITH THE PRINCIPAL DAILY TO DISCUSS POTENTIAL SAFETY CONCERNS AND MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS. CONDUCT INTAKE OF STUDENTS BEING VISIBLE AT ALL TIMES. PATROLLING THE BUILDING AND GROUNDS AT ALL TIMES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY. CHECKING IN WITH ADMINISTRATORS THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL DAY AND CHECKING FOR SAFETY HAZARDS. BUILDING RAPPORT WITH THE STUDENT POPULATION, PARENTS AND THE ENTIRE SCHOOL COMMUNITY THROUGH QUALITY CONNECTED RELATIONSHIPS. SCHOOL POLICE OFFICERS SHOULD NOT FREQUENT THEIR OFFICES UNLESS THEY ARE CONDUCTING OFFICIAL BUSINESS SUCH AS WRITING A POLICE REPORT OR CONDUCTING AN OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION.

3. **POSITIVE ROLE MODEL-** ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL ROLE HELD BY A SCHOOL POLICE OFFICER IS THAT OF BEING A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL TO STUDENTS. STUDENTS OFTEN SEEK APPROVAL, DIRECTION AND GUIDANCE INFORMAL INTERACTIONS WITH SCHOOL POLICE OFFICER THAT THEY CAN TRUST. SOME WAYS FOR THE SCHOOL POLICE OFFICER TO BE A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL INCLUDE: SETTING LIMITS BY BEING

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CLEAR ABOUT WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE; SETTING AN EXAMPLE; BEING HONEST: BEING CONSISTENT WITH STUDENTS, STAFF AND PARENTS; ENCOURAGING APPEARANCE; BEING VISIBLE AND ACCESSIBLE; TAKE CONCERNS SERIOUSLY AND FOLLOW THROUGH WITH COMMITMENTS TO TAKE ACTION; PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL SUPPORT FUNCTIONS; MAINTAINING A RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS' PARENTS; AND MAINTAINING A RELATIONSHIP WITH FACULTY AND THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION.

- 4. LAW-RELATED EDUCATOR-** LAW-RELATED EDUCATION IS DESIGNED TO TEACH STUDENTS FUNDAMENTALS AND SKILLS TO BECOME RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS IN A DEMOCRACY. LAW-RELATED EDUCATION TEACHES SOCIAL COMPETENCE, PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS, A SENSE OF AUTONOMY, AND REINFORCES HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUTH AND POSITIVE PEER NORMS. THIS SHOULD BE A FUN AND INTERESTING CLASS AND CAMPS WITH FIELD TRIPS, COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS, VISITS FROM JUVENILE JUSTICE REPRESENTATIVES, CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION, AND MOCK TRIALS OR PUBLIC PERFORMANCES. SCHOOL POLICE OFFICERS HAVE RECEIVED TRAINING FROM N.A.S.R.O. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS, D.A.R.E. DRUG ABUSES RESISTANCE EDUCATION, G.R.E.A.T. GANG RESISTANCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND TEEN DATING MATTERS (TEEN DATING VIOLENCE CLASS).

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

UPDATED SCHOOL POLICE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES MEMO

**I HAVE READ AND FULLY UNDERSTAND MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A SCHOOL
POLICE OFFICER:**

MEMBER: (PRINT NAME/SEQ) _____

MEMBER (SIGNATURE/DATE) _____

SUPERVISOR (PRINT NAME) _____

SUPERVISOR (SIGNATURE/DATE) _____

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