

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES  
FOR SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS  
SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT**

WHEREAS, M.G.L.c.71 §37P(b) requires the Commissioner of the Springfield Police Department (SPD), in consultation with the Superintendent of the Springfield Public Schools (SPS), to develop Standard Operating Procedures for School Resource Officers (SRO) assigned to the SPD Student Support Unit (SSU), to provide guidance to SROs about daily operations, policies and procedures; and

WHEREAS, Article X of the "School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding Between Springfield School Committee and the Springfield Public Schools and Springfield Police Department ("MOU") requires the City of Springfield Police Commissioner, in consultation with the Superintendent of Springfield Public Schools, to establish Standard Operating Procedures ("SOP") consistent with the MOU;

NOW THEREFORE, these SOPs are intended to provide the guidance and information required by law, for the support of SPS students, parents/guardians, staff, and the SRO.

1. SRO Uniforms: The SRO Officers shall wear SPD uniforms and badges as a means of identification as a Springfield police officer.
2. SRO Officers assigned to a school shall remain on the school campus for the entire school day. When an SRO Officer arrives at his/her assignment, he/she shall inform the principal or another administrator of arrival. Should a situation arise that would cause an SRO Officer to leave the school, the supervising SRO sergeant and the school principal (or his/her designee) will be notified. The only exception to leaving a school without making notification to an administrator would be for an "*officer needs assistance emergency*" situation or at the order of any Officer of Rank or Superior Officer.
3. Role of the SRO and How the SRO Officers and SPS Administrators Work Together:
  - a) Under G.L. c. 71, §37P, SRO Officers shall not serve as school disciplinarians, as enforcers of SPS or school Codes of Conduct or regulations, or in place of school-based mental health providers, and the SRO Officers shall not use police powers to address traditional school discipline issues, including non-violent disruptive behavior. Under the MOA, SPS administrators shall not request that SSU members perform or assist in student discipline.
  - b) The school principal or his or her designee, and the SRO Officer shall use reasoned professional judgment and discretion to determine whether SRO involvement is appropriate for addressing student misbehavior. In such instances, the guiding principle is whether misbehavior rises to the level of criminal conduct that poses direct and imminent harm to students, staff, or members of the community. SRO Officers may, at the request of SPS principals, assist SPS administrators when such assistance is required in situations involving a direct and imminent threat to a

student, staff, administrator, or public safety. For student misbehavior that requires immediate intervention to maintain safety, whether or not the misbehavior involves criminal conduct, the SRO Officer, when requested by school principal, may act to de-escalate the immediate situation and to protect the physical safety of students, staff, and members of the community.

- c) The school principal, or designee, shall integrate the assigned SRO Officer into the school community through requested participation in faculty and student meetings, school events during school hours, and assemblies.
4. **Enforcement Action and Arrests:** In accordance with state law and the MOA, SRO Officers shall not take enforcement action against students for Disturbing a School Assembly (G.L. c. 272, §40) or for Disorderly Conduct or Disturbing the Peace (G.L. c. 272, §53) within school buildings, on school grounds, or in the course of school-related events. See Sections 72 and 159 of Chapter 69 of the Acts of 2018. The SRO shall consult with the principal or principal's designee prior to an arrest whenever practicable, and the student's parent or guardian shall be notified as soon as practicable after an arrest.
5. **Searches:**
    - a) An SRO Officer may conduct or participate in a search of a student's person, possessions, or locker where there is probable cause to do so in accordance with federal and state law. The SRO Officer shall, as soon as practicable, inform the school principal or designee prior to conducting a probable cause search. The SRO Officer shall not ask school employees to participate in a search of a student's person, possessions, or locker, absent probable cause and exigent circumstances.
    - b) A SPS building-level administrator may conduct a search of a student's person, possessions, or locker where a) there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the student has violated or is violating state or federal law or violated SPS or the school Code of Conduct, and b) the search is justified in scope given such suspicion or is otherwise allowed by law. The SPS building-level administrator shall not ask an SRO Officer to assist in a search for suspected violation of SPS or the school Code of Conduct. Legal questions regarding the parameters for SPS administrators conducting searches should be directed to SPS.
    - c) Strip searches of students *by school officials* are strictly prohibited under any circumstances. An SRO Officer may conduct a limited strip search of a student on school property in accordance with state and federal law, provided that the SRO Officer be of the same student identified gender and conducted in the least intrusive manner possible to protect students and staff.
6. **Questioning of Students:** In a situation which does not involve a direct and imminent threat to a student, staff, administrator or public safety, the SRO Officer shall inform the building administrator or designee who shall then inform the

