



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Joins Iroquois CSD in Announcing Expansion of SRO Program

JIM RANNEY August 16, 2022

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



Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C, Elma) joined Iroquois Central School District Superintendent Douglas Scofield and other officials in announcing expansion of the district's School Resource Officer program. Starting this fall, each of the district's five buildings will have a dedicated SRO each day while students are in attendance.

Officer Joseph DePlato has served as the district's SRO for the past several years and presented the plan to expand the program by 5 full-time officers at a recent conference of the Iroquois Board of Education and administrators.

"I applaud the Iroquois Central School District for recognizing the value and importance of the SRO program," Senator Gallivan said. "With a new school year about to begin, we must do all we can to ensure our schools are safe for students, faculty and staff. SROs work with administrators, faculty, parents and students to develop and implement safety plans and resolve conflicts before they become more serious."

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 education and personal safety tips.

"In addition to providing security, school resource officers help foster a positive relationship between law enforcement and students," said Superintendent Scofield. "Our students, staff and parents know that Officer DePlato is here to help and that he is a trusted part of our school community."

"I have enjoyed getting to know students and helping them identify potential problems and how best to resolve them," said Officer DePlato. "As an SRO, I work closely with teachers, school counselors, administrators and others to build relationships and to keep our facilities safe."

Senator Gallivan, a former NYS Trooper and Sheriff of Erie County, is a strong advocate of the SRO initiative and has introduced legislation (S.4286A) to establish a statewide school resource officer program for districts seeking to enhance safety. Gallivan says a

comprehensive SRO program would assist schools in developing safety plans and further deter school violence.

The proposed legislation would clearly define school resource officer and, for the first time, provide an important state aid component to allow school districts across the state to fund the program. The legislation would amend state education law to make the hiring of a school resource officer by a public school district or a charter school a shared service eligible for aid. It would also provide a reimbursement grant program for the hiring of an SRO in a non-public school.

The legislation would also require a SRO to be an experienced active duty or retired member of law enforcement, such as a police officer, state trooper or deputy sheriff. Retired individuals already possess the necessary experience and training required to do the job. The bill would provide retired police officers who are employed as SRO's with full peace officer powers, giving them the ability to arrest as well as carry a weapon on school grounds while on duty.

Additionally, the bill would amend the state's retirement and social security law to allow school districts to hire retired police officers without needing a waiver for an annual salary of less than \$50,000. Under current law, retired public employees must apply for a waiver in order to earn more than \$30,000 per year. The present cap on earnings can deter the best-qualified and most experienced officers from becoming a SRO.

The legislation has been sent to the Senate's Education Committee.

2021-S4286A

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Relates to school safety measures

February 03, 2021

In Senate Committee [Education](#)

Sponsored by [Patrick M. Gallivan](#)

Do you support this bill?
