



## LOUISVILLE METRO POLICE DEPARTMENT

**GREG FISCHER**  
MAYOR

**STEVE CONRAD**  
CHIEF OF POLICE

November 23, 2015

Dr. Donna Hargens, Superintendent  
Jefferson County Public Schools  
VanHoose Education Center  
3332 Newburg Road  
Louisville, KY 40232

Dear Dr. Hargens,

I want to thank you and your staff for the close working relationship that the Louisville Metro Police Department has been able to foster with JCPS. Together, we have been able to make tremendous strides to ensuring the safety of the children that are educated in our community. I did want to relay a few recent items that have been brought to my attention.

Several of my staff members attended a meeting this past week at the CB Young building to discuss school safety. This program was hosted by Mr. Stan Mullen from JCPS Security and Investigations. It was obvious from the facilitated discussions that there is a general misunderstanding as to when to call the police and our responsibilities when we arrive. Legally, police officers are authorized to make an arrest (or issue a citation) for misdemeanors committed in the officer's presence; or for felonies where probable cause exists. This should include circumstances where; children are extremely disruptive (including assaults or destruction of property), there is a threat directed towards the safety of the school, or any criminal instance occurs that severely jeopardizes the safety and sanctity of the school environment.

Much of the discussion at this meeting focused on specific examples where officers could not lawfully act. For instance, in most cases, officers could not lawfully remove a child from a bus after order has been restored. Another situation where officers could not lawfully intervene would involve removing disruptive children from a classroom where no violation of law had occurred. Since the perception of police responsibility was so varied across the JCPS staff members in attendance, I wanted to clearly outline our duties so that a common message may be shared to your entire staff.

Officers will respond any time we are called and we will take appropriate action to regain order to any situation. Furthermore, we will assist your staff and faculty in any investigation that may require police attention. We will not and legally, we cannot enforce administrative regulations. This includes; student disobedience, minor altercations, verbal arguments, violations of JCPS rules, truancy, or any instance where officers do not have a legal right to intervene. In some cases faculty members have requested that officers arrest a student. When problematic behavior becomes a violation of law is a decision that the officer on the scene must make, and therefore it cannot be arbitrarily identified by a faculty member or other school staff. Our officers receive many hours of training on how to establish reasonable suspicion and probable cause for enforcement action and the ultimate decision must rest with them.

Obviously, school safety is a paramount concern, but we must also recognize our legal responsibilities and limitations. I hope that through a continued open dialogue we will be able to educate everyone within your organization and resolve any misconceptions that exist. We are a committed partner in school safety and look forward to the ongoing cooperation between our agencies.

Thanks again and feel free to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SC', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Steve Conrad  
Chief of Police

SC/js