



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Announces Funding to Support School Resource Officers

JIM RANNEY September 27, 2017

| ISSUE: **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER, SCHOOL SAFETY AGENTS**



Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) joined Erie County Sheriff Timothy Howard, Erie County Legislator Ted Morton, Holland Central School Superintendent Cathy Fabiatos and Alden School Superintendent Adam Stoltman to announce continued funding for school resource officers (SRO) in several local districts. The announcement was made Wednesday during a press conference at Holland Central High School. The SRO program provides a uniformed officer in schools as a way to promote student safety, conflict resolution and anti-

bullying initiatives.

“With a new school year underway, it is important to acknowledge the critical role law enforcement is playing in some of our schools,” Gallivan said. “As a former state trooper and Erie County Sheriff, I believe strongly in the SRO program as a way to ensure safety in our schools and build a positive relationship between officers and students. I’m pleased to see the program is not only continuing, but expanding.”

Senator Gallivan secured \$110,000 for the Erie County Sheriff’s Office in this year’s state budget to support the SRO program. The funding allows the Sheriff’s Office to assign an additional deputy to the program.

“I want to thank Senator Gallivan for his efforts in securing funding for two School Resource Officers,” said Sheriff Howard. “For the past few years, my office had one Deputy dedicated as an SRO for all of these school districts, but today I am very pleased to say we can better serve these schools and communities with an additional SRO. These Deputies act as mentors, counselors and educators and can explain to the students about the devastating effects of substance abuse and addiction as well as be a trusted adult when they need help with a school or home problem,”

Erie County Sheriff’s Deputy Ashley Vogl will serve as a SRO in the Alden and Holland school districts while Deputy Frank Simmeth will work in North Collins and Springville schools. In the past, Deputy Vogl covered all four districts.

“Thanks to this partnership, we can place another SRO into these rural districts,” said Erie County Legislature Majority Leader Joseph Lorigo. “The role that SROs play in our schools is incredibly important, and in order to be successful they need to form relationships with the

students and staff they are working with. This cannot be accomplished if they are assigned to four districts. Adding an SRO for Holland and Alden will make a significant difference during this school year and help build on the success that the Sheriff's Office has seen through the SRO program. This is a perfect use for grant funding, and I am happy to support this partnership."

"School Resource Officers are especially important in today's culture when students are facing many challenges," said Legislator Morton. "Being able to add another SRO and divide the work will help everyone involved. The assigned deputy will increase security at those schools, while creating an atmosphere of trust. I am pleased to see this support from Senator Gallivan to add another officer, who is a great addition to the Alden Central School District."

SRO's work closely with school administrators, faculty and staff on school safety plans and assist in required safety audits of all school buildings. They also visit classrooms and coordinate with teachers to present information on internet and social media safety, drug and alcohol abuse, heroin and opioid use and personal safety tips.

"We continue to be incredibly grateful with the advocacy efforts of our local and New York State elected officials on behalf of the Alden and Holland Central School Districts," said Fabiatos and Stoltman in a joint statement. "Senator Gallivan's efforts in securing this SRO grant a few years ago has allowed our district and community to experience first-hand the benefits of such a position and we look forward to the programmatic changes the additional time will yield. Partnering on this venture will allow us to learn from one another in hopes of strengthening the role of law enforcement agencies in each of our communities,"

Over the past five years, Senator Gallivan has secured state funding to support the SRO program in several other school districts in Erie and Wyoming counties. Funding includes \$30,000 for the East Aurora Union Free School District; \$25,000 for West Seneca Central;

\$25,000 for Iroquois Central; \$31,500 for Attica Central; \$31,000 for Letchworth Central; \$20,000 for Perry Central; and \$20,000 for Warsaw Central.