



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

# **Senator Gallivan and Ec Sheriff Howard Announce School Resource Officer Program for Five Erie County School Districts**

Patrick M. Gallivan

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## ***ECSO Deputy Will Rotate Between Alden, Holland, Iroquois, North Collins and Springville***

Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) announced today that he has secured state funding to employ a School Resource Officer (SRO) at five Erie County school districts beginning in the 2013-14 academic year.

The program is being administered in cooperation with the Erie County Sheriff's Office, which will provide a Sheriff's Deputy to serve as the SRO on a rotating basis at Iroquois Central School District, Alden Central School District, Springville-Griffith Institute Central School District, North Collins Central School District and Holland Central School District.

"Protecting students and providing a safe environment for their education is a central responsibility of state government. Student Resource Officers used to be a common sight in our schools, but recent budget constraints have limited available funding for these positions. Numerous school districts have contacted me about re-instituting an SRO program and I am thrilled we are able to oblige," Gallivan said. "Today's schools are facing a host of difficult challenges that school resource officers have been proven to help address. From cyber-bullying to vandalism, school resource officers help promote a safe educational environment in schools so teachers are able to teach and students are able to learn."

"First and foremost I want to commend Senator Gallivan for securing the funding for this resource officer. This position is vitally important for the continued safety of our schools and communities," said Erie County Sheriff Tim Howard.

"Resource officers play many roles including first responders for any and all critical incidents on campus, whether it's an intruder, a student fight or a health emergency. Having a deputy on campus can eliminate several minutes of response time when seconds count. They know the

schools like the back of their hands and if there is ever a problem, they don't need a map- all of which contributes to a safe school environment, which is ultimately what we all want and more importantly, what our children deserve."

The School Resource Officer will be funded through a one-year \$100,000 legislative initiative grant secured by Senator Gallivan and will serve at each school district twice weekly on a randomized rotating basis beginning in the fall.

The five school districts that are participating in this program do not currently employ a school resource officer on their campuses.

**Mr. Douglas R. Scofield, Superintendent of Iroquois Central School District,** said, "The Iroquois School District is thankful for the return of School Resource Officer (SRO) program. By Senator Gallivan securing the education initiative grant he

has allowed our district to be better prepared to meet the needs of our children. The SRO not only provides security in the building, but is also an instrumental force in developing the students in becoming citizens that have a relationship with law enforcement that benefits the entire community. The Iroquois District is extremely fortunate to be included within this program.”

**Mr. Adam Stoltman, Interim Superintendent of Alden Central School District**, said, “The educational value that School Resource Officers (SRO) bring to young people in terms of citizenship, safety and emergency preparedness is immense, and Alden Central School is appreciative of Senator Gallivan’s efforts in securing funding for this worthwhile project. Fostering positive relationships between students and law enforcement will benefit the community as a whole, and Alden Central School District is excited to be a part of this endeavor. Additionally, we are extremely excited about the opportunity to partner with Iroquois, Springville, North Collins, and Holland.”

**Mr. Ben Halsey, Superintendent of North Collins Central Schools** said, “The opportunity this grant provides North Collins is immeasurable. We are not capable of funding our own SRO and this program will give us valuable expertise to implement our school safety plan, as well as assist with preventative programs for our students and families.”

**Dr. Paul M. Connelly, Superintendent of Springville-Griffith Institute Central School District**, said, “The Springville Griffith Institute Central School District is very grateful for Senator Gallivan’s concern over the safety of our students and school district. The SGI District has a wonderful relationship with the Erie County Sheriffs, who have been there for us time and time again. This grant will only strengthen that relationship.”

**Jeff Durkin, founder and president of the Safe Community Coalition**, said, “The re-instatement of an SRO was one of the critical opportunities the Safe Community Coalition had identified as a proactive step to making our schools and communities safer so we are excited and grateful for the funding allocation.”