

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

WHEREAS, the City of Bellbrook and the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools District wish to formalize a School Resource Officer program to serve the schools within the City of Bellbrook; and

WHEREAS, both the City and School District agree formation of the program will provide mutual benefit to the students and staff of the schools and the residents of the City of Bellbrook; and

WHEREAS, Ohio Law requires the School District and the City enter into a memorandum of understanding that clarifies the purpose of the school resource officer program and roles and expectations between the participating entities addressing at least the following:

- Clearly defined set of goals for the school resource officer program;
- Background requirements or suggested expertise for employing law enforcement in the school setting, including an understanding of child and adolescent development;
- Professional development, including training requirements that focus on age-appropriate practices for conflict resolution and developmentally informed de-escalation and crisis intervention methods;
- Clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the parties involved, including school resource officers, law enforcement, school administrators, staff, and teachers;
- A protocol for how suspected criminal activity versus school discipline is to be handled;
- The requirement for coordinated crisis planning and updating of school crisis plans;
- Any other discretionary items determined by the parties to foster a school resource officer program that builds positive relationships between law enforcement, school staff, and the students, promotes a safe and positive learning environment, and decreases the number of youth formally referred to the juvenile justice system; and

WHEREAS, the City and the School District wish to enter into a memorandum of understanding to provide core services including:

- Assistance with adoption, implementation, and amendment of the comprehensive emergency management plan required under section 5502.262 of the Revised Code;
- Carrying out any additional responsibilities assigned to the school resource officer under the employment engagement, contract, or memorandum of understanding, including but not limited to:
  - Providing a safe learning environment;
  - Providing valuable resources to school staff members;
  - Fostering positive relationships with students and staff;
  - Developing strategies to resolve problems affecting youth and protecting all students.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants herein contained, the parties agree as follows:

I. Policy Statement

A. Purpose

The purpose of the School Resource Officer (SRO) Program involves the assignment of carefully selected and trained police officers from the Bellbrook Police Department to work directly in the schools of the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools District in cooperation with the administrators and faculty. The program is designed to minimize disruption to the educational process in the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools District by a commitment to maintain a zero tolerance for weapons, drugs, violence, and unruly behavior through the arrest of violators, confiscation of contraband, counseling of at-risk youth, and maintaining an atmosphere that is safe and conducive to learning.

B. Objectives of the Program.

1. Build a positive image toward orderly behavior.
2. Familiarize students with the role of law enforcement personnel, their objectives, and role in society.
3. Encourage students to stay in school.
4. Implement an effective program of safety education.
5. Make the campus a safe environment for learning through law enforcement and crime prevention.
6. Work with students to foster a positive attitude toward law enforcement.
7. Encourage more cooperation between students and police.
8. Reduce juvenile crime. Promote positive youth development.
9. Assist teachers/staff with instruction or support information as requested.

C. Duties of the School Resource Officer (SRO)

The SRO's activity in the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools will be guided by the following procedures. These procedures have been drafted in a cooperative effort between Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools District and Bellbrook Police Department. These procedures highlight several areas which are collectively felt to be necessary. It is understood that specific daily assignments to accomplish the following functions will vary from school building to school building. The primary functions of the SRO are as follows:

1. Provide a safe and secure school environment.
2. Serve as an educational resource officer.
3. Serve as liaison between the school and the Bellbrook Police Department.
4. Meet with the school principal and at times with central office Administration to discuss plans and strategies to address specific issues or needs as they may arise.
5. Protect the students and staff.
6. Reduce juvenile delinquency through close contact with students

and school personnel.

7. Investigate delinquent acts within the school system and its neighborhood complex when school or student oriented.
8. Participate as a resource person for the school district in classrooms, assemblies, and other school events.

