



NEWS RELEASE

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Funding approved for SROs in Zionsville and Western Boone schools

A multi-agency partnership will facilitate the assignment of a sworn law enforcement professional in every Zionsville and Western Boone school* beginning this August. Partners in this effort include the Town of Zionsville Mayor's Office, Zionsville Police Department (ZPD), Boone County Sheriff's Office (BCSO), Zionsville Community Schools (ZCS) and Western Boone Schools (WeBo). Funding is to be accomplished in collaboration with the Town of Zionsville, Boone County and Whitestown Councils.

The Boone County Sheriff's Office portion of the plan to add six new deputies and outfit them with uniforms and equipment is \$1.04 million. Fund shares from the other involved entities reduces the County's cost (via the BSCO budget) to \$590,053.

The Boone County Council approved an additional appropriation at a June 25 special meeting. The County Council approved nearly \$600,000, taken from the Public Safety Local Income Tax, to lay groundwork for the program.

The Zionsville Town Council passed an additional appropriation for public safety on June 18. The \$277,000 total will come with ZCS funds to hire and equip officers to serve and protect the five Zionsville schools in the ZPD urban coverage area. In Zionsville schools, BCSO deputies will be placed in the three rural district schools: Zionsville West Middle School, Stonegate Elementary and Boone Meadow Elementary.

The Whitestown Town Council made it official on June 13, pledging up to \$75,000 for BCSO's hiring and outfitting of two School Resource Officers and an additional \$75,000 for the 2019-20 school year.

In Western Boone Schools, one officer per school will be placed at Western Boone Jr.-Sr. High School, Thorntown Elementary and Granville Wells Elementary. Current WeBo Resource Officer Jeremy McClaine will be promoted to administrative sergeant to oversee the School Resource Officer Division of BSCO.

Putting a trained, well-equipped professional law enforcement officer in every school in the county has been part of a collaborative plan between the Town of Zionsville, ZPD, BCSO and ZCS for some time. According to Boone County Sheriff Mike Nielsen, the law enforcement professionals assigned to schools will be equipped with the same gear as deputies assigned to patrol duty.

"We have been proactive with this plan for over a year now," said Sheriff Nielsen. "With the recent events in Noblesville this past month, it has expedited our decision to move forward with a well-designed fiscal and logistical plan. I have granddaughters who attend Noblesville West Middle School and it satisfies me knowing we are continuing to do our part to help keep the students of Boone County schools safe and secure. I truly want to thank all entities involved