



Martin Police Department

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Don W. Teal, *Chief*

**MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING
Between
WEAKLEY COUNTY
SCHOOLS
And
CITY OF MARTIN POLICE
DEPARTMENT**

Rationale: A prosperous future for citizens of the city of Martin, TN, depends, in large part, upon the school system's ability to properly educate its children. Effective schooling requires a safe and orderly environment in which learning may occur. Consequently, the city of Martin Police Department, in collaboration with Weakley County Schools, conducts the School Resource Officer (SRO) Program in order to provide school administrators and staff with law enforcement resources and expertise they need to maintain safety, order and discipline in the school environment. The SRO Program is intended to ensure that no student's right to receive an education is impeded by violence or disruption.

The success and integrity of this program relies on effective communication between the SRO, the principal and other key members of each organization. Daily interaction between the school's administration and the SRO is extremely important. With this in mind, it is imperative to establish, maintain and update specific guidelines and procedures for both the SRO and the school administration to follow. This Memorandum of Understanding will clarify the role of School Resource Officer and school administrators, their scope of authority and the responsibilities of both the city of Martin Police Department and Weakley County Schools in this collaboration.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Resource Officer (SRO)

- A. The School Resource Officer (SRO) is a sworn city of Martin Police Department officer assigned to provide the law enforcement expertise and resources which will assist school staff in maintaining safety and order within the SRO's assigned school(s). The SRO will be considered an active member of the administrative team in his/her assigned school(s).
- B. The SRO's assigned school buildings, grounds and surroundings will be the equivalent of the SRO's patrol area and he/she assumes primary responsibility for handling all calls for service and coordinating the response of other police resources to the school grounds. All criminal activity that comes to the attention of the principal or school staff will be reported immediately to the police department. In an emergency situation, the school will call 911 and also notify the SRO. In a non-emergency situation, the school will notify the SRO or call the non-emergency police department number if the SRO is not available. Information that is not of an emergency nature may be held for action by the SRO upon his/her return to duty.

- C. The SRO's duty schedule will be determined by the SRO's administrative commander, but will principally be arranged to provide coverage throughout the academic day including peak arrival and departure times before and after school. Whenever possible, the SRO will be visible patrolling the exterior and interior grounds, particularly during the opening or closing of school or lunch periods.
- D. The SRO provides a visible deterrent to crime and is a positive representative of the police department to students and staff. As such the SRO will wear the regulation police uniform and operate a marked police cruiser while on duty unless otherwise authorized by the supervisor for a specific purpose.
- E. The relationship between the school principal and the SRO is critical to the success of the program. In light of this fact, the principal and the SRO will meet weekly, more frequently if indicated, for the express purpose of exchanging information about current crime trends, problem areas or other areas of concern which may have the potential for disruption within the school or community.
- F. The SRO will assist with truancy in cases which indicate the potential for hostility toward a school official or the school, or in instances which may be out of the ordinary, or when there is a concern for the safety and welfare of the student. Truancy program administration will remain the responsibility of school administration, with representation at court hearings made by the WCS Supervisor of Attendance, or other system/school official as indicated.
- G. The SRO will assist the school liaison with the planning and execution of training for school administration on law related issues. Information regarding crime trends and changes in laws relevant to schools will be disseminated to the school liaison weekly, at the least, quarterly to aid in monitoring, evaluating and providing a safe educational environment.
- H. The SRO may provide instruction which will enhance the students' understanding of the police mission and citizenship responsibilities. However, responding to incidents or conducting investigation will always take precedence over instructing in the classroom. New lesson plans for all formal, organized presentations will be reviewed by the administrative commander and school administrator prior to presentation.
- I. SROs will be responsible for monitoring the social and cultural environment to identify emerging youth gangs. All information concerning gangs will be provided to the school administrator, the school liaison and administrative commander. Gang prevention and early intervention measures will be coordinated through these respective offices.
- J. When serving the best interest of the police department and/or the school, the SRO will make public presentations to civic, business or clerical groups. Additionally, SROs may obtain membership in school/community based organizations such as PTOs, school advisory councils or prevention coalitions.
- K. Participation in other activities such as panel discussions, mentoring programs or task forces must be approved, in advance, by the administrative commander. The SRO will keep the commander informed of the status of any and all such activities.
- L. Programs conducted in schools by other divisions of the police department will be coordinated with the SRO to avoid redundant services and to ensure equitable distribution of the same.
- M. Other duties of the SRO include:
- Proper disposal of illegal substances recovered by the school which are not needed for criminal prosecution
 - Maintaining familiarity with the Weakley County Schools Student Hand book which outlines student conduct rights and responsibilities
 - Attending and providing testimony at disciplinary hearings upon request

SUPERVISION

The administrative commander will ensure that planning, budgeting, scheduling and leadership are provided to the program. The administrative commander will be responsible for initial and recurring SRO training.