D. Personnel Assignments

1. A joint committee composed of representatives of the City and the School District will review volunteer candidates and make a recommendation for SRO assignment. If school administration concludes a SRO is not a good fit for the assignment, they may request a different officer is assigned. Any dispute to such assignment will be resolved between the Chief of Police and the Superintendent.
2. Each officer will be a full-time commissioned police officer certified by the State of Ohio as set forth in R.C. 109.71(A)(1).
3. SROs should have a minimum of two years of experience as a police officer and have experience with juvenile issues. Experience working with diverse ethnicities and socioeconomic groups, with persons suffering trauma or mental health crisis, and with juveniles with special needs is preferred.
4. The officers are employed by the City of Bellbrook Police Department. When dealing with matters specifically related to operation of the schools, each officer will fully cooperate with the school administration. When dealing with matters directly related to violations of law, officers will be under the direction of his/her Police Department chain of command.
5. Ordinarily, the SRO will work five days a week with weekends off. Working schedules and off days may be altered by the officer's supervisor.
6. Communications control
  - (a) Interoffice mail, electronic mail and general correspondence
  - (b) Contact by police radio via the communications center
  - (c) Cellular Phone
  - (d) Office Phone in their respective schools
  - (e) Dress for the SRO will be the full police uniform of the day.

E. Scope of Accountability of the SRO

1. The SRO's assignment is the Bellbrook Sugarcreek School District
2. The SRO will be accountable to the Police Department's chain of command.
3. While at the schools, the SRO will work closely with and fully cooperate with school staff.
4. The SRO is expected to cooperate with the school officials, including administrators and faculty.
5. The SRO will abide by the school policy regarding school operations

and respond to the request of school officials regarding school operations and policies.

F. Reporting Responsibilities of the SRO

1. Monthly reports of SRO activities will be prepared and submitted through the SRO's chain of command to the Chief of Police.
2. Program records will be maintained by the Police Department's Administration.
3. A copy of the monthly report will be made available to school administrators.

G. Equipment Needs of the SRO

1. Forms and methods of reporting will be supplied by the Police Department.
2. Private and effective office space and office supplies will be provided by the school district.
3. All police equipment and clothing are supplied by and subject to the Police Department rules and regulations as approved.

H. Supervision of the SRO

1. Will be in accordance with the Bellbrook Police Department policy on chain of command.
2. Upon evaluating the performance of the SRO, the respective supervisor will confer with the school principal and/or Superintendent for input regarding in-school performance.

I. Cooperative Liaison

1. School personnel
2. Fire Department
3. Other police units, sections and personnel

J. Guidelines

1. An officer shall be assigned to the school in full duty uniform.
2. The SRO should not become involved in school matters unless the situation would typically involve law enforcement. SRO's are not school disciplinarians. When working in conjunction with principals and staff on school matters, the SRO's are considered not only law enforcement officers, but also school officials in regard to District policies. They are to work cooperatively with principals and staff on any school related matter. They will remain full time sworn police officers responsible to and directed by the Police Department command staff.
3. SRO's will handle any student education records or other confidential information in accordance with District policy and state and federal law.

K. Training

1. In compliance with R.C. 3313.951, any officer assigned as an SRO shall meet the training requirements of that Section, which include:

- (a) Complete a basic training program approved by the Ohio peace officer training commission, as described in Department (B) (1) of section 109.77 of the Revised Code;
- (b) Complete at least forty hours of school resource officer training within one year after appointment to provide those services through one of the following entities, as approved by the Ohio peace officer training commission:
  - (i) The national association of school resource officers;
  - (ii) The Ohio school resource officer association
  - (iii) The Ohio peace officer training academy
- (c) A certified training program provided by an entity described in division (B)(1)(b) of this section shall include instruction regarding skills, tactics, and strategies necessary to address the specific nature of all of the following:
  - (i) School campuses;
  - (ii) School building security needs and characteristics;
  - (iii) The nuances of law enforcement functions conducted inside a school environment, including:
    - (a) Understanding the psychological and physiological characteristics consistent with the ages of the students in the assigned building or buildings;
    - (b) Understanding the appropriate role of school resource officers regarding discipline and reducing the number of referrals to juvenile court; and
    - (c) Understanding the use of developmentally appropriate interview, interrogation, de-escalation, and behavior management strategies.
  - (iv) The mechanics of being a positive role model for youth, including appropriate communication techniques which enhance interactions between the school resource officer and students;
  - (v) Providing assistance on topics such as classroom management tools to provide law-related education to students and methods for managing the behaviors sometimes associated with educating children with special needs;
  - (vi) The mechanics of the laws regarding compulsory attendance, as set forth in Chapter 3321. of the Revised Code;
  - (vii) Identifying the trends in drug use, eliminating the instance of drug use, and encouraging a drug-free environment in schools.

