



# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ST. CHARLES COUNTY POLICE ADDING SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS IN AREA SCHOOLS FOR 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

**ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO** – The St. Charles County Council this week approved using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to place School Resource Officers (SROs) from the St. Charles County Police Department in elementary schools in unincorporated areas of the county for the 2022-2023 school year.

“Under our current contract with the school districts, SROs are in unincorporated area high schools and most middle schools—nine of 23 schools,” says County Executive Steve Ehlmann. “With this funding, we are extending our SRO placement to include every school in unincorporated St. Charles County, Augusta Elementary School in the Washington School District, and schools in Dardenne Prairie and Weldon Spring which contract with St. Charles County for police services.”

School districts normally share the cost of SROs. However, the ARPA funding provides that funds can be spent to combat violence and in view of the nationwide danger to schools of this violence, the provision allows the County to provide 14 additional officers at no cost to the districts. The County is looking at resources to continue this funding past 2023.

St. Charles County’s SRO program started during the 1995-96 school year, when fears nationally were centered around violence and drug use in schools. Since the mass shooting in Columbine, Colorado, in 1999, school shootings have been on the rise. Statistics show there have been 27 school shootings with injuries or deaths this year, the latest being in May at Robb Elementary in Uvalde, Texas. Officers now are responding to incidents where violent individuals with assault weapons are entering schools with the intent to kill.

Every police officer in St. Charles County—including SROs—receive Multi-Assault, Counter Terrorism Action Capabilities, or MACTAC, training. School scenarios are included in the 10 hours of intense training; officers are reminded that incidents are spontaneous and that suspects are unpredictable and could be heavily armed.

Citizens, teachers, and nonprofit agencies also have benefitted from active shooter training. Many have gone through four hours of 4E School Training: Educate, Escape, Evade and Engage—or Run, Hide, Fight—taught by the St. Charles County Police Department.

“MACTAC is a rigorous training,” says St. Charles County Police Chief Kurt Frisz. “We place trainees in a variety of scenarios and make it as real as possible to make certain we can stop an active shooter in any situation. For officers, it’s a reality of our job and why we serve to protect the public, but for civilians, it’s something they need to be prepared for and to think about. We want to equip them with as many tools as we can to help save their lives and the lives of those around them and in their care.”

“Now, more than ever, it is important to make certain citizens remain safe,” Ehlmann says. “With these new resource officers, and the active shooter training we are providing in the community, I feel confident our police officers are prepared should an active shooter incident occur anywhere in the county.”

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***About St. Charles County:***

*St. Charles County, Missouri, founded in 1812, is one of the fastest growing counties in Missouri. With a population of 405,262, is it the state's third largest county. It is home to 21 scenic county parks of which four are in reserve, encompassing 4,197 acres.*

*With one of the largest economies in the state, St. Charles County is home to multinational companies including General Motors, Citi, MasterCard Worldwide and Boeing. It is ranked among the top 25 counties in the nation in high-tech job growth by the Progressive Policy Institute and consistently has the lowest unemployment rate in the Metropolitan St. Louis area.*

*St. Charles County Government has more than 1,170 employees in more than 30 departments and offices who work to make the county an excellent place to live, work and shop. For more information, please visit [sccmo.org](http://sccmo.org).*