



Williamsburg County School District

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In Addition to School Resource Officers, the Williamsburg County School District Has Engaged the Services of School Security Officers (SSOs) Within the District.

In response to the growing concern about school safety, Dr. Kelvin Wymbs and the Williamsburg County School District are sponsoring a strategic partnership between the Williamsburg County Sheriff's Office and a private security company. These efforts are to proactively address the need for more officers to be present and visible in our schools. Sheriff Gardner with the Williamsburg County Sheriff's Office and representatives with Capitol Security Services, LLC, have been communicating regularly to ensure the safety of the citizens, visitors, and students of Williamsburg County.

SSOs and SROs work together to create an environment that is favorable to a successful and productive learning environment, despite the differences in their roles. School resource officers undergo training at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy, whereas school security officers are employed by private companies under the supervision of the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED). Both roles carry the responsibility of safeguarding the rights of individuals present on the property.

If a crime is committed at the school, both parties have the authority to make an arrest. The SRO's and SSO's prioritize establishing rapport with students and strengthening ties with school officials and neighborhood associations.

To guarantee the greatest level of safety for both staff and students, school security officers receive curriculum and training that primarily focuses on developing relationships with students. They are available to support administrators in handling student behavior concerns and improving the safety protocols and policies currently in place for staff, students, and visitors at Williamsburg County School District, though their use may vary from school to school.

By having a security officer on duty, you have someone extra to help with operational safety, hallway checks, and property patrols. Hemingway High School now has an SSO in addition to the school resource officer thanks to a cooperative effort by the Williamsburg County Sheriff's Office, Williamsburg County School District, and Capitol Security Services, LLC. The School Resource Officer has been paired with two SSOs at Kingstree High School, while C.E. Murray Middle School presently employs just one.

Planning to assign school security officers to the other two middle schools in the WCSD will be the subject of an ongoing discussion shortly. Aside from aiding school resource officers in their responsibilities, school security officers (SSOs) are employed to perform a variety of tasks to demonstrate a cooperative and cohesive relationship between the Sheriff's Department, Capitol Security Services, and the Williamsburg County School District.

To make sure that the proper assessments have been made to alert the appropriate authorities and that Williamsburg County School District policies and procedures are followed to assist, SSOs will receive cross-training with the Sheriff's Department in the event of a crisis, such as an active shooter. By increasing security, the district is being proactive in preventing unfortunate incidents.