## II. School Resource Officer Program

The Bellbrook SRO program will be fashioned to fulfill four main roles: (1) law enforcement, (2) education, (3) crime prevention and (4) mentor/problem solver.

- A. Law Enforcement Role - The SRO will be responsible for the majority of law enforcement activities occurring at the school during school hours. This will involve the traditional enforcement activities of arrests, reports, and filing of charges, etc. The officer is also responsible for conducting follow-up investigations at the request of other police Department personnel. In addition, the officer is responsible for information sharing between school officials and the Police Department. To establish and maintain credibility, it is imperative that the SRO not be compromised in his/her position as an enforcement authority.
  1. It is critical that protocols and procedures are established for enforcement action detailing the officer's role and the school's role. It must be clear when and how the officer's law enforcement activities and the school's administrative discipline will be coordinated.
- B. Crime Prevention - A second role the SRO fulfills is crime prevention. The officer will conduct various activities including foot patrol and internal security throughout the school property when requested and appropriate by school officials. The officer can be utilized by completing security surveys relative to the physical security of school property and facilities. Additionally, the officer will act as a resource to the faculty and staff of the school to advise on matters relative to criminal activity. The officer will help coordinate or conduct crime prevention presentations for faculty, staff and students. Topics of interest in the areas of criminal law and crime prevention could benefit students and staff. Finally, the officer will gather and disseminate intelligence to prevent potential crimes.
- C. Education - The third role of the SRO is education. Considering the overall mission of the schools is to educate, it is very important that the SRO participate in this mission. By becoming a member of the educational team, the SRO will become more accepted by students, faculty and staff. Officers can provide presentations on law-related topics which are provided to any class by teacher invitation. The officer can also speak to student and parent support groups and provide training to administrators and faculty in the area of law enforcement. An added benefit to this role is the presence of the officer in the classroom. Students who have the opportunity to spend some time with a police officer in a positive, non-threatening setting are also more likely to open up and share information with that officer, thus building trust and respect.
- D. Mentor/Problem Solver - The fourth role of the SRO is that of a mentor/problem solver. Officers can mentor students within the context of that officer's knowledge, training and experience. The officer can be available to the students on a variety of issues which range from dealing with anger, personal conflicts, drug and alcohol issues, abuse and neglect, and other issues which could in some way be connected with the law. The SRO's can work closely with the school counselors, social workers, and psychologists in order to provide appropriate levels of support and information to students in need. SRO's should not attempt to provide ongoing/scheduled or formal counseling with students; but rather, should

refer those students to the appropriate school psychologist or counselor for such service.

### III. SRO Standard Operating Procedures

The SRO's activity in the school will be guided by the following procedures. These procedures have been drafted in a cooperative effort between the Bellbrook Police Department and the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools District. These procedures highlight several areas which are collectively believed to be necessary.

A. Role in Crime Suppression - One of the SRO's roles will be enforcement including traditional criminal investigation and report taking. As a police officer, the SRO has the authority to make arrests and use alternatives to arrest at his/her discretion.

1. The SRO and school administration will continuously work together and coordinate the sharing of appropriate information about both criminal and non-criminal activity that affects the safety and risk of security to the school and community.
2. The SRO and school officials will strive to develop plans such as de-escalation techniques, conflict resolution and restorative justice practices to serve as an alternative to arrest where practicable and in the best interest of the district and its students.

