



WESTPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Foti Koskinas
Chief of Police

News Release

WESTPORT POLICE CREATE SCHOOL SECURITY UNIT

(Westport, CT 09/08/2023) The Westport Police Department, in partnership with the Westport Board of Education, announces the creation of the School Security Unit. The police department has researched and planned the implementation of the School Security Unit for several years. The Unit's first day will be on September 11, 2023. The police department coordinated with Town leadership, the Board of Education and the Westport community in presenting the School Security Unit package to the Representative Town Meeting on September 05, 2023. The RTM unanimously approved the appropriation to add three new officers to the force. Chief Koskinas stated, "It is only because of the collaboration and forward thinking of our local government, board of education, community members, elected officials, parents, teachers, students, and staff that we were able to accomplish this goal."

These new officers will fill the void created by sworn officers assigned to the School Security Unit. This new unit will consist of one Sergeant, one School Resource Officer (SRO), and three School Security Officers (SSO). The current SRO, Officer Ed Wooldridge, will continue his assignment at Staples High School while the SSO's will be spread amongst the remaining schools in a campus model.

Officer Sean Kelley will be promoted to Sergeant in the near future, and he will be the unit supervisor. Officer Kelley was hired by the Westport Police Department in December of 2000 and has served as a Detective in the Youth Division. He will be assigned to Bedford Middle School.

Officer Dennis Broderick will be assigned to the Coleytown Campus which includes Coleytown Elementary School and Coleytown Middle School. Officer Broderick was hired in September of 2022 after retiring as a Sergeant with the Milford Police Department. While employed by Milford, Officer Broderick spent over half of his twenty-year career assigned to the Detective Bureau.

Corporal Rachel Hall will be assigned to the Saugatuck Campus which includes Saugatuck Elementary School and Kings Highway Elementary School. Corporal Hall was hired in March of 2016 after beginning her career with the Ridgefield Police Department. Corporal Hall is a member of the Marine Unit, Motorcycle Unit, Drone Unit, and served as a Desk Officer.

September 8, 2023

Officer Edward “Ned” Batlin will be assigned to the Long Lots Campus which includes Long Lots Elementary School and Greens Farms Elementary School. Officer Batlin was hired in December of 2001 and was the D.A.R.E. Officer for many years. In addition to his responsibilities here at the Police Department, Officer Batlin is very active with local sports at the high school level and with Westport PAL.

Although the SSO’s will primarily remain outside of the schools, they will work directly with school administrators as needed. In addition to providing enhanced security, they will also focus on traffic enforcement and safety concerns related to student drop off and pick-up. Additionally, the campus model will certainly improve response times to calls for service in an emergency situation. Superintendent of Schools Tom Scarice stated, “The collaboration between the Westport Public Schools and the Westport Police Department is exemplary. As Superintendent, I welcome a consistent presence around our grounds, driveways, parking lots, and campuses. Additionally, these added resources will ensure a rapid response in the event of an emergency, this is among the highest of my priorities in fostering a safe school environment.”

First Selectwoman Jen Tooker added, “Westport has a long history of prioritizing our kids and our schools. This is yet another great example of the Town and the Westport Public Schools working together to make this a safe and welcoming community for all.”

END

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