



La Crosse Police Department

Shawn P. Kudron, Chief of Police

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La Crosse School District Superintendent and School Board Members:

The La Crosse Police Department has recognized the scrutiny and concern regarding the school resource officer program. School resource officers are uniquely positioned to provide safety and build relationships with students, families, and district staff. Due to the ever-changing dynamics of policing and community relationship building, the La Crosse Police Department stands poised to make positive changes and adjustments to the SRO program.

In the fall of 2019, after becoming the Chief of Police for the La Crosse Police Department, I began a thorough review of our Department's programming, which included the School Resource Officer Program. After meeting with then Superintendent Randy Nelson, a change was made to the SRO uniform policy where the SRO's began wearing plain clothes for part of their work week. At the start of 2020, I began working with La Crosse Police Administrative staff to identify and encompass additional changes to our SRO program. However, prior to the implementation of the following changes, COVID-19 occurred and schools were no longer in session. With the recent news of the La Crosse School Board considering the termination of SRO funding, and thus eliminating the program, this letter serves as a blueprint for a reimagined School Resource Officer program.

The following are aspects of our current SRO program that we believe have served both institutions well and would remain in effect moving forward:

- School Principals and School District Administration will be involved, and take an active role in the selection of the SRO's for the schools.
- SRO's do not administer school-based disciplinary actions.
- SRO's will continue to support and respond to the elementary schools and alternative school sites (BGC) to build relationships with students, staff, and families.
- SRO's will participate in school safety assessments and provide input to the School District Safety Council.
- The La Crosse Police Department will continue the "Handle with Care" program by providing information to School Administrators of traumatic incidents that students may have been involved in away from school.
- SRO's will deliver classroom instruction in prevention programs, positive life skills programs and other topics at the schools' request.

The following areas of adjustment and improvement will be implemented effective the 2020-2021 school year:

Appearance

- SRO's will wear a plain clothes uniform.
- SRO's will remain armed, but the firearm will be concealed on person and out of sight.

Leaders in providing a safe and vibrant community.

- SRO's will operate vehicles that will have no Police markings.
- SRO's will be encouraged to wear dress attire displaying School name/School spirit.

Training

- All SRO's will be trained in the following disciplines:
 - Fair and Impartial Policing
 - Mental Health First Aid & Mental Health First Aid youth module
 - Crisis Intervention Training
 - YWCA's Racial Justice/Racial equality workshop
 - National Association of School Resource Officer Basic and Advanced training courses
- School District Administration will advise if there is other training(s) SRO's should attend in order to be more effective while interacting with youth within the school setting.

School Policing

- SRO's will no longer cite for truancy and will continue to work with the County-wide work group to figure out alternatives to improve attendance.
- Enforcement action, the SRO will:
 - Citation/Low Level Misdemeanor: Refer the incident to school administration/system of care to determine if school-based discipline or other alternatives should be used.
 - Serious Misdemeanors/Felonies: Refer the incident to the District Attorney's office to determine if criminal charges should be considered.

Community Engagement

- SRO's will work with school staff to determine appropriate involvement in school clubs, groups, and associations that would prove beneficial to relationship building and engagement.
- SRO's will be encouraged to take on roles of mentorship and guidance in areas of extracurricular activities such as sports, strings, and band.

Through a nearly 27-year relationship, the La Crosse School District and La Crosse Police Department have moved in a positive direction bringing safety, security, and mentorship to the school environment. The La Crosse Police Department is proud of the role that we play in the La Crosse School District. The La Crosse Police Department has been accredited since 1995, and the School Resource Officer Program was awarded model program status by the National Association of School Resource Officers in July 2006. Policing is an ever-evolving profession, and we strive to be leaders in change. My proposed vision for our School Resource Officer program is one that I believe will serve our students, staff, and families well into the future. The School Resource Officers are well positioned to foster positive relationships with the future of the La Crosse community. Given the chance, these Officers can and will make the needed adjustments to effectively serve and meet the needs of students, staff, and families of the La Crosse School District.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Shawn P. Kudron
Chief of Police