

*Background information on Kirkland's School Resource Officer Program
July 10, 2018*

The Kirkland Police Department has had a successful collaborative partnership with the Lake Washington School District (District) to provide a commissioned law enforcement officer, assigned to each high school as a School Resource Officer (SRO) for many years. The contract between the City of Kirkland and the District clearly states, in part:

"...that the goal of the program is to foster a positive image of police officer among young people and must have the ability to deal effectively with a diverse student population while providing good quality educational services in the area of law enforcement..."

The Department is an accredited agency through the Washington Association of Sheriff and Police Chief's and has a policy manual that specifically provides a purpose and scope for the School Resource Officer Program. The SRO program is designed to form a partnership between the school administrations, teachers and most of all students while providing a safe environment. The goals and objectives include such things as:

- Create a greater respect for law and order in the public school system and minimize criminal activity.
- Identify youth in danger of becoming known to the criminal justice system and work with them to help them choose a more positive and socially acceptable way to conduct themselves.
- Maintain a regular office on campus to connect with youth in need of services.
- Provide classes on substance abuse education, search and seizure, criminal law, motor vehicle law.
- Participate in student counseling and parent conferences when appropriate.
- Coordinate and supervise security measures at school activities in conjunction with the school administration.
- Be a positive role model for youths through positive interaction and projection of professional image. Mentor and coach while building relationships.
- Provide safety training for staff on maintaining a safe and secure environment.

There are currently two SRO's who are assigned to Lake Washington High School and Juanita High School. Both are fully commissioned, certified police officers who have successfully graduated from a Basic Law Enforcement Academy. Washington's academy is 720 hours in length. Each of the SRO's have also taken advanced training specific to working with students that includes but is not limited to:

- National & State School Resource Officer Basic and Advanced courses
- Crisis Intervention Training
- Child Interview and Interrogation
- Active Shooter Response Training
- Missing Children and Child Abuse Investigation
- Domestic Violence Investigations
- Verbal de-escalation training

Since attending the Academy, SRO King has over 662 hours of advanced training, with 240 of those hours being applicable to being a School Resource Officer. SRO Davidson, has over 730 hours of advanced training with 327 hours being applicable to the SRO assignment.

The SRO's very rarely take enforcement action but rather refer poor behavior back to the District. They interact with numerous students each day as social contacts to build rapport, trust, and coach and mentor those experiencing difficulties. Another focus of the program is to work with truant youth who are more at risk for poor academic performance, dropping out of school and substance abuse. The SRO's support the District by serving "Becca's Law" truancy paperwork so that student's parents are informed of unexcused absences and the possible juvenile court consequences.