B. Role in Locker, Vehicle and Personal Searches - When requested and lawful, the SRO may assist school Administration in searches of person(s), property or vehicle(s) under the following, but not limited to, applicable reasons:

1. Student may reasonably be considered a threat to assault the searchers.
2. Student may attempt to escape in a situation in which the student would be a danger to him/herself or a danger to others.
3. Student may possess a firearm or knife, a suspicion that may be supported on the slightest articulated indication including conclusions drawn as a result of teaching, or law enforcement experience.
4. Student is suspected of having drugs, which may include needles or toxic substances.
5. Items being searched may contain dangerous items.
6. Items to be searched, e.g., an automobile, requires professional search techniques to make the search effective.

In all cases, the SRO should refrain from actually conducting the search unless warranted due to the foregoing. It may be sufficient to simply have the SRO present in any of the foregoing circumstances and the administrator and SRO shall determine how to proceed on a case-by-case basis and should favor, where reasonable, the administrator conducting the search.

Strip searches of students by SROs are prohibited. Unless there is a serious and immediate threat to a student, a teacher, or public safety, SROs shall not initiate or participate in other physically invasive searches of a student.

The SRO may perform searches independent of the school administration only during an emergency or where criminal activity is suspected so long as consistent with the existing provisions of the Ohio Revised Code and the Bellbrook Police Department policy.

- C. Role in Critical Incidents - The SRO will be familiar with the emergency operations manual of the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools. During any critical incident occurring on school property, the SRO will act as a liaison between the school Administration, the Bellbrook Police Department, and other emergency resources. The SRO's will be on the district 's Disaster Planning Committee.
- D. Role in Truancy Issues - Truancy will continue to be handled by school personnel. Normally, the SRO will not take an active role in tracking truants. The SRO will act as a liaison between school and police personnel should police involvement become necessary due to safety concerns. The SRO will file charges against students or adults when truancy becomes a violation of Ohio law.
- E. Role as an Educator - The SRO will serve as an educational resource to school faculty, staff and students. The SRO may be called upon for presentations on specific topics which may lend valuable insight regarding a particular subject matter. The SRO might not be a certified teacher; therefore, the normal classroom teacher or authorized substitute will be present during any instructional period. The SRO will maintain complete lesson plans on their topics of instruction and will furnish a list of topics to school personnel.
- F. Enforcing/Reporting School Policy Violations - The SRO is not a school disciplinarian and normally will take action only when there is a violation of law. School discipline is the responsibility of the appropriate school administrator. The SRO will normally report school policy violations through the proper channels to be handled by school Administration. It is the responsibility of the SRO to become familiar with the student handbook.
- G. Sharing of Information - Recognizing that communication and information sharing is essential to the success of the SRO program; the following procedures should be followed to facilitate a free flow of information to and from the SRO.
  - 1. Sharing of information will be governed by the Ohio Revised Code; the Ohio Administrative Code, Ohio Public Records Law, and relevant Bellbrook Police Department and Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools District policies.
  - 2. The sharing of arrest related information by the SRO with school Administration upon request or at the direction of the SRO, if lawful.
  - 3. Juvenile fingerprints and photographs as part of an arrest record shall not be shared by the SRO.
  - 4. If the SRO is aware of information about a student that is obtained by the Bellbrook Police Department, which indicates that the student is in violation of school policies (Student Code of Conduct), the SRO should forward that



information to the school administration.