The administrative commander will coordinate services between patrol command, the school liaison, school administrators and SROs.

The administrative commander will actively participate in the selection process for new SROs.

The administrative commander will supervise the development and release of information to the media regarding the SRO program

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The principal will ensure effective communications exist between the SRO and school staff. The principal will meet on a weekly basis with the assigned SRO to exchange information about current crime trends, problem areas or other areas of concern which may have the potential for disruption within the school or community. This meeting will not be delegated to other administrative staff on a regular basis.

The SRO's assigned school buildings, grounds and surroundings will be the equivalent of the SRO's patrol area and he/she assumes primary responsibility for handling all calls for service and coordinating the response of other police resources to the school grounds. All criminal activity that comes to the attention of the principal or school staff shall be reported immediately to the police department. In an emergency situation, the school shall call 911 and also notify the SRO. In a non-emergency situation, the school will notify the SRO or call the non-emergency police department number if the SRO is not available. Information that is not of an emergency nature may be held for action by the SRO upon his/her return to duty.

Criminal enforcement action taken by the SRO which results in the charging of a student with a crime will be supported by the principal and/or school employees by their appearance in court when necessary to provide testimony essential to the case.

The school will provide a work area for the SRO equipped with a telephone. The SRO will be provided access to storage which may be locked for securing contraband recovered by school staff. The SRO will be responsible for arranging the destruction of any illegal substances which will not be used for prosecution.

The principal will meet at least once per semester with the SRO, the administrative commander and the school liaison to ensure any areas of need are addressed. At least twice annually the SRO Oversight Committee will convene, hear program reports from active SROs and review program performance.

Upon request, the principal will provide information to the administrative commander to assist with the SRO's annual performance evaluation.

THE SCHOOL LIAISON

The school liaison will ensure that open lines of communication exist between the schools and the police department. The SRO will submit weekly activity reports to both the administrative commander and the school liaison; the school liaison will meet at least once per semester with each of the SROs, the administrative commander and the school principals to ensure any areas of need are addressed. At least twice annually the SRO Oversight Committee will convene, hear program reports from active SROs and review program performance.

The school liaison will also serve as a training resource for active SROs, provide school system orientation opportunities for incoming officers, coordinate meetings for the SRO Oversight Committee, assist with problem solving for the program and assist the administrative commander in the release of information regarding the SRO program.

The school liaison will provide staff development opportunities, when available, to the SROs in topical areas which will increase the effectiveness of the officers and their ability to carry out their assigned duties.

SELECTION, ASSIGNMENT OF THE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

The most critical aspect of the SRO program is the officer selection process. The "SRO Oversight Committee" has been established for this purpose. Membership will be composed of the following:

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| Director of Schools (or Assistant Director) | Chief of Police |
| School Board Chairman | Administrative Commander |
| Supervisors of Instruction for grades K-5 and 6-12 | Two parent representatives |
| School Liaison | Active member, City of Martin Board of Aldermen |
| Representative, school board jurisdiction within the city of Martin | |
| Representative, school board jurisdiction other than city of Martin | |
| The principal, assistant principal and school counselor from each campus served | |

This committee will convene twice annually as notified by the school liaison unless an active search is required. SROs will provide a brief overview of activities, actions or instruction provided on the assigned campus or within the community and administrative issues, if indicated, will be reviewed.

If an active search is required the City of Martin Police Department will determine application deadlines, post the position vacancy and secure advertising in appropriate media outlets. Candidates meeting standard departmental criteria and the application deadline will be assigned a date/time/location to complete a psychological evaluation. Candidates successfully completing the psychological evaluation process will then participate in a series of interviews with police department administrators. Those candidates completing the interview process successfully will then be referred to the SRO Oversight Committee and a group interview location, date and time will be scheduled.

Prior to the group interview session(s) the SRO Oversight Committee will meet to review accuracy of the current job description, review interview questions and interview format, address indicated administrative items and schedule interview dates, times and location.

While committee member opinions will be sought, the administrative commander and the principal of the school to be served will make the final determination as to which candidate will be offered the vacancy.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The City of Martin Police Department has in place a policy which regulates the use of electronic control devices. This policy addresses training in the proper use of such devices as well as investigation, documentation and review of such use, and requires final approval of any report documenting such use by the chief executive officer.

