



Newport News Police Department - Operational Manual

OPS-445 - INVESTIGATIONS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Amends/Supersedes: OPS-445 (01/07/2009)

Date of Issue: 02/12/2020

I. GENERAL

- A. Officers will respond to schools when requested, and will coordinate any investigation conducted therein with the Office of the Principal and the assigned School Resource Officer (SRO), when available.
- B. Officers will respond and investigate all reported felony violations on school property, whether or not school is in session.
- C. The investigating officer shall inform the principal, and any assigned SRO, of any investigation conducted on school property during school hours.
- D. For the purposes of this policy, occurrences on school property include: incidents on school buses; at school bus stops, and school-sponsored activities.

II. PROCEDURE

- A. Minor administrative infractions that occur during school hours on school property are the responsibility of the school personnel.
- B. School authorities will investigate injuries on school property occurring during school, unless the injury is determined by school officials not to be accidental and classifiable as a felony criminal violation.
- C. The Code of Virginia requires the principal, or his designee, to report to police any violations as outlined in the Code of Virginia § 22.1-279.3:1.
- D. School Resource Officers (SROs) [44.2.4]
 1. The SROs will investigate and address any routine criminal activity, reported criminal activity, or suspected criminal activity, taking place:
 - a. on school property;
 - b. on a school bus;
 - c. at a school bus stop; or
 - d. at a school sanctioned activity or event.
 2. Routine criminal activity includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. truancy;
 - b. trespassing;
 - c. threats;

- d. destruction of property;
- e. vandalism;
- f. assaults;
- g. intimidation;
- h. violations of the drug control act,
- i. weapons offenses;
- j. gang activity; and
- k. graffiti.

NOTE: See also “OPS-435 Handling of Juveniles” when responding to truancy and other routine juvenile criminal activity.

3. Department specialized units will be notified in cases of offenses other than routine criminal activity. SROs will provide assistance in such cases.

NOTE: The standards for “probable cause” are more restrictive for police officers than the standards of "reasonable suspicion" governing school officials when dealing with search and seizure (e.g., search of students, search of lockers). Although working in the school system, SROs must abide by police officer "probable cause" standards. SROs receiving information falling into the "reasonable suspicion" category shall advise a school official, who will conduct any necessary actions. When an officer **directs** the activities of an individual, that individual becomes an "agent" of the police and subject to police officer "probable cause" standards.

E. After School Hours

The investigation of any criminal offenses on school grounds after regular school hours is the responsibility of the Department. The principal and any assigned SRO will be notified by the next working day when school is in session.

Steven R. Drew
Chief of Police