

II. Increase collaborative efforts between local law enforcement agencies, school board and sheriff's department.

•Information sharing (re: interdictions, arrests, domestic violence, etc.) between local law enforcement agencies, sheriff's department and schools

•SROs will submit written weekly reports on daily activity to the sheriff's department, school principals and the Safe and Drug Free Schools coordinator

Although the SROs daily schedule will be determined by the individual school administrator, it is understood by the Weakley County Board of Education and the Weakley County Sheriff's Department that:

•Confidentiality laws will be upheld by all partners/participants

•SROs are first and foremost law enforcement professionals and will perform their duties in compliance with sheriff's department policies and procedures

•SROs will be expected to enforce any and all state, local or federal laws as necessary

An oversight committee will be established to monitor the effectiveness of the program. This committee will be charged with the recruitment and selection of candidates, the development of job descriptions (in cooperation with school administrators), and ongoing overall program evaluation and public reporting. It will be comprised of parents, educators and representatives from each of the following: the sheriff's department, the board of education, each community served and the county government.

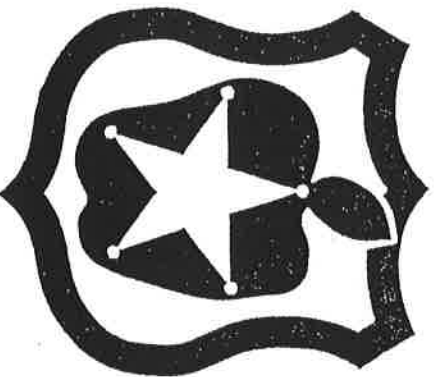
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*– dedicated to providing
a safe environment
for children*

Weakley County School Resource Officer Program

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Weakley County Sheriff's Department and the Weakley County Board of Education to implement a county wide School Resource Officer program which will exemplify community oriented policing by: recruiting community representatives to serve in an oversight capacity; will employ proactive safety, counseling and educational activities which will result in the reduction of disruptive incidents on school campuses and at school related functions throughout the county; and will result in a greater amount of community information being shared. This will ultimately produce a safe and secure environment for all who live, work and learn in Weakley County.



What is this SRO grant?

The Department of Justice, through the COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services) program has awarded the Weakley County Sheriff's Department a three year grant which will provide the salaries and benefits for six School Resource Officers (SROs).

Accepting this grant for three years will mean the county agrees to fund the salaries for **one** additional year. The total amount for the fourth year would equal \$240,000.00. Dividing the one year cost by the total Weakley County population (34,895 based upon the 2000 census), this program would cost **LESS** than \$7.00 per person.

We have three years to save this amount. Aren't our children worth this small investment?

Why do we need this program?

Unfortunately, today many homes are not happy places for children. Many children are subjected to the trauma of domestic violence, substance abuse or neglect. The result of emotional, physical or sexual abuse is all too often exhibited in the place children spend the majority of their lives: school.

Data reported in the comprehensive needs assessment compiled by the State Department of Education in 2000 reveal important facts.

First, Weakley County ranks 56th in the rate of youth unemployment (on a scale rating 1 as least in need, 95 most in need). Minimal employment opportunities result in lower rates of bonding with the community (such as school) and diminish the chances for developing a positive work ethic.

Secondly, (using the same scale) Weakley County was ranked 61st in the state for the number of children involved with the

juvenile justice system. This statistic clearly demonstrates a need for a comprehensive strategy to connect with today's youths: county-wide School Resource Officers.

When children witness or are the recipients of violence, it is often expressed through their social interactions. Weakley County is ranked 81st (again, using the same scale of 1 least in need, 95 most in need) in terms of child abuse.

Additionally, substantiated cases of child abuse rose in Weakley County to within .5% of the state average (11.7/100 in 1998 to 17.9/100 in 1999) All too often victims of abuse continue the cycle by disrupting class, refusing to follow teacher instructions or by bullying others.

Violence as a result of the influence of drugs in the home spills over into the school setting. Weakley County Schools staff have noted an increase in the numbers of reports concerning bullying incidents, disruptive students in the classroom, and harassment incidents.

Weakley County SROs will:

• Serve as an additional guidance resource, providing advice and counsel to students, develop peer mediation, conflict resolution and mentoring programs

• Instruct students in applicable safety areas (e.g., driver's education, government, anti-gang, violence and substance abuse prevention, etc.)

• Assist administrators in filing juvenile petitions as needed

• Work with school, community, law enforcement and judicial systems, ~~direct~~ school truancy program

• Work under the direction of assigned school principal(s) during the academic year to monitor and control the safety and security of students, staff, facilities, traffic, etc.

• Represent Sheriff's Department at school/community events as appropriate

Goals and objectives:

I. Increase positive community/ parental interactions with law enforcement and local educational agencies.

• Recruit parents, civic and community leaders to serve on Oversight Committee

• Officer presence **100%** of school operating hours (to include extra-curricular activities)

• Officer presence at community events

• Officer reports at Oversight Committee meetings and as requested by parental/ civic/community government entities

II. Increase school campus security

• Officers will consult in the evaluation and implementation of campus safety plans, and serve on school "Incident Response Teams"

• Officers will serve as an educational/counseling resource by providing substance abuse/violence prevention, conflict resolution or law related programs

• Officers will assist school administrators in filing petitions and serve as court liaisons as needed