POLICE INVESTIGATION AND QUESTIONING

The SRO has the authority to stop, question, interview, and take police action without the prior authorization of the principal or contacting parents. With certain exceptions, the investigation and questioning of students during school hours or at school events should be limited to situations where the investigation is related to the school. Investigations and questioning of students for offenses not related to the operation of or occurring at the school would occur in such situations where, for example, delay might result in danger to any person, flight from the jurisdiction by the person suspected of a crime or destruction of evidence.

As soon as practical the principal will be notified of any significant enforcement events. SROs will coordinate activities so that action between agencies is cooperative and in the best interests of the school and public safety.

The SRO will provide information to the appropriate investigative section of any crime(s) or leads that come to the attention of the SRO. The SRO will be kept advised of all investigations that involve students from his/her assigned school.

ARREST PROCEDURES

School Resource Officers are expected to be familiar with school rules and their application with the school. *Routinely, rule infractions will not be handled as violations of law and are to be handled by the school administrator.* Questions related to the enforcement of rules versus laws within the school will be discussed with the school administrator. This applies specifically to the system's general code of conduct.

The following procedures will be followed when and if it becomes necessary to arrest a student or staff member:

1. If known, the principal will be informed immediately of the impending arrest of a student or staff member.
2. Every practical effort will be made to coordinate, through the principal's office, the arrest of an individual or serve a warrant or petition, and to effect the action after school hours.
3. Persons whose presence on school grounds has been restricted or forbidden, or whose presence is in violation of law will be arrested for trespassing.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

School officials may conduct searches of students' property and person under their jurisdiction when reasonable suspicion exists that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The standard for the search is reasonable suspicion.

The SRO will not become involved in administrative (school related) searches unless specifically requested by the school to provide security, protection, or for handling of contraband. These searches must be at the direction and control of the school official. At no time will the SRO request that an administrative search be conducted for law enforcement purposes or request a school official act as his/her agent.

Any search by an officer will be based upon probable cause and, when required, a search warrant will be obtained. Stop and frisk option will remain an option when there is reasonable suspicion that a criminal act has been committed or may be committed, or that an individual may be armed.

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

Upon a request issued by the school principal, the SRO will attend disciplinary hearings conducted by school administrators. The officer will be prepared to provide testimony on any actions taken by the officer and/or any conduct observed personally by the officer. Physical evidence, if any, will be made available to the SRO. Transportation and safeguarding of evidence will be the responsibility of the SRO unless other arrangements have been made.

The SRO will not provide any official department document or juvenile record to the school or attendance supervisor. Documents of this nature are by law released when schools subpoena such information through an appropriate court.

If official records, reports or documents are subpoenaed for a school disciplinary hearing the Martin Police Department will coordinate the release of such information through the administrative commander, the city attorney and the SRO.

RELEASE OF STUDENT INFORMATION

Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) 49-6-3051 and The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA] grants access to any records concerning any pupil enrolled in a school to law enforcement officers seeking such information in the course of their official duties. The school will determine whether or not "legitimate educational interests" exist. It is understood the SRO will protect the privacy of education records.

RELEASE OF POLICE INFORMATION

Consistent with the basic tenants of the relationship between the school principal and the SRO described in this Memorandum of Understanding, open communication is essential to effectiveness. SROs will exchange information with the principal regarding students' involvement in criminal activity in and around the school. This information will be limited to that which directly relates to and contributes to the safety of the school environment. SROs will not make copies or provide access to official documents, police reports or records available to the school or staff. In accordance with TCA (cited), the Juvenile Court is to notify the director of schools of any petitions against students for selected offenses. The supervisor of attendance, in turn, notifies the appropriate school principal.

CONCLUSION

This policy represents mutually agreed goals and objectives for the School Resource Officer Program as determined by the City of Martin Police Department and Weakley County Schools.

This endeavor is a partnership between education and law enforcement to support a collaborative, problem solving approach to the epidemic growth of violence in schools. Regular communication between the administrative commander and the school liaison will be conducted to support this partnership.

This Memorandum of Understanding will remain in effect until such time as either party withdraws from the agreement by delivering a written notice of such recession to the other party. This agreement will be reviewed annually and amended as necessary to meet the needs of the signatory agencies.

This Memorandum of Understanding will not be construed to create or substantiate any right or claim on the part of any person or entity which is not party hereto.

Signed:

Don Tread
Chief of Police

8/9/16
Date

Randy Fray
Director of Schools

8-9-16
Date

[Signature]
Principal, Westview High School

8/9/16
Date

Nancy Bell
Principal, Martin Primary School

8/8/16
Date

Nathaniel Holmes
Principal, Martin Middle School

8-9-2016
Date

[Signature]
Principal, Martin Elementary School

8/9/16
Date