

**John G. Testa**  
Legislator, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Minority Leader



**Committee Assignments:**  
Budget & Appropriations  
Environment, Health & Energy  
Legislation  
Rules



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## **Legislator Testa, Colleagues Approve County Police for School Resource Officers**

The Westchester County Department of Public Safety will be providing four police officers to serve as School Resource Officers (SRO) in the Lakeland and Hendrick Hudson School Districts. The positions were created through an amendment to an existing intermunicipal agreement (IMA) which adds three new SRO's where the existing IMA previously provided one SRO at Walter Panas High School. The newly created SRO positions were approved at the Board of Legislators meeting on Monday evening by a unanimous 16-0 vote.

The new SRO positions were created at the request of the Lakeland and Hendrick Hudson School District Superintendents and supported by County Legislator John Testa. One of the new SRO's will be assigned to the Hendrick Hudson School District at their High School. The other two additional Sro's will be assigned to the Lakeland School District at the Van Cortlandtville Elementary School and the Lincoln Titus Elementary School. The new SRO's will begin immediately with the two new elementary school positions continuing through the last day of school in 2021. The IMA for the Hendrick Hudson SRO runs through the last day of school in 2023.

The SRO's are critical positions in our schools that provide community policing benefits for children and law enforcement. Establishing familiarity and trust with law enforcement at an early age is especially important for kids who are at risk. SRO activities include deescalating potentially violent situations in an emergency, preventing and investigating criminal activities, preventing juvenile delinquency, working with educators and administrators on programs to

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prevent drug abuse and most importantly to serve as a role model and source of positive input and mentoring to our youth.

The four SRO positions will be fully funded by the school districts through annual payments by the school district to the county. When school is not in session, the SRO staff will be assigned to patrolling Westchester County's vast parks system during the busy summer season.

Following the vote, Legislator Testa who is a retired teacher from the Peekskill school district said, "I am grateful to my colleagues for joining me in support of this intermunicipal agreement. We have no more valuable asset in our communities than our children and it is imperative that we provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment in which they can pursue academics as well as the important social and civic responsibilities that they will use for the rest of their lives. We have seen the tremendous benefits that having School Resource Officers as a daily presence in Walter Panas High School and I know that our younger kids will benefit from those relationships as well."



*Legislator Testa discusses new School Resource Officer positions during committee meeting on Monday*

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