5. If a juvenile or school district employee is an uncharged suspect in a crime, his/her information shall not be released unless authorized by Police Department Command Staff.
  6. Information which the SRO obtains from school personnel which deals with criminal or possible criminal activity shall be maintained by the SRO in his/her information files and/or forwarded to the Police Department's reporting system. Hearsay information or rumors alone shall not be the basis for any formal action by the school or Police Department for law enforcement purposes. It can be used in intelligence gathering capacity or to validate the need for further investigation.
  7. The SRO and/or Bellbrook Police Department will issue subpoenas for educational records they wish to obtain from the District. The parties acknowledge that if a subpoena is issued, unless the subpoena states that the existence of the subpoena is not to be disclosed, the District will provide notice to the parent or guardian of the student, pursuant to FERPA, and give such parent or guardian at least five days before providing such records to the SRO or the Bellbrook Police Department.
- H. School Liaison - It is recommended that each school assign someone to act as the liaison to the SRO program. This person is very important to ensure acceptance and successful implementation of the program. This person will help coordinate the SRO's presence in the various classrooms and at school functions to ensure maximum utilization of the SRO in an educational role and as a liaison.
- I. Office Area - The school shall provide private office space for the SRO including a desk, chairs and a separate telephone line. The office will be in a highly visible location that has easy access to the students but will provide for privacy when needed.
- J. Written Agreement/MOU - A copy of this Agreement shall be provided to each SRO assigned to the School District and shall serve as the written agreement relating to the current and any additional SRO positions, between the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools and the Bellbrook Police Department.

If either party to this Agreement finds a need for modification to the Agreement, it shall be submitted at the time of the renewal. If the change is needed in the interim, it will be administered through an amendment to the Agreement which is mutually agreed upon by both parties.

#### IV. Term of Agreement

The City of Bellbrook, acting on behalf of the Bellbrook Police Department and the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools collectively agree that this agreement/MOU is a three (3) year commitment, based on the effective date shown at the end of this agreement/MOU. If either party chooses to terminate this agreement, six (6) months written notice prior to the end of the agreement shall be provided.

V. Financial Agreement

The City of Bellbrook, acting on behalf of Bellbrook Police Department and the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools collectively agree to split equally the regular and overtime and cost of wages and fringe benefits of the SRO. In consideration of the times the officers not providing services to the schools (see item VI) the Bellbrook Police Department will pay the cost of the overtime.

VI. In accordance with Section V. of this SRO Memorandum of Understanding between the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools District and the City of Bellbrook, the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools District have agreed to split equally the regular and overtime cost of wages and fringe benefits of the SRO. In consideration of the times the officer is not providing services directly to the schools (see item VIII) the Bellbrook Police Department will pay the cost of the overtime.

VII. The Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools District agrees to make payments on these services on a quarterly basis. The City of Bellbrook agrees to invoice the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Schools District for services for the prior quarter on the following schedule:

<b>Date Invoiced</b>	<b>Period Invoiced</b>	<b>Payment Due Date</b>
April 1	January 1 to March 31	April 15
July 1	April 1 to June 30	July 15
October 1	July 1 to September 30	October 15
January 1	October 1 to December 31	January 15

Invoices should be detailed including personnel billed and period/times billed for.

VIII. School out of Session/Absences

The SRO's will remain in their capacities during summer and winter breaks. To reduce their absence from their respective schools, the SRO's are encouraged to use this time for any advance training and/or personal leave.

In the event of the absence of a regularly assigned SRO, the Police Department may provide a substitute SRO to the extent practicable.

In cases of immediate need, the Police Department may temporarily assign the SRO's to cover road patrol, investigative, or other duties as assigned. SRO's shall periodically engage in professional development related to age-appropriate practices for conflict resolution and developmentally informed de-escalation and crisis intervention methods.

IX. Entire Agreement

This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Ohio. The Agreement contains the entire agreement between the parties, superseding in all respects any and all prior oral or written agreements or understandings pertaining to the SRO program and shall be amended or modified only by written instrument signed by both of the parties.

Legal Refs.: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. 1232g.  
ORC 3319.321  
ORC 3313.951

Signed:

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Robert Schommer, Bellbrook City Manager

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Dr. Doug Cozad, Bellbrook Sugarcreek  
Schools Superintendent

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Date of Acceptance