

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER/LAW ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to provide guidelines for the conduct of SROs and other law enforcement authorities in the schools. These are guidelines only and may be adjusted within reasonable and lawful limits on a case-by case basis.

A. General Expectations Concerning the Roles of School Personnel and SROs

1. SROs shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws, Board of School Directors policies and procedures, school rules, and Newport Police Department rules in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.
2. In general, school administrators and staff are responsible for enforcing Board policies and school rules and for maintaining order in the schools. SROs who observe violations of policies and/or rules may intervene with students to stop the behavior and shall report violations to appropriate administrators.
3. School administrators and staff may consult with and request assistance from SROs in addressing student violations of policies and rules as they deem appropriate.
4. School administrators and staff will notify the SRO if they have reason to believe that a student has committed a crime or if they obtain evidence of illegal activity (such as weapons, drugs or alcohol).
5. School administrators may request the assistance of SROs in enforcing Board policies, school rules and federal/state laws with visitors and intruders on school property.
6. Unless there is a health or safety emergency, SROs shall consult with an appropriate school administrator prior to requesting additional law enforcement assistance on school grounds.
7. SROs are expected to maintain the same standards of professional conduct in their dealings with staff, students, parents and community members as other school staff.

B. Investigations, Questioning and Searches of Students for School-Related Purposes

Some types of student conduct that are forbidden by school rules, such as assaults, bomb threats, weapons possession, and drug offenses, are also punishable by criminal law. When a particular act is both a violation of school rules and a crime, the school disciplinary investigation by school administrators and the criminal investigation by the police and district attorney will often operate simultaneously. When practical, school administrators and the police should coordinate their investigations.

Whenever practical, investigations, questioning, and searches of students for school related conduct that may violate both school rules and the law, will be conducted jointly by a school administrator and the SRO.

1. The SRO shall notify a student of their rights and shall contact parents to the extent required by laws and/or procedures applicable to the conduct of questioning and searches by law enforcement officers.
2. Evidence of violation of state/federal laws will be turned over to the SRO, unless such disclosures are otherwise prohibited by FERPA or any other applicable law.
3. Since police investigative reports and police-obtained witness statements may not always be available to school administrators, the school administrator shall prepare and maintain their own records and reports concerning school-related investigations.

C. Investigations, Questioning and Searches of Students for Non-School Related Purposes

1. In general, SROs and other law enforcement authorities are discouraged from using the schools as a venue for questioning and searching students for alleged violations of state or federal laws that are not related to the schools,
2. Exceptions will be made in the event of an emergency endangering student or staff safety or in exigent circumstances as authorized by law. Other exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis after consultation between the Superintendent/designee and law enforcement authorities.

3. The SRO (or other law enforcement official if applicable) is responsible for ensuring that the student is informed of his/her rights prior to questioning or a search.

D. Arrests of Students at School

1. In general, SROs and other law enforcement authorities are discouraged from arresting students at school for non-school-related activities.
2. Exceptions to the above will be made in the event of an emergency endangering student and/or staff safety or in exigent circumstances as authorized by law.
3. The SRO (or other law enforcement official if applicable) is responsible for complying with applicable state and federal laws concerning parental notice and notification of rights prior to questioning.
4. A student may be removed from school by an SRO or other law enforcement official when there is a court order, an arrest warrant or when a warrantless arrest is authorized by law. The school administrator shall attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible of the student's removal from school.

E. Confidentiality of Student Information and Records

1. School administrators shall release personally identifiable student information contained in education records to SROs and other law enforcement authorities in accordance with the requirements of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other applicable laws.
2. SROs are considered to be school officials with legitimate educational interest in reviewing educational records in order to perform their professional responsibilities.
3. SROs are expected to maintain confidentiality of personally identifiable student information in accordance with applicable laws, Board policies, and school rules.