



2018-2019
Tarpon Springs Police Department
School Resource Officer Unit



Sergeant Robert Faugno- Unit Supervisor (Center)
Officer Ryan Theil- Tarpon Springs High School (Far Right)
Officer William Volker – Sunset Hills Elementary School (Second from Right)
Officer Kevin Lang- Tarpon Springs Middle School (Third from Right)
Officer Christine Brinker- Tarpon Springs Elementary School (Far Left)
Officer Robert Gellatly- Tarpon Springs Fundamental School (Second from Left)
Officer Michael Trinidad- Tarpon Springs High School (Third from Left)



PURPOSE

The purpose of the School Resource Officer (SRO) is to help ensure a safe, positive, and productive learning environment for all students, administrators, and faculty through means of prevention, intervention and enforcement of law. The SRO program is also intended to reinforce the Tarpon Springs Police Departments' community policing philosophy by promoting positive relationships between youth and law enforcement.



HISTORY

The concept of the School Resource Officer dates back to the late 1950's where an SRO program was initiated in Flint, Michigan. Its huge success became the model for future SRO programs across the country.

The Tarpon Springs Police Department first introduced its own police officer into an SRO program beginning at Tarpon Springs Middle School during the 1996-1997 school year. This initiative began the foundation of a successful SRO program, which eventually expanded by adding through a grant in 2005 an SRO that was assigned to cover all three elementary schools. Then in 2007 we took over the SRO responsibilities at Tarpon Springs High School where we assigned two officers.

In 2008, the Tarpon Springs SRO's received high recognition from the Florida School Resource Officers' Association as the School Resource Officer Unit of the year.

In 2011, Officer Taurean Mathis was recognized by the Pinellas County Board of Education by naming him School Resource Officer of the year.



REQUIREMENTS

To be qualified to participate in the SRO program, all officers are required to have successfully completed the Basic Recruit Training Course, and have received their certification in law enforcement from the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission. Additionally, all officers must successfully complete the Tarpon Springs Police Departments' Field Training program and have worked as a patrol officer for at least one year. Any officer selected to become a School Resource Officer must become certified by attending a 40 hour advanced course where the officer will receive training in juvenile law, counseling skills, class instruction techniques, and ethics.



ACTIVITES OF THE SRO

Many may think a School Resource Officer merely enforces laws at schools without realizing how much a School Resource Officer contributes to learning. The SRO often gives presentations to students on such topics as, alcohol and drug abuse, teen dating violence, cyber safety, and bicycle safety to name a few. School resource officers work closely with school administration to enforce school rules and policies whenever possible and to become an intervention option when appropriate. School Resource Officers are very active in assisting school staff and are highly visible during class changes and in lunchrooms. SRO's are often called upon to counsel students, act as an intervention for conflict resolution, and assessing students who are at risk. The SRO acts swiftly and cooperatively when called upon to disruptions and flagrant criminal offenses on campuses: such as campus disruptions, trespassers, or physical altercations in addition to maintaining a "Zero" tolerance for possession of illegal drugs and weapons. SRO's attend many after school activities and community events and work closely with our schools administrative partners towards providing a safe learning environment.