



# Williamsburg County School District

Post Office Box 1067-Kingstree, SC 29556  
Telephone: (843) 355-5571 Fax: (843) 355-3213  
[www.wcsd.k12.sc.us](http://www.wcsd.k12.sc.us)



Myron E. Davis, Ed.D  
Executive Director of Public Relations

Dr. Kelvin Wymbs, Superintendent

## IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 23, 2024

## WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT'S SECURITY OFFICERS ARE IN EVERY SCHOOL

The need for school security has been steadily increasing over the years as school systems are responding to community demand. Security staff act as first responders, managing pedestrian and traffic safety, and ensuring the safety of the district's schools. In the Williamsburg County School District, security officers are armed. School security officers respond to rare threats such as active shooter situations, providing a sense of safety to parents and school personnel. Their on-site presence ensures a swifter response to any incidents.

Security officers are hired to control access, ensuring authorized individuals are on campus. They may also monitor security cameras, report suspicious activity, and perform other safety-related duties. In some school districts, security officers handle serious discipline issues, which is a controversial duty. They are expected to be involved in the school community on a deep level, from vulnerability assessments to safety training, to ensure student safety. School Security Officers (SSOs) are private security workers, distinct from School Resource Officers (SROs) sworn officers. While some districts have both, recent events have prompted reconsideration of police contracts, leading some districts to opt for private security due to less stigma and concern with contributing to a school-prison pipeline. Some districts have confidence in their trained security and safety officers. Successful training and student relationships are cited as reasons for this decision.

School Security Officers (SSOs) are security officers assigned to a WCS D school to help ensure the campus remains safe for its students, staff, and visitors. SSOs are primarily used at schools that do not have a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO). SSOs are employed by the district's security contractor, but the program is overseen by WCS D's Student Services Department. SSOs are being used at schools where law enforcement agencies are unable to provide SROs. SSOs complete an internal district orientation to ensure they are familiar with topics specific to schools, including district emergency response procedures, drill procedures, visitor management guidelines, and the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). SSOs must possess a security license from the State of South Carolina. SROs are assigned to a school and fulfill the roles of a law enforcement officer, informal counselor/mediator, and law-related educator. SROs are armed and possess arrest authority. An SSO is a full-time security officer employed by WCS D's security contractor. Their primary responsibility on campus is the physical protection of the school. Officer Ambrosia McClary of WM. Anderson Primary School states "I feel that all school districts should have Security Officers assigned to all schools. Security Officers provide another layer of security to schools so that students and faculty feel safe as learning takes place."