



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2016.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Henrico County Police Division

Program Title: SRO Arrest Procedures

Program Category: Criminal Justice and Public Safety

CONTACT INFORMATION

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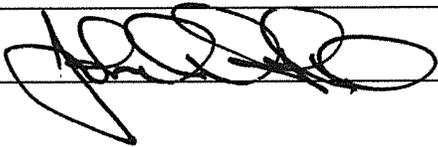
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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: John A. Vithoukas

Title: County Manager

Signature: 

1. Short Overview of the Program

In May 2015, realizing that there was a need for change as it related to arrests by police officers at Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS), Chief Douglas A. Middleton, with the assistance of a host of others, created a new policy that provided police officers, whether School Resource Officers (SROs) or field personnel, with greater discretion in the application of arrests or diversion opportunities. When it is reasonable, in the interests of the juvenile and the juvenile's family, and when the safety of the community or another person is not at risk, officers shall release a juvenile on a Juvenile Violation Report. The results of these changes have been dramatic in reducing the number of arrests. Custodial arrests by officers for the first semester of 2015 (4), as compared to the first semester of 2014 (199) show a dramatic deduction in custodial arrests of students by officers. A yearly Juvenile Services Officer (JSO) certification has been established and consists of training that is relevant and practical for all SROs.

2. Problem/Challenge/Situation

Henrico County Officers were conducting arrests of juveniles that dealt with Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) Student Code of Conduct. Due to Police regulations, an officer could not suggest a diversion or alternative program to a juvenile's arrest. The previous way of business involved formal arrests of students and a time consuming completion of paperwork that kept officers away from schools for a significant period of time. The goal of this change was to return to the days where officers are in schools simply for the safety of the students and the School Security Officers (SSOs) would

handle matters of conduct. Officers are encouraged to use their discretion. When they think some sort of criminal charge or diversion program is appropriate, they will prepare a Juvenile Violation Report (JVR) and forward it to the juvenile court officials, who will then decide what to do with students.

3. How the Program Was Carried Out

The purpose of the changes was modifying the arrest procedures of juveniles by Henrico County Police Officers. There were no alternatives to a juvenile's arrest for officers, and juveniles were arrested for offenses that should be handled by Henrico County Public Schools Administration. Chief Middleton had multiple discussions with the HCPS Superintendent, Patrick C. Kinlaw, concerning possible changes to police arrest procedures. The key point of the changes was exploration of alternatives to arrest, such as referrals to Juvenile Intake for consultation or deferring to HCPS schools for administrative action for lesser criminal offenses. These changes included the expansion of officer discretion to allow for diversion programs or to other resources besides a formal arrest. This included increased training for School Resource Officers and a required certification as a Certified Juvenile Services Officer (JSO).

A team of personnel within the Police Division reviewed, wrote, and prepared a new School Resource Officer Program. The team examined: legal obligations and applicable school and SRO laws; developed specific objectives and goals for the School Resource Officer Program; revised and wrote policies applicable to SROs; and coordinated with the Juvenile Court Services Director and the Clerk of the Juvenile Court with the concurrence of the Commonwealth's Attorney. Meetings began in early May of 2015

with a completion date of June 30, 2015. Policies were written or changed to affect the implementation date. The June date provided an opportunity to retrain every officer in the Police Division through standard classroom training, permitted the Division to establish and implement the Certified Juvenile Services Officer training, and would allow all changes to be explained to HCPS School Staff with implementation during the 2015-2016 school year. The 40-hour Certified Juvenile Services Officer training, which is mandatory for all School Resource officers, would allow a thorough explanation of the changes and cover topics that are relevant and practical such as Cultural Influences on teens, Conflict De-escalation, Dealing with Autistic and Challenged Students, Bullying and Harassment, and Youth Mental Health and Emotional Issues.

The purpose of the School Resource Officers program is to provide a safe learning environment for students, teachers and administrators in Henrico County Schools. Further, a primary purpose is to build positive relationships between students and law enforcement. To ensure these objectives are achieved, the following changes have been established: School Resource Officers have the primary responsibility of protecting students and educators from threats that may occur within the school to which they are assigned. SROs are expected to perform all related functions to ensure the safety of students and faculty. SROs shall not perform any duties or functions that have not been approved by the Chief of Police.

