

# SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

Code **KLGA** Issued **9/19**

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In order to provide a safe learning environment for all students, the board supports the use of school resource officers to expand school safety efforts and to conduct community policing services in and around the schools.

## **Definition**

A school resource officer is a sworn law enforcement officer who has completed the state-approved basic course of instruction and is assigned to the district to act as a law enforcement officer.

## **Jurisdiction**

School administrators and staff will have the primary responsibility for maintaining proper order in schools and for disciplining students for violations of board policies and school rules. A school resource officer is not a school disciplinarian and will not be requested or permitted to intervene in school discipline matters unless authorized by the district code of conduct. The administrator or other school officials may refer any misconduct to the school resource officer or other local law enforcement authorities when the conduct rises to a level of criminality or the conduct presents an immediate safety risk to one or more people.

Upon observation or notification and verification of a criminal offense by district or building-level administration, the administrator will immediately contact the school resource officer, or local law enforcement authorities if the school resource officer is unavailable or circumstances warrant otherwise. When a referral to law enforcement is required, the school resource officer will be the first line of contact for local law enforcement to ensure that the matter is resolved promptly to decrease significant interruption to the learning process.

The school resource officer is granted statewide jurisdiction to arrest any persons committing crimes in connection with a school activity or school-sponsored event, and he/she will be called immediately to handle a disturbance or emergency regarding a person who is not a student who willfully interferes with, disrupts, or disturbs the learning environment or school activity.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

As law enforcement, a school resource officer's roles and responsibilities in the school setting will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Enforce local, state, and federal laws.
- Serve as a resource to administrators and staff concerning law enforcement and child welfare issues.
- Serve as a liaison between the schools and the Latta Police or Sheriff's Department in addressing issues of concern to both entities.
- Develop educational programs and activities on topics such as crime prevention that will increase a student's knowledge of and respect for the law and the function of law enforcement agency programs.

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- Assist in emergency crisis planning; building security matters including, but not limited to, conducting security inspections to deter criminal or delinquent activities; and training school staff on handling crisis situations.
- Provide consultation and support to improve school/law enforcement collaboration.

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

The roles and responsibilities listed above are in addition to any outlined in the requisite memorandum of understanding (MOU) executed between the district and the employing local law enforcement agency. Prior to the placement of a school resource officer in a district, a MOU must be executed defining the role of the district, individual schools, local law enforcement agencies, school administration, and the school resource officer. At the beginning of each school year, district administration will review the terms of the MOU with, and provide a written copy to, both the building-level administration and the school resource officer.

Adopted 9/12/17; Revised 9/10/19

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#### Legal References:

- A. S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, as amended:
  1. Section 5-7-12 - School resource officer definition and jurisdiction.
  2. Section 16-17-420 - School disturbances by nonstudents; penalties.
  3. Section 59-24-60 - Requires administrators to contact law enforcement.
- B. S.C. State Board of Education Regulations:
  1. R43-210 - School resource officers.
  2. R43-243 - Special education discipline guidelines.
  3. R43-279 - Minimum standards of student conduct and disciplinary enforcement procedures to be implemented by local school districts.