



School Resource Officer Performance News

Volume 1, Number 2

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The SRO Files

Opening long shot: A typical morning as students arrive for school at Capital High School.

Slow zoom to: A group of girls laughing and admiring two of Capital's star basketball players (male) headed to their lockers.

Close up on Girl 1 (approaching the basketball players): "Hey...anybody ever tell you that you have a great..."

Stop tape and slowly fade to Officer Dick

Baranco: "You make the call...has an offense happened here or is she just flirting? Think about it. Your answer and our closer look after morning announcements."

Slow fade out. Morning announcements start.

Morning announcements end and a slow fade up to Officer Baranco: "If you answered 'she's only flirting,' you're wrong."

Thus begins a 10–20 second discussion of the possible code of conduct violation, the consequences of such a violation, and how to report any incidents of harassment. It is less than 30 seconds, but this is the beginning of a series of educational sessions for Capital High School students on harassment.

For the opening episode of the harassment series, Officer Baranco has intentionally "cast" the basketball players as the victims of the harassment. "I did this so that it turns the tables on the sexual harassment issue and makes boys realize what it must feel like to be the victim," said Baranco. Other segments will address bullying, harassment of English as a second language students, and gay and lesbian students.

continued on page 2

Director's Corner

Time has flown since the premier issue of *Performance News* and so have I—thanks everyone for your patience while I have been traveling so much over the last two months! Speaking of travel, I would like to hear from the SROs, supervisors, and a school administrator from each school about your availability the week of June 14 for a 1.5-day final meeting in the Washington, DC, area. Travel costs are covered; I just need your time!

This event is one of many looming around the corner for our project. Port St. Lucie is nearing their fifth month of the implementation period and many others follow closely. We will soon begin planning the follow-up surveys and archived data collection in preparation for the final Circle staff site visit to each school to do one-on-one interviews with customers and a focus group.

Meanwhile, however, I encourage you to continue to focus on your school-specific priorities. Many sites have instituted creative programs and strategies for addressing their outcomes and we have tried to feature some of them in this issue of *Performance News*. In the lead article, *The SRO Files*, Dick Baranco of Boise taps student know-how to get his messages across. In *Spotlight: Bulldog Bucks—Positive Behavior Can Be Profitable!* Forest Grove Middle School shares a little about their successful student incentive program—Bulldog Bucks.

I continue to encourage you to "borrow" ideas from one another and don't hesitate to use the SRO Performance Measures Web site (<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/sroperformancemeasures/>) to share your great ideas.

As always, I'd like to hear your opinions about this issue and have you submit ideas for future issues. Thanks to all who contributed to this issue and happy reading.

Tammy Rinehart Kochel
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“The SRO Files” continued from page 1

“The SRO Files” was the brainchild of Officer Dick Baranco, Capital’s Video Technology class, and a team of faculty advisors. Each series is planned as part of the Video Technology class. Students work with Officer Baranco and faculty advisors to select the topics for the vignettes—usually based on problems students are encountering in school or are interesting to them—script them, participate in the “casting” of the students, and film and edit the final tapes. Each of the vignettes takes about 1 hour to film (for a 20–30 second clip) and another 4–5 days of class time to edit and produce.

Officer Baranco plans another series of episodes on drug and alcohol issues. “The SRO Files have been a great tool to not only inform students about various crimes or codes of conduct issues, but the production process is a great way to get students and faculty involved,” notes Baranco.

Can “The SRO Files” work for other schools? “Sure!” says Baranco. “And even if the SRO doesn’t want to be on camera—you can always enlist another community policing officer or school administrator to be on camera and YOU can be the director.”

And the Oscar goes to... Dick Baranco and the students of Capital High!

Officer Dick Baranco has been a Corporal with the Boise, ID Police Department for 26 years and a School Resource Officer (SRO) with Capital High School for 11 years. To learn more about how to produce your own “SRO Files,” contact Officer Dick Baranco at 208-322-3875, x110 or at barand@CAP1.SD01.K12.id.us

From the Field

What activities have started in each of the schools? Find out below.