Supervisors and SROs assigned to the School Services Unit are required to successfully complete a vigorous training program that certifies them as Juvenile Services Officers (JSO) as defined by Division Directives or Policy. The Commanding Officer of Community Services Section, with the assistance of the Commanding Officer of the

Personnel and Training Section constructed a curriculum for this certification that is relevant and practical for all SROs and others working with child services in the Police Division. The training is approved by the Chief of Police prior to being presented to candidates for the JSO certification. This training will include but is not limited to the following: 1. VDCJS SRO School, 2. Crisis Intervention Training, 3. Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP), 4. Effective Communications in Schools, 5. Juvenile Arrest Procedures and Laws, 6. Youth Mental Health and Emotional Issues, 7. Interacting with Students with Disabilities and Special Needs, 8. Adolescent Development, 9. Conflict De-Escalation, 10. Impact of Court Involvement on Recidivism and Disengagement from schools, 11. Dealing with Autistic and Challenged Students, 12. Cultural Influences on Teens, 13. Drug Recognition and Addressing Drug Issues on School Property, 14. Search and Seizure requirements, 15. Gang Identification and Response, 16. Police Division Policy applicable to SROs, 17. Use of Discretion in a School Environment and Alternatives to arrest and 18. Any other training as determined to be pertinent and applicable to the duties and responsibilities of a SRO. In order to maintain the status of Certified Juvenile Services Officer, SROs will be required to complete annual recertification training, as well as maintain all other certifications required of all Henrico County Police Officers.

In accordance with Section 22.1-279.6 of the Code of Virginia, the HCPS has a Code of Student Conduct (COSC) that was reviewed and modified as required by law and HCPS policy. Henrico County Police Officers shall not assume any responsibility for the enforcement of any provision of the COSC. These officers shall restrict their involvement from participating in any school action related to the enforcement of the

COSC. Exceptions are: when a crime is known to have occurred; law enforcement services are required; or the Police Officer believes intervention is necessary.

As it relates to arrest of students on school property, Henrico County Police Officers shall arrest a student only as a last resort when dealing with student conduct that involves the commission of a crime. Police Officers should avoid arrests when alternatives to arrest are available and the officer believes that an arrest is not required or necessary for the specific violation. Alternatives to arrest by an officer include but are not limited to: 1. Referral to the school administration for action other than arrest, 2. Referral to parents or legal guardians for appropriate action, and 3. Referral to Juvenile Intake for services or other action that is in the best interest the student and/or his family. In every case involving a crime committed by a student in Henrico County Schools, officers shall consider the type of crime committed, the appropriate action that should be taken, and circumstances that may have influences on the student's behavior, etc. Officers shall consult and communicate with the highest ranking school official on school grounds to determine if there are special circumstances that should be considered. If a Police Officer believes an alternative to arrest is appropriate, but the school administrator or a parent/guardian prefers charges, the Police Officer shall provide that individual with instructions on how to obtain a petition and have the matter brought before the court.

4. Financing and Staffing

HCPS provides the Police Division with funds for twenty-one Police Officer positions. This funding covers salaries, airtime for a cellphone and supplies. The remaining thirty-seven positions required to effectively operate the School Services Unit are funded in the Police Budget. The County pays the cost of all equipment required by officers and staff to support the School Resource Officer Program.

5. Program Results

The results of these changes were dramatic in their success. Custodial arrests by officers for the first semester of 2015 (September 2015 to January 2016) when compared to the first semester of 2014 (September 2014 to January 2015) showed a significant reduction in numbers from 199 custodial arrests in 2014 to 4 custodial arrests in 2015. To-date, School Services Supervisors have not received any complaints regarding the handling of a juvenile by parents or guardians or school administrators. Students are given more of a chance in school to learn. Services are being provided to students who would have originally received charges. This program has enhanced the cooperation and communication between the Police Division and Public School department heads, officers and administrators.

6. Brief Summary

This model of policing, as it relates to juveniles and students in a school setting, was developed and implemented BEFORE the current climate to make changes to the

responsibilities of School Resource Officers in schools began. Multiple jurisdictions (such as Chesterfield County Police, Hanover County Sheriff's Office, Richmond City Police, and the VA Department of Criminal Justice Services are inquiring as to how the Henrico County Police Division has implemented the changes with School Services and its School Resource Officers. The HCPD has gladly shared its schools arrest program in the hope that other localities can have a successful working team of Police Officers and School Resource Officers.