

Class III Police Officers

**West Windsor – Plainsboro
Board of Education Meeting
May 8, 2018**

Requirements for Class Three Officers

- Must be a retired New Jersey law enforcement officer
- Must have served as a full-time officer within three (3) years of appointment
- Physically capable of performing the position
- Be less than 65 years of age

Training Requirements for Class Three Officers

- Must possess a NJ Police Training Commission basic police officer certification or New Jersey State Police Academy certification;
- Have completed SRO training within 12 months of appointment
- Training includes training in the protection of students from harassment, intimidation, and bullying, including incidents which occur through electronic communication

Job Duties/ Responsibilities/ Terms:

- Have full police powers
- Under the supervision and direction of the Chief of Police
- If authorized by Chief of Police are permitted to carry a firearm
- Not eligible for health care benefits or pension enrollment

Class III Roles: Educators, Informal Counselors, and Community Policing

- Educating students
- Teaching school staff
- Advising on emergency preparedness and crisis and incident management
- Promoting crime prevention through environmental design
- Teaching parents and the community
- Informal counselor
- Building relationships through community policing.

What are the core benefits of police officers working in schools?

- Core benefits (those that benefit more than one group) included:
 - Increased accessibility (e.g. between students, the police and schools)
 - It is critical for officers to build relationships with students while serving as a resource to students, teachers, and administrators to help solve problems.
 - School resource officers are not armed guards standing sentry at school entrances.
 - Strategic and multi-agency preventative working (e.g. sharing intelligence, working with other agencies; police presence and profile)

Roles of Class III Officers: Educators, Informal Counselors, and Community Policing

- Class III Police Officers can fulfill a variety of roles:
 - Preventing and responding to school-based crime
 - Foster positive relationships among law enforcement, educators, and youth
 - Help to promote a positive school climate
- Class III Police Officers fulfill a “triad” role encompassing three primary functions:
 - Educator
 - Informal counselor
 - Community Policing

Police Officer as Educator

Law enforcement training and experience equip Class III's with specialized knowledge that can be particularly valuable in a school environment.

- **Teaching school staff.** Class III's can lead in-service trainings and provide training on crisis prevention and intervention.
- **Educating students.** Class III's can teach students about criminal investigation, substance abuse, conflict resolution and restorative justice, and youth-relevant crimes such as dating violence.
- **Advising on emergency preparedness and crisis and incident management.** Class III's can prepare schools to handle and develop and coordinate emergency response plans.
- **Promoting crime prevention through environmental design.**

Police Officer as Informal Counselor

- Positive relationships between the Police Officer and students are consistently identified as a key to success for Class III Officer program.
- Students often view and turn to officers in the same way they might turn to parents or other adults in their lives, seeking out informally to discuss issues.
- Critical goal of the program is to build trust and foster relationships with students through formal and informal interactions.

Community Policing

- Building relationships with students, staff, and the community.
- Having a sworn law enforcement officer available at the school diminishes critical response time in the case of a violent incident or other emergency. A Class III's familiarity with a school's layout and design, as well as knowledge of the individuals involved in a problem, can further improve response efficiency.
- Class III's fulfill a number of traditional law enforcement functions including responding to on-campus calls, emergencies, or trespassers . If necessary, conducting criminal investigations, and sharing information with investigation units. Patrolling the school property.

NJ SAFE Task Force on Gun Protection, Addiction, Mental Health and Families and Education Safety

- Among its April 2013 recommendations, the NJ SAFE Task Force encouraged districts to consider the use of SROs.

SROs perform many functions and are much more than armed security guards. Experience shows that SROs can earn trust among the student population so that students who would otherwise be reluctant to call the police feel comfortable sharing information of suspicious activity, before it escalates to violence. To the extent that school districts can hire SROs, the State should encourage them to do so.

- A 2010 U.S. Department of Justice publication points to research that the presence of an SRO may deter “aggressive behaviors including student fighting, threats and bullying” and make students, teachers and staff feel safer.

National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO)

- On the first anniversary of the Newtown tragedy, Kevin Quinn, NASRO president, explained the purpose of SROs to PBS correspondent John Larson.

...school resource officers are properly trained...police officers from the local jurisdiction that are assigned to a school on a full-time basis. ...they're more than..."let's just put an officer with a gun standing at the front door, waiting for something bad to happen."

- These officers are completely integrated into the school and into the school system as part of the faculty, as part of the administration team.

***What Makes Schools Safe?* FINAL REPORT:
SCHOOL SECURITY TASK FORCE New Jersey
School Boards Association**

- He or she is assigned by the employing law enforcement agency to work in collaboration with schools to—
- Assist in developing school policy that addresses crime and recommend procedural changes.
- Address crime problems, gangs and drug activities affecting or occurring in or around school property;
- Deploy or expand crime prevention efforts for students;
- Educate likely school-age victims in crime prevention and safety;
- Train students in conflict resolution, restorative justice and crime awareness

NJSBA's January 13, 2013 Safe and Secure Schools Forum

Chief Raymond Hayducka, then-president of the state police chiefs association, criticized the use of retired officers for school security at NJSBA's January 13, 2013 Safe and Secure Schools Forum.

“As a police chief, I want authority and control over any person in the school who is armed. Police officers are required to have extensive background and training, and schools can get them by having an SRO program or hiring them off duty.”

Chief Hayducka pointed out that private security guards or retired officers have no law enforcement powers to arrest, detain or frisk subjects. They don't necessarily have up-to-date training on the use of force and on tactics to use in an active shooter situation.

He also noted that non-police officers cannot communicate with responding law enforcement officers via police radio and that a local police department may not share non-public information on police procedures with private security officers.

Hiring Process is Critical

Traits of an Effective School Resource Officer:

- 1. Truly enjoys working with students and has a deep commitment to helping them.*
- 2. Builds positive relationships with students, staff and parents.*
- 3. Strengthens cooperation between school community and the township police department.*
- 4. Supports students while following through on her/his law enforcement responsibilities.*
- 5. Becomes an integral part of the school staff and an active member of the school's Crisis Response Team.*

Overview and Recommendation

- **Uniform Memorandum of Agreement**
- **Community Policing - Relationship Building**
- **Member of school safety teams**
- **Threat Deterrent**
- **Threat Assessment and Response**
- **Strategic and multi-agency coordination**
- **Member of School Safety Team**

*** Recommendation**

Next Steps

- **Create a Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Shared Service Agreement between WWP and both townships.**
- **Municipal Governments must create the Special Law Enforcement Officer – Class 3 position and approve a salary range.**
- **Posting of Positions**
- **Hiring Process**
- **Training and Onboarding**
- **Anticipated Fall 2018**