Capital High School (Boise, ID). Since the start of this semester, Officer Baranco has been involved in 10 arrests for drug-related crimes involving Capital High students. Officer Baranco and Assistant Principal Ruzicka have resolved these cases with a combination of referrals to juvenile court, “behavior contracts” between the student and Officer Baranco,

referral to counseling sessions, drug prevention education sessions, and community service. Officer Baranco continues to work with the involved students to ensure that they adhere to their counseling programs and their “behavior contracts.”

Officer Baranco is developing an education session for health classes on the effects of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the active ingredient in marijuana, on the brain, and the next series of “The SRO Files” will focus on related issues. During the next two weeks, faculty and staff will receive a flyer addressing the signs and symptoms of drug use.

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East High School (Rochester, NY). The three SROs at East High School have each taken on slightly different activities since the holiday break. In total, the SROs held 167 student conferences and a smaller number of parent conferences about a range of issues. Officer Brown has focused on peer mediation and Officer Robinson has had success identifying gang members. Officer Rafferty focused his efforts on law enforcement by conducting criminal investigations and patrolling, and has been keeping office hours and collaborating with school personnel. The officers have each conducted a classroom presentation, instituted a presence in the Student Support Center, and attended extracurricular events.

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John Marshall High School (Rochester, NY). Since the last newsletter, it has been cold in Rochester! Officer Snead has found that the weather is helping to keep kids in school and reduce truancy and crimes committed by students in the community during school hours. Despite this, he has an intern who is helping him to pull truancy records so he can determine why some students are not attending and involve the parents and students in getting kids back to school.

Officer Snead also has instituted constant involvement with groups of feuding students; conducted one-on-one student conferences about fights, truancy, drugs, sexual abuse, and disruptive behavior; and held four parent conferences, each of which addressed fighting. Officer Snead supervised a peer mediation about stolen property. He delivered classroom presentations on deadly force and “crime and mystery.” Officer Snead holds office hours (about 3 hours a week) and monitors student arrival. His duties require that he patrol both the campus and the surrounding neighborhood during school hours.

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Forest Grove Middle School (St. Lucie County, FL). Since the holidays, the deputies have focused their efforts on Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) instruction to seventh graders addressing drugs, gangs, fighting, and alcohol issues. Eighth graders have been instructed in sexual behavior and touching issues and posters have been placed throughout the school about gangs, bullying, peer pressure, social skills, and reporting crime. Youth Crime Watch has grown to about 30 student members who perform Varsity Patrol in the school hallways and who have been fundraising for an incentive trip. Deputies have worked with custodians on graffiti removal, partnered with deans to address students’ behavior, and met with parents about bullying and fighting. The Bulldog Bucks program continues to enjoy success and is featured on page 4 of this newsletter.

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Neuqua Valley High School (Naperville, IL). Officer Gibler continues to make class presentations on legal issues, theft, drugs, and alcohol. She taught a self-defense class to multiple-needs kids with emphasis on preparing for college and protecting oneself against physical violence, theft, and identity theft. She also gave a presentation on appropriate

behavior to multiple-needs youth who are transitioning to post-high school jobs, college, or independent living.

Officer Gibler has been attending crisis team and dean and faculty meetings, and holding student and parent conferences. She attends bi-weekly meetings with the SRO supervisor and other area high school SROs, which recently have focused on theft issues, one of her main priorities in the project.

In addition to responding to crimes, she has been busy creating and organizing an innovative strategy to reward students. In partnership with area merchants, Officer Gibler is devising an incentive program that will give gift certificates to students who turn in lost or stolen property or report a crime.

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St. Lucie West Middle School (Port St. Lucie, FL). Major areas of focus for St. Lucie West are bullying and fighting. The influx of new students adds to an overcrowding issue already present. The SRO Performance Measures Project has lead Port St. Lucie Police Department (PSLPD) to work with Saint Lucie County Sheriff Department on a bullying curriculum. The project is in the planning stages. An elementary SRO is PSLPD’s liaison for the project to create a curriculum that will fit needs at all educational levels.

Officer Arensen is currently working on his own principal-sanctioned bullying program as part of his commitment to the project. Arensen has developed a quiz/handout that he uses when doing classroom presentations on bullying. He also mentors students referred to him by the guidance counselors. These students are either being bullied or are the bullies themselves. Arensen attends GREAT classes and uses them as an opportunity to “piggy back” on those lessons and address bullying topics as well.

