



CITY OF PEEKSKILL

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

John G. Testa  
Mayor

## **Peekskill Police Department, Youth Bureau, Teaming Up With City School District In Project Designed To Help Make Schools, Children, Healthier, Safer.**

*Street Agreements Will See Two Peekskill Agencies Acting As Paid  
Participants In Federally Funded Program If Grant Is Approved.*

Multi-Year Effort Will Focus On Areas Ranging From Truancy To Mental Health. Police Department Will  
Receive Compensation of \$166,000; Youth Bureau, \$100,000.

### ***For Immediate Release***

**Tuesday, April 26, 2005**

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PEEKSKILL, NY— Two of the City's departments are teaming up with the Peekskill City School District as part of a multi-year, federally-funded program to make schools and children safer and healthier.

Called "Peekskill Safe Schools/Healthy Students," the program will set up projects ranging from helping troubled students more effectively work and learn within the school system to putting up local police and truancy officers together in the same squad cars.

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Funding for the effort will come from a \$1.835 million grant which is currently being sought from the U.S. Department of Education. Both the Police Department and the Youth Bureau will play a crucial role in overall program if it is funded. Reflecting this, the Police Department will receive \$160,132 to compensate for overtime and other expenses incurred in working with the program, and the Youth Bureau \$100,463.

“We here at the Police Department know from personal experience the needs of Peekskill’s youth. We look forward to the opportunity to further help the School District with at-risk children,” says Police Chief Eugene Tumolo.

Peekskill Safe Schools/Healthy Students has a number of specific goals, the grant proposal says. It will seek to:

1. Provide and maintain a safe school environment.
2. Prevent and reduce alcohol and other drug use and violent incidents.
3. Screen, assess, intervene and refer students with mental health issues.
4. Build the capacity of parents, business and seniors to support positive youth development.
5. Reduce juvenile crime.

Both the Police Department and the Youth Bureau will invest considerable time and energy in playing their roles in the program. A key component of creating a safe school environment will be the installation of an official Security Office in Peekskill High School.

As part of the grant the Peekskill Police Department will assist in a review and assessment of each building’s safety plan. They will also conduct training to upgrade knowledge and skills for each building safety team.

Help will be provided by the Peekskill Police Department in other ways as well. “Partnering with the probation and the Peekskill Police Dept, procedures will be developed and/or strengthened to assure that court adjudicated or school disciplined youth are more effectively reintegrated into school and have access to substance abuse, mental health, or other services needed for successful reintegration and school achievement,” the grant application says.

In addition, the Grant will create a “ride-along” program. “County Juvenile Justice Probation Officers will ‘ride along’ with the school resource officer (SRO) during after school, evening and weekend hours to create a strong presence in the community, follow up on youth and reach out to parents who believe their child(ren) are ‘ungovernable,’” the grant application says.

“A partnership of police and probation conducting ‘ride-alongs’ displays to the community that law enforcement is actively engaged in the prevention of criminal activity, not just punishment,” the application says. “Grant funds will be used to pay for overtime,” the application says.

Participation by the Peekskill Youth Bureau will include the specific hiring of a staffer dedicated to helping the Program achieve its goals. The Peekskill Youth Bureau is the leader of Peekskill Agencies Together, a group of the City’s leading non-profits. The City of Peekskill Youth Bureau will hire a full time professional to work with the PAT coalition partners,” the grant application says.

“Teamwork is essential when it comes to making Peekskill a better place,” says Mayor John Testa. “It is vital that our schools be safe places and that they have an atmosphere that promotes learning and achievement,” he says.

“We are committed to doing whatever we can to help the school district in that endeavor. This grant will enable our Police Department increase their involvement with the school district youth without causing an unfair burden to the taxpayers.” Mayor Testa says.

For more information, contact Chief Eugene Tumolo at 914-737-8000.

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