



What High School Seniors Are Saying About Their SRO

Several months before the 2012 OSROA conference we sent out scholarship application forms to Ohio high school seniors asking them to tell us how their school resource officer (SRO) has made a difference at their school. We had an overwhelming response from the students. Their stories and comments were both interesting and heartwarming, but more importantly they expressed how SROs create a better atmosphere at their schools each and every day. Below are just a few of the responses that we received:

“Throughout my high school journey, I have felt that my school resource officer has served the student body in a constructive and helpful way. Having a school resource officer offers an opportunity for school officials to proactively protect their schools and improve the educational environment. As a law-related educator, officer Gano helps deter students from trouble and encourages them to be active, positive participants in their school and community. By creating awareness through community events and workshops, the students are able to learn and understand information they wouldn’t get in the classroom. Exposing the effects of crime and drugs to a community gives the schools a stronger and safer atmosphere for students.”

Student at Bradley High School

“In today’s society, it is too frequent that schools are at risk due to lack of protection. It is a relief for me to say that my school has a dedicated SRO who makes it his responsibility to keep us safe throughout the year. Not only does he do his job as a guardian of the school, but he also makes a positive difference by his compassionate nature. He is easily approachable, and always responds with a friendly, intuitive manner to those who confront him. If more schools could have a school resource officer like our, the frequency of a breaking news story every week about a school shooting, vandalism, and rioting would likely be drastically reduced. Our resource officer is typically found watching over the commons area, especially during lunchtime. He helps maintain a safe and positive atmosphere during the lunch periods, and talks amongst the students and faculty while making sure that the environment is safe for those who are enjoying their lunch. Matters such as connecting with students and maintaining safety within the building truly mean a lot to students like myself, who wish to learn in a safe and secure space. I know that while I am learning in my classes, he is somewhere nearby ensuring that my education is not interrupted by harmful means. Without a doubt, he deserves thanks on behalf of myself, and the entire student body at Grove City High School.”

Student at Grove City High School

“Let me take you back to a time before our SRO took the reins of my high school. Legend tells of daily brawls within the corrupted walls of the cafeteria. Students would fight at the drop of a pin, letting their contending words progress into flying fists with violent intentions. Our school was starting to develop a reputation for not only its dramatic physicality, but also its drug problem. Students had no reason to fear breaking school rules. Detentions and suspensions no longer had any threatening effect upon them. It was a scary place to be.

Luckily, these situations took place before my freshman year. In 2009 a rugged and respectful SRO stepped in to fill the void of order and safety. Within two months his reputation of “using force necessary to control a situation” was established. Kids known to throw punches kept their hands to themselves. The SRO also had a K-9 dog called Grief, who was famous for his “impeccable smell.” Officer Ghetto made sure to discipline students, and even earned their respect by befriending them and being a positive role model.

In my four years of attendance, I can count on my hand the number of fights I’ve witnessed. Drugs are no longer tolerated. Without a resource officer my four years of high school could have been characterized by violence and fear but instead they were characterized by great memories and safety.”

Student at Medina High School

“Officer Ron Burkitt doesn’t just have an impact on those students who are ‘busted’ by him. He also impacts those of us at Davidson High School who want a violence and drug-free environment. His presence and dedication to his job provide a peaceful and conducive learning environment for students. His presence is also supportive of our teachers. The teachers and staff know that they are working with kids who will respect the law. His not only reactionary, but focused on prevention as well and the proactive steps to create a better school community. This provides a positive environment for all. He attends hockey games and other events in civilian clothes. This is the silent support he is gives to all students. He becomes a role model for many of the students who may at first avoid him – but need him the most. Officer Burkitt isn’t happiest to “catch kids doing wrong’ but finds it more rewarding to see those who started down the wrong path turn their attitudes and lives around. For that, everyone in the Hilliard community benefits.”

Student at Davidson High School