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School COP: Another Tool for Your Toolbox

By Guest Columnist Tom Rich

Many of you have heard about *School COP*, a software package for entering and analyzing incidents that occur on school campuses. The software runs on Windows and can be downloaded for free at www.schoolcopsoftware.com. The latest version of *School COP* will particularly interest sites participating in the SRO Performance Measures project because it includes the ability to track and analyze SRO activities.

Just as you can enter your own incidents in *School COP*, you can also define the types of activities you want to track. For example, you can create broad categories like law enforcement, teaching, counseling, program implementation, and collaborating with school personnel, and then define specific activities within each category. The law enforcement category, for example, might include incident investigation, patrol, arrest, or assistance to another agency. After you customize *School COP*, you can enter information about specific activities undertaken, including when and where the activity was performed, who performed the activity, how many hours were spent on it, and, if applicable, the activity outcome. As with incidents entered in *School COP*, you'll then be able to easily create a wide variety of graphs and reports, including summaries of the types of activities undertaken and the number of hours spent on activities.

We hope that you find this new feature useful! If you have any questions or need assistance with *School COP*, please contact Tom Rich at tom_rich@abtassoc.com or 617-349-2753.

Tom Rich is an Associate with Abt Associates Inc. Abt has been one of Circle's partners in delivering COPS in Schools training for the past four years. School COP was developed under a grant from the National Institute of Justice (#1999-LT-VX-K017) and is disseminated to SROs and school administrators at no charge through funding from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (#2002SHKWXX001).

Spotlight: Bulldog Bucks—Positive Behavior Can Be Profitable!

What would you do for a student who demonstrated a random act of kindness? Forest Grove Middle School has designed an innovative program, Bulldog Bucks, to reward good student behavior in an effort to reduce the number of fights and amount of bullying, intimidation, and harassment at school. Since the beginning of the school year, school resource deputies (SRDs), school staff, and administrators have been promoting the school's expectations to be prepared, act responsibly, respect everyone, and keep safe. Students who demonstrate these behaviors are rewarded with "Bulldog Bucks," which is "money" adorned with the school mascot.

Students can then shop in the Bulldog Store to purchase items such as pens, pencils, folders, pom-poms, cameras, and bulldog t-shirts; raffle tickets; or tickets to activities such as playing in a basketball game, lunch with the principal, a movie and popcorn, and a band concert. While the program has resulted in counterfeiting infractions (does the Secret Service know?) in a handful of creative students, overall, SRDs and school staff praise this program as a success and they claim a lowered number of serious infractions at Forest Grove Middle School.

The Results Are In! Surveys at St. Lucie West

As the school year began, students and staff of St. Lucie West Middle School (SLW) in Port St. Lucie, FL, were surveyed about their impressions of the school resource deputy and school resource officer (SROs), and school safety in general. Port St. Lucie Police Department (PSLPD) is commended for creatively tapping a computer class to enter their results into a database—that is collaboration working for everyone! The experience was helpful for students and time saving for the SROs.

The results are positive. Nearly all staff surveyed and three-quarters of students feel very safe at

school. Most staff surveyed reported exceptional collaboration with both SROs and claimed that when they had called on Officer Dimeo or Deputy Dampier to provide assistance, they were extremely satisfied.

Students echo the praise. Most students found services such as the GREAT training, classroom presentations or assemblies, informational handouts, one-on-one counseling or mentoring, and the routine patrol of the campus to be helpful.

The survey captured students' comfort with reporting crimes and their understanding of which crimes or incidents should be reported at school. Most students have a good grasp on what incidents *should* be reported and even thought incidents should be reported more often than the officers did! Yet, when witnesses, victims, or perpetrators were asked whether they had *actually* reported an incident, it was determined that certain types of incidents were underreported. Bullying and fights went unreported, while alcohol, weapons, theft, and drug violations were reported. Half of the students being party to or witnessing sexual misconduct reported and half did not. Overall, about half of the students reported being mostly or extremely comfortable reporting a crime on campus, but as many as 27% felt uncomfortable doing so. This data throws down a challenge to the SROs and gives focus to their efforts—not necessarily teaching students *what* to report but rather getting them to do it!

