



## Basic School Resource Officer Course Outline and Objectives

**Course Length:** 40 hours

**Intended Audience:** School resource officers, other law enforcement officers or school safety professionals responsible for school safety and/or who work in the school environment, and school administrators and education professionals dedicated to school safety.

**Course Description:**

The NASRO Basic School Resource Officer (SRO) Course is designed to enhance participants' knowledge of the functions of the school resource officer and increase their understanding of how school resource officers can effectively fulfill their role in the school setting. The purpose of this course is to equip participants with the knowledge and tools to skillfully serve their school communities.

The Basic SRO Course explains the NASRO Triad Model of school-based policing, which sets forth that school-based law enforcement officers fulfill three distinct, but interrelated roles – law enforcement officer, informal counselor/mentor, and public safety educator. Through this course, participants will gain a solid understanding of the responsibilities associated with each of these functions and learn the importance of implementing the principles of each role to enhance school safety.

Attendees will gain insights into how to establish a collaborative partnership with school administrators and other school staff. Elements foundational to successful SRO programs, such as the necessity of an inter-agency memorandum of understanding, the careful selection and specific training of SROs, and properly equipping SROs, are discussed. Instructional blocks on ethics and school law will instill an awareness of current education-related law and train participants to discern and apply ethical and legal courses of action in their work.

This course shares how enforcing the law and assuring public safety with children and inside the school environment differs from doing so with adults and in the greater community. Instruction on adolescent brain development, establishing and maintaining successful relationships with diverse students, trauma-informed practices, and supporting students with disabilities will equip participants to develop and maintain positive relationships with all students, staff, and parents.

Participants will be provided with information about various public safety issues relevant to school-age children and teens, including adolescent mental health, digital culture and safety, human trafficking, substance abuse, and suicide. It is essential that SROs have current knowledge about, and best practices for, addressing these concerns through preventive education and individualized support provided to students with concerning behaviors or signs. Awareness and understanding will prepare SROs to collaborate with school administrators, teachers, and mental health staff to identify and help students in need and improve student safety. Instruction on a variety of instructional techniques, as well as classroom management tools, is also included to assist SROs to capably provide public safety education.

Additionally, modules covering responses to safety-related concerns, which include behavioral threat assessment, armed assailant response, de-escalation, and emergency operations planning will furnish participants with an understanding of critically important strategies for planning, preventing, and responding to serious and potentially life-threatening situations that arise in school environments.

Upon completion of this course, school resource officers will possess an effectual understanding of the role of the SRO and operational knowledge to carry out their responsibilities to foster school safety. Likewise, school administrators and professionals will gain better understanding of the role of the SRO and how the SRO can best work with school staff to foster school safety.

**Course Overview:** NASRO's Basic Course is designed to meet the needs of SROs working in schools and at all school related events. While the course is developed and presented for law enforcement professionals, anyone working with youth today will benefit from the 40 hours of hands-on, scientifically proven, and relevant information provided to promote and foster school safety.

**Course Objectives:**

- apply the SRO TRIAD model to all aspects of the SRO assignment
- demonstrate positive and professional behavior while interacting with all school stakeholders
- exercise proven best practices of planning, preventing, and responding to foster school safety
- acquire knowledge of educational terminology and its associated procedures and policies

**Teaching Methodology/Course Format:** This course uses a combination of classroom instruction, interactive learning, PowerPoint presentations, videos, and practical scenarios. Students will be provided with a NASRO Basic Course Manual and access to website resources.

**Method of Evaluation:** Successful completion of the course includes a written examination designed to measure knowledge gained. Students must pass the examination with a score of 70% or higher in order to receive a NASRO certificate.

**Remediation Process:** Attendees scoring below 70% will be given 14 days to complete remediation. Remediation will consist of reviewing material missed on the written exam and providing the course instructor with at least one written paragraph on each incorrect test question. The instructor will review the response and assign a PASS/ NOT PASS for the participant and notify the NASRO office of the determination. *No extensions will be given.* It will be the responsibility of the attendee to ensure course credit is received within the 14-days.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendees will be allowed to miss no more than 10% of the total course time or a maximum of 4 hours. This requires pre-approval from the course instructor and must be an unavoidable absence (such as a court appearance).

**IADLEST Certification:**

The NASRO Basic SRO course has met the rigorous requirements to attain IADLEST (International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training) certification. The IADLEST National Certification Program's mission is to "raise the bar" for law enforcement training throughout the United States by establishing baseline standards that will promote the development and delivery of training which is pertinent, well researched, and legally defensible. NASRO's Basic SRO Course standards are designed to meet or exceed any individual state certification requirements. This national certified training is accepted by POST organizations in 36 states. NASRO is the **only** Basic SRO course with this distinction, ensuring the "Gold Standard" for training.

