

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MEMO

To: Baltimore City School Police Force
From: Akil L. Hamm, Sr. Acting Chief of School Police
Date: September 28, 2016
Re: School Police V Administrator Duties and Responsibilities

THE PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE ON 21ST CENTURY POLICING DELIVERED ITS RECOMMENDATIONS ON STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND THE COMMUNITIES THAT THEY PROTECT.

MANY OF THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS WILL SOUND FAMILIAR TO THOSE WHO PAY ATTENTION TO SCHOOL CLIMATE DEBATES: SCHOOL POLICE SHOULDN'T BE INVOLVED IN ROUTINE DISCIPLINE, OFFICERS SHOULD BE A MULTI-SECTOR APPROACH TO TACKLING YOU JUSTICE ISSUES, THE REPORT SAYS.

“NONCRIMINAL OFFENSES CAN ESCALATE TO CRIMINAL CHARGES VERY QUICKLY.

I HAVE OUTLINED SOME CLEAR BOUNDARIES FOR OUR OFFICERS TO FOLLOW AND SHARE WITH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS TO ENSURE THAT OUR INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS BUILD TRUST SO THAT DISCIPLINE ISSUES AND ISSUES OF STUDENT MISBEHAVIOR THAT CAN BE LEFT TO ADMINISTRATORS AND EDUCATORS.

Discipline vs. Criminal Activity

Is it appropriate for me to call my School Police Officer to a classroom if a student refuses to leave?

The school administrator can have the School Police Officer to accompany him/her to the classroom if it is believed that the School Police Officer might need to remove the student. Prior to this, the administrator should utilize other City Schools support staff including the school counselor, behaviorist, nurse, and other staff as needed. The School Police Officer should be used as a last resort if the student fails to respond to other staff or presents a danger to themselves or others and/or has been placed on suspension. An administrator should document all non-police interventions used prior to the School Police Officer's involvement.

Can I require my School Police Officer to respond to remove a child from a classroom (no crime committed, just oppositional defiant)?

This is not recommended unless the behavior of the student imposes a clear imminent danger to self or others. A School Police Officer may accompany an administrator for support. At times, the positive relationship of a School Police Officer with a particular student may be used as "leverage" to get a student to comply.

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School Police Officer vs. Administrator Duties

Can an administrator call a School Police Officer to enforce school rules for students running in the halls, walking the halls, leaving the lunch room, or wearing hats in school or violating a school rule that doesn't violate Maryland Criminal Law?

It is the responsibility of the administrator to enforce routine disciplinary consequences for inappropriate behavior. School Police Officers should be mindful that getting involved in what should be routine discipline can lead to possibly violating student's constitutional rights.

What is a School Police Officer's role if a student refuses to comply with an administrator and refuses to go to the office or classroom?

This is a school issue and relates to a low-level misbehavior. The school should use other interventions and supports as necessary to address the non-compliant behavior of the student. The School Police Officer should not be involved unless criminal behavior is observed. The role of the School Police Officer should be to de-escalate every volatile situation while also providing support to the school administrator.

If a student leaves the building, should the School Police Officer be called to retrieve him/her?

No. The administrator can inform the School Police Officer of the situation. If a School Police Officer observes a student leaving the building, the School Police Officer should notify the administrator of the name of the student, but the student should not be retrieved or transported to school by the School Police Officer. If the School Police Officer or police observe criminal behavior of a student off school property, the School Police Officer should address the criminal behavior, contact the parents, and/or arrest the student and take him/her to the precinct, not the school.

******This copy should be signed and returned to the Acting Chief of School Police. This will acknowledge that you fully understand and in receipt of this departmental memorandum.***

Member's Printed Name: _____

Member's Signature: _____

Sequence # _____

Date: _____

Supervisor Printed Name: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____

Date: _____

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