The comforting news is that only a small minority of students reported being threatened by another student during the previous school year (10%), while about a quarter had been called bad names. When students were asked how they can deal with bullies, nearly all students thought telling a teacher, SRO, guidance counselor, parent, or other adult was the appropriate response. In response to these issues, PSLPD and St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department are jointly developing a bullying curriculum—mentioned in more detail in *From the Field*.

Naperville in the News...Again!

SRO Erin Gibler partnered with social worker Pam Witt to write an article for CAT Tales, a school newsletter in Naperville, advising parents to keep tabs on their teens to reduce underage alcohol consumption and drug use. The full article is available at: http://nvhs.ipisd.org/news_cattales_jan-2004.html. The following excerpt is reprinted with permission from the author:

With cold, wintry months ahead, teenagers forced indoors and reporting "there's nothing to do," opportunities for underage alcohol consumption and possible drug use are increased. Here are a few suggestions to help insure a safe and tranquil winter season for everyone:

- How do you know what your teenage son or daughter is *really* doing when they leave the house to go out with their friends for the evening? As obvious as it might seem—**ASK!!!** Do you ever follow up on what they told you?
- Call the parents of your teenager's friends. It is then that you will find out: 1) if they are even home, 2) that they actually have other plans for the evening and will not be home, or 3) they are looking forward to hosting the group.
- Continue to have your teenager check in with you over the course of the evening, especially if their plans change and they leave one house to go to another.
- Be home, and awake, when your son or daughter arrives home at the end of the evening. If they know you will be talking with them when they come in, they may think twice about what they choose to do or not do that evening. Do not be afraid to get off the couch or out of the recliner to come close to your son or daughter as you talk about their evening.

- Get to know the parents of your teenager's friends. By expanding your parent network, a natural support for both you and your teenager becomes established.

"This is a lot of work," you might say. Whether or not your teenager has given you reason to trust or not trust them, staying involved in their lives by getting to know the parents of their friends, asking questions, and following up on their evening plans gives them the message that you care. Will they protest? Absolutely—but do not let their reaction deter you in your parenting responsibilities.

Some teenagers argue that since they are going to be drinking anyway, why not just let them have a few friends over to the house to drink "supervised." They promise to collect all car keys and have everyone spend the night to insure a safe environment. What could happen to you now? You could end up arrested and charged with Providing Alcohol to Minors or Permitting Minors to Become Intoxicated. The Naperville Police Department and surrounding agencies have been strictly enforcing these laws due to an increasing amount of activity involving teenage drinking. The consequences for these crimes can range from up to \$1000.00 in fines to jail time.

NPD is asking all parents and families to sit down and talk about the situations that could occur when there is underage drinking. Talking to your child and telling them what you expect and do not expect is the best suggestion to prepare for situations. Remind them of the new law, "Presence Restriction" of Alcohol: Any minor who remains in a room, apartment, house, location or vehicle where alcohol is being consumed by minors. This could start many discussions about underage drinking and the repercussions.

Notable Mentions

Counting the Blessings

Congratulations to Mildred Mitchell Brown, SRD for SLCSO at Forest Grove Middle School, who is expecting the birth of her fifth child in August. She is currently serving light duty due to her pregnancy and we will miss having her on the project. Best wishes on your newest blessing!

Personnel Changes in Port St. Lucie

PSLPD has hired their first "Major," whose duties include overseeing the Community Programs section, where the SRO program is housed. Major Gary Robinson was sworn in on February 2, 2004. Lieutenant John Gojkovich is the new supervisor in Community Programs. He is taking the place of Lieutenant Steve Claus who is transferring to shift supervisor of the Neighborhood Patrol Bureau. Steve's expertise and leadership will be missed, and we wish him the best. We welcome both Major Robinson and Lt. Gojkovich to our project.

Seeking a Speedy Recovery

Our thoughts are with Officer Phil Fackler of SLCSO, SRO at Forest Grove Middle School, who is being treated in the hospital for meningitis. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Congratulations

Congratulations Officer Gibler, SRO at Neuqua Valley High School, on your engagement during Super Bowl weekend. We wish you many years of marital happiness!

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