## **Course Outline:**

### **Day One – Foundations of an Effective SRO Program**

#### **1. Foundations of School-Based Law Enforcement**

**Module Overview:** The Foundations of School-Based Law Enforcement module will present participants with the history and evolution of school-based policing. Over the decades, NASRO has observed, recognized, and supported SRO best practices that foster school safety.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Analyze the NASRO TRIAD model, debate its components, and present two actions for each TRIAD role applicable to one's SRO assignment.
- Apply class discussion of SRO Program Recommendations to one's SRO assignment with a focus on establishing or improving one's SRO assignment.

#### **2. The SRO as Informal Counselor/Mentor**

**Module Overview:** This module emphasizes why it is important to create and maintain positive and influential relationships with students. Informal counseling and mentoring strategies will be provided for the SRO to use in working with students. Understanding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is necessary to protect student confidentiality and equips the SRO with appropriate student-related information. This module will arm the SRO with tools to develop connections with students, parents, school staff, and community stakeholders in the role of informal counselor.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Interpret FERPA to correctly apply the law in a school setting.
- Identify key communication skills to building relationships with students.
- Describe best practices and strategies that foster positive relationships with students.

#### **3: The SRO as Public Safety Educator**

**Module Overview:** Recognizing that SROs have varying public speaking responsibilities and opportunities, this module will equip participants with the skills needed to effectively present in the classroom and school community.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Incorporate visual, auditory, and kinesthetic strategies to enhance student learning.
- Identify appropriate public safety topics for lessons and presentations.
- Use lesson planning tools to build an appropriate presentation.
- Practice effective public speaking skills.

### **Day Two – The SRO Difference**

#### **4: School Law**

**Module Overview:** While an officer is knowledgeable of individual, societal, and community laws, the SRO must become a specialist in school related law and a resource for educational stakeholders. The SRO will learn information regarding student behaviors, rights, and/or activities that will provide legal guidance when called upon to make daily decisions that positively affect school safety.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Review local, state, and federal student-related court cases and discuss rulings.
- Develop a list of cases that are applicable to the SRO's school that will serve as presentation topics for students, parents, and staff that promote school safety.
- Explain the correlation between landmark student-related court decisions and the responsibilities and involvement of the SRO and recognize potential liabilities.

**5: Ethics and the SRO**

**Module Overview:** The SRO position carries great responsibility and can be subject to intense public scrutiny. This module will provide guidance and increased awareness of ethical considerations to assist the SRO in fostering the trust of the school community and in enhancing school safety.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Identify and discuss the need for high ethical standards of the SRO.
- Compare the unique ethical considerations of the SRO to the non-school officer.
- Evaluate how discretion, foreseeability, and flexibility are central to guiding ethical behavior.

**6: Adolescent Brain Development**

**Module Overview:** This module will focus on the adolescent brain and its differing stages of development. As previously discussed, building relationships with students is key to SRO success. Recognizing how brain development affects an adolescent's emotions, thinking, and social functioning, all of which play a vital role in an adolescent's behavior and decision-making process, will aid in explaining the "why they do what they do." Learning the stages of puberty and adolescent brain development and how they affect egocentrism, impulsivity, and risk taking will assist the SRO in mentoring and counseling students to foster school safety.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Identify and distinguish characteristics of puberty and adolescence as it relates to changing behaviors.
- Describe the connections between adolescent brain development and impulsivity, risk-taking, and egocentrism.
- Distinguish behaviors associated with the thinking brain and the feeling brain.
- Determine effective strategies for building positive relationships with adolescents.

**Day Three – W.H.Y. (What's Happening to our Youth)****7: Supporting Students with Disabilities**

**Module Overview:** The SRO will gain valuable information about students with disabilities, discuss behaviors often associated with specific disabilities, review legal obligations to educate students with a disability, and learn to apply proven, positive constructive strategies to mentor and counsel students with disabilities to build positive relationships.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Apply the terminology related to students with disabilities, IDEA, and Section 504 in their class discussions and activities.
- Compare the federally mandated discipline process and legal considerations for students with disabilities vs. non-disabled students.

- Identify the SRO's role in positively mentoring students with disabilities.
- Discuss proactive responsive strategies and de-escalation techniques when supporting students with disabilities.

