

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****June 21, 2022**

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**SUBJECT: OVERVIEW AND ROLES OF FORT WORTH POLICE DEPARTMENT  
SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS**

The purpose of this Informal Report is to provide information on the roles and responsibilities of Fort Worth Police Department School Resource Officers (SROs).

The safety and security of our citizens, especially our children, are paramount. Therefore, the City of Fort Worth has entered into agreements with various independent school districts that have schools located in the City of Fort Worth to provide school resource officers. The stated purpose of agreements between the City and the school districts is to “provide security services for the purpose of creating a safe educational environment, in partnership with the District.” The City of Fort Worth currently contracts with six of the thirteen independent school districts that have schools in the City of Fort Worth to provide school resource officers. The FWPd School Resource Unit consists of one lieutenant, five sergeants, one detective, and sixty-eight officers. The FWPd School Resource Unit’s main office is located at 1000 Calvert Street, where the lieutenant, the sergeants, and the detective office. Each school resource officer, however, offices at his or her assigned school.

School assignments are made at the discretion of the Youth Services Section commander. Officers are directed to provide a police presence at their assigned schools, respond to calls for service, present educational programs, and any other duties or assignments given by their supervisors. General duties may include the following:

- Enforce criminal laws by making arrests and issuing citations to violators. In 2013, Senator Royce West D-Dallas authored Senate Bill 393, which forbade police officers from issuing class C citations for misbehavior at schools, excluding traffic violations. This legislative change made minor infractions such as minors in possession of tobacco, disruption of classes, graffiti, mutual combat fighting, and disorderly conduct that occur on campuses to be handled administratively by school staff rather than criminally by police. Arrests may still be made for class B misdemeanors or above, but some may be filed out of custody.
- Investigate and file criminal cases that occur on SRO staffed school campuses or as directed by the Youth Services Section commander. The School Resource Unit (SRU) investigates and files all criminal cases that occur on contracted school campuses during regular school hours. The SRU will also investigate and file offenses that occur on school buses to or from schools. Cases on campuses involving adult actors are investigated by SROs but are not filed by the unit detective. The cases are filed by the appropriate investigating unit. Also, cases where students are at a bus stop, at an after-hours sporting event, or at school after hours will not be worked by the SRU.
- When possible, ensure proper traffic flow in and around the school campus.
- Serve as a liaison between the schools, the department, and the community.
- Serve as a liaison for the Crime Stoppers program in schools.
- Fully participate in any drills (lockdown, tornado, etc.) conducted by their schools.
- Serve as mentors to students by being a positive role model in the lives of the students.
- Work with other officers, such as NPOs, to reduce crime and criminal opportunities at or near the officer’s school.

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- On a regular basis and when needed, present educational programs to staff and/or students as well as at school-related community events. Civilian Response to Active Shooter Event (CRASE) is a popular one.

According to the law set by the 86<sup>th</sup> Legislature's SB 11 and HB 2195, all school officers must successfully complete the School Based Law Enforcement Training program (SBLE) within 180 days of being assigned and submit the certificate to the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE). As well, newly appointed FWPB SROs will be field-trained for a minimum of ninety (90) days. The training will be documented and then reviewed by a SRU supervisor weekly, monthly, and at the end of the training phase to determine whether the SRO is progressing at an acceptable rate.

In addition to the mandated forty-hours of training that every Texas peace officer takes every two years, every SRO is mission-trained during summer recess. Part of this training is provided at the yearly Texas Association of School Safety Officers Safety Conference. At this conference, both basic and ongoing SRO training is provided. In addition, the FWPB SRU officers also submit to active shooter training on a yearly basis (Advanced Shooter Response for School-Based Law Enforcement – ALERRT), and in many cases, offer training to other FWPB officers. Furthermore, some may attend training based on various areas of concern like social media investigations, sexting, campus safety, adolescent mental health, and the like.

School threats are made often, sometimes up to six per week. They come from various sources: parents, students, staff members, social media, the FWPB Intel Unit, or a call from the FWPB Communications Division. The SRU has several officers who are skilled in researching social media threats. When the Internet Protocol (IP) address is identified, the SRO will use that information to do further investigation. An internet or cell phone search warrant may have to be obtained. When a subject and an address is identified, the SRO and his or her supervisor will often do a home visit to speak with the subject and his or her parent and request a consent to search to ascertain whether the subject has the capacity to carry out the threat. Devices utilized in the crime will be confiscated as necessary. Based on the circumstances, an arrest and/or suspension may follow. If the threat to the school persists, notifications will be made, and extra officers will be assigned to the school.

If you have any questions about this information, please contact Assistant Chief Joseph Sparrow at 817-392-4231 or [Joseph.Sparrow@fortworthtexas.gov](mailto:Joseph.Sparrow@fortworthtexas.gov).

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