student's parent, guardian or interested adult, prior to questioning the student. An SRO Officer may question or participate in the questioning of a student about conduct that could expose the student to criminal or delinquency proceedings or arrest only after informing the student of his or her Miranda rights, and only in the presence of the student's parent or guardian or interested adult, according to law, except parental notice and/or presence may not be required in situations involving a direct and imminent threat to a student, staff, administrator or public safety. The SRO Officer shall not ask a school official to question a student in an effort to circumvent federal or state law.

7. Chain of Command: Each SRO Officer assigned to a school building is an employee of the SPD, and reports to, and takes commands from, his or her commanding officer/s, typically one or more Sergeants assigned to the SRO. The SRO Sergeant/s report to and takes commands from SPD supervisors, including Lieutenants, Captains, Deputy Chiefs and the Police Commissioner. Any SPD supervisor may also issue commands to an SRO Officer when the need arises.
8. Performance Evaluation Standards:
  - a) Annual Review: The Police Commissioner and the Superintendent of SPS shall annually, at the end of the school year, review the performance of the SRO Program and the success and effectiveness of the SRO in meeting goals and objectives, compliance with the MOU, and the use of arrest, citation, and police force in school.
  - b) Semi-Annual Review Meetings: On or before July 1<sup>st</sup> of each fiscal year during the Term of the MOU and on or before January 1<sup>st</sup> of each fiscal year during the Term of the MOU, the SPS Director of Safety and Security and one of the SRO sergeants shall meet to review staffing and the daily rosters of attendance and assignment of SRO personnel working under this Agreement for the previous six-month period.
  - c) Weekly Reports: One of the SRO sergeants or his/her designee will submit weekly to the SPS Director of Safety and Security copies of all SRO Officers' arrest reports and incident reports, which shall include: the name of the person arrested; name of the school; charges brought; type of weapons confiscated; staff assaults; number and type of tickets issued; filing of delinquency petitions; and other referrals to the juvenile and criminal court system.
  - d) Data Collection: In accordance with state law, the SRO Officers and school administrators shall work together to ensure the proper collections and reporting of data on school-based arrests, citations, and court referrals of students, consistent with regulations promulgated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
9. Protocols for Referrals and Diversion Programs: School administrators and guidance counselors may consult with the school SRO Officer(s) to identify at risk students for purposes of referral by school counselors to school and community-based programs, including diversions programs.

10. Information Sharing: SPD acknowledges and agrees that, in the course of providing services under the MOU, SRO Officers may be provided with or gain access to information, in oral, written or other form, that is of a confidential and non-public nature, including but not limited to, student records. Except as required by law, SRO Officers will not disclose confidential information gained during their employ as an SRO Officer to any third parties without the approval of SPS. The SRO Officers shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties as "authorized school personnel" as defined pursuant to the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, 603 Code of Mass. Regs. § 23.02 and as a "Law Enforcement Unit" under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") (20, U.S.C. § 1232g).
11. Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 371P(g), neither the City, the SPS nor the SPD shall be liable for injury, loss of property, personal injury or death caused by an act or omission of a public employee while acting in the scope of the public employee's employment and arising out of the implementation of section 37P, and section 37P shall not be construed as creating or imposing a specific duty of care.

Approved:



Daniel J. Warwick  
Superintendent of Springfield Public Schools

Date: 8/16/23



Cheryl C. Clapprood  
Superintendent of Springfield Police Department

Date: 8/25/23