## 8. Building a Positive Digital Culture

**Module Overview:** The module reviews the evolution of digital media and examines the negative effects inflicted on students. Almost every day, the SRO must address incidents, criminal or noncriminal, that originate or intersect on social media and surface negatively in the school environment. Social media and technology can create challenges and school safety issues when used inappropriately. It is imperative that SROs are knowledgeable, proactive, and decisive in the handling of the challenges fueled by social media. This module will give SROs tools and insights to provide guidance in establishing a positive digital culture that fosters school safety.

### Learner Objectives:

- Review digital media platforms, their evolution over the past decades, and reflect on how technology has affected society and students.
- Become acquainted with current digital platforms and discuss the negative effects of inappropriate use.
- View digital misinformation and relate examples to the school environment and the challenge they create to maintain school safety.
- Identify digital media threats as related to cyberbullying, pornography, fake news, sexting, and discuss the social, emotional, & physical harm it causes youth.

## 9: Trauma-Informed Practices

**Module Overview:** This module will detail how adverse childhood experiences can cause traumatic stress and it can inhibit a student's learning and social adjustment. Using knowledge, empathy, and application of best practices in working with trauma-impacted students provide the SRO the opportunity to more effectively mentor and counsel these students.

### Learner Objectives:

- Define three types of stress and describe how they impact behavior and brain development.
- Recognize outward signs of traumatic stress.
- Identify the correlation between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the role of the SRO as an informal counselor/mentor in managing challenging behavior.
- Analyze examples of challenging encounters with traumatized and victimized youth and propose best practices techniques in addressing behaviors.

## 10: Human Trafficking: Protecting Our Students

**Module Overview:** This module provides factual information about human trafficking and its traumatic effect on victims, signs a student may be being trafficked, and strategies for intervention and providing support. SROs must be able to recognize youth behaviors that may signify victimization to investigate and intervene. As public safety educators, SROs should appropriately educate students, staff, and parents on this topic to aid in the prevention of human trafficking.

### Learner Objectives:

- Define human trafficking and recognize emotional and physical signs, risk factors, and recruitment practices within the school community

- Educate students, staff, and the school community about relevant human trafficking facts and trends and how to report concerns
- Identify local/regional agencies to assist with education and prevention efforts, where concerns can be reported, and that offer victim support service

## **Day Four – Fostering School Safety: Response to the W.H.Y.**

### **11: Behavioral Health (Mental Health Suicide and Substance Abuse)**

**Module Overview:** The Behavioral Health module describes student behaviors associated with mental illness, suicidal ideation, and substance abuse. It is incumbent that SROs help to educate the school community about these concerns and be prepared to appropriately and proactively respond to students experiencing behavioral health issues. This module will enable the SRO to determine and employ proven best practices aligned with each role of the Triad Model to improve student safety.

#### **Learner Objectives:**

- Define mental health disorders and be able to identify students who may be struggling with mental health challenges.
- Recognize indicators of suicidal ideation and be able to help an actively suicidal student.
- Recognize signs of substance abuse.
- Review appropriate intervention strategies for students who are experiencing challenges with mental health, suicidality, and/or substance abuse issues.
- Discuss balancing the various SRO TRIAD roles regarding student behavioral health.

### **12: Behavioral Threat Assessment**

**Module Overview:** Continuing the response to the WHY, this module will review school threats and violence over the past decades and recognize the important task of identifying factors that could prevent, lead to, or pose a serious threat to students, staff, and school safety. Focusing on the application of the TRIAD model, best practices for conducting a thorough and defensible behavioral threat assessment will be discussed. While most threats are low level only requiring school intervention, some may require immediate law enforcement response. Information learned, examples discussed, and models provided will prepare the SRO to make informed decisions regarding threats of varying degrees.

#### **Learner Objectives:**

- Define targeted violence and behavioral threat assessment
- Relate the principles of a behavioral threat assessment to ensure school safety
- Identify concerning student behavior that may trigger the need for an assessment
- Review varying threat assessments, assess varying levels of degree of concern for an assessment, and apply them to the threat assessment process.
- Apply the NASRO TRIAD to identify management strategies to mitigate risk of a threat.

### **13: Developing and Supporting Successful Relationships with Diverse Students**

**Module Overview:** Continuing the response to the WHY, this module is designed to provide awareness of biases within oneself and others that can be a barrier to successful and trusted relationships with diverse school populations. Successful SROs build relationships by recognizing their existing biases and implementing strategies that build trust and respect. This module will provide strategies for creating, fostering, and maintaining authentic relationships with diverse communities and groups in schools.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Apply understanding of culture and diversity to law enforcement and community relations.
- Examine how biases can impact the SRO's role as an informal counselor/mentor and explore strategies to manage personal biases for objectivity in counseling and mentoring students.
- Recognize attitudes, perceptions, and demographics that foster biases and scrutinize strategies that build successful student relationships.

**14: Verbal De-Escalation**

**Module Overview:** The SRO is instrumental in fostering positive behavior throughout the school setting. SROs will experience student situations where an opportunity exists to minimize escalating behavior to avoid physical force or police involvement. This module introduces the concept of verbal de-escalation, addresses stressors that may trigger violent student behavior, and most importantly fosters de-escalation skills. Verbal de-escalation methods will prove paramount in forming positive student relationships, defusing potential school day chaos, and maintaining a safe learning environment.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Define verbal de-escalation and discuss the positive outcomes of acquiring this behavior altering skill.
- Recognize behavioral triggers and relate behaviors to experiences and situations you have witnessed.
- Review the components of the National Institute of Justice's "Use of Force Continuum" and through classroom dialogue discuss proven techniques that foster positive behavior change.
- Discuss and practice de-escalation techniques using varying scenarios in a group setting.

**Day Five – Response to Critical Incidents****15: School Emergency Operations Planning: Navigating a School Crisis**

**Module Overview:** This module will focus on the four phases of emergency management to guide SROs in planning for, and responding to, a wide array of emergencies which may occur. The goal of this module is to provide national emergency preparedness requirements and guidelines, as well as planning tools and resources, that will equip SROs to effectively collaborate with the school safety-team, agencies, and the community to develop and maintain an Emergency Operations Plan.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Explain emergency operations planning and the four phases of emergency management.
- Detail the roles and responsibilities of the SRO in mitigation/prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.
- Identify local, state, and federal resources available for emergency operations planning and support.

**16: Armed Assailant Response**

**Module Overview:** It is critical for SROs to train and prepare for the threat of an armed assailant in the school. The application of the TRIAD will proactively provide guidance, strategies, and direction to foster school safety; however, should there be an imminent danger, the SRO must be prepared. This module will review past school tragedies to discuss lessons learned to improve response moving forward. Protocols and procedures to follow in order to neutralize a threat and

prevent loss of life and bodily harm will be explored. The module will reinforce the need for SROs to be present in schools and the paramount position SROs have in keeping the school safe.

**Learner Objectives:**

- Review past school tragedies and examine lessons learned.
- Discuss lifesaving option-based responses.
- Consider best practices to properly train students and staff with appropriate lifesaving drills.
- Discuss, explore, and debate SRO response to an armed assailant that fosters lifesaving actions.

**17: NASRO Membership Benefits and Website Resources**

# NASRO Basic School Resource Officer Training Agenda

## Day One: Foundations of an Effective SRO Program

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- 8:00 – 9:00 am Welcome, Introductions, Course Overview
- 9:00 am – 12:00 pm Foundations of School-Based Law Enforcement
- 12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 – 3:00 pm The SRO as Informal Counselor/Mentor
- 3:00 – 5:00 pm The SRO as Public Safety Educator

## Day Two: The SRO Difference

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- 8:00 am – 12:00 pm School Law
- 12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:30 pm Ethics and the SRO
- 2:30 – 5:00 pm Adolescent Brain Development

## Day Three: W.H.Y. (What's Happening to Our Youth)

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- 8:00 – 10:00 am Supporting Students with Disabilities
- 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Building a Positive Digital Culture
- 12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:00 pm Building a Positive Digital Culture, *continued*
- 2:00 – 3:30 pm Trauma Informed Practices
- 3:30 – 5:00 pm Human Trafficking: Protecting Students

## Day Four: Fostering School Safety (Response to the W.H.Y.)

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- 8:00 – 10:00 am Behavioral Health (Mental Health, Suicide, and Substance Abuse)
- 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Behavioral Threat Assessment
- 12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 – 3:00 pm Developing Successful Relationships with Diverse Students
- 3:00 – 5:00 pm De-Escalation

## Day Five: Response to Critical Incidents

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- 8:00 – 9:00 am Group Presentations
- 9:00 – 11:00 am Emergency Operations Planning: Navigating a School Crisis
- 11:00 am – 12:00 pm Armed Assailant Response
- 12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:00 pm NASRO Membership Benefits and Website Resources
- 2:00 – 3:00 pm Course Review
- 3:00 – 5:00 pm Course Exam and Debrief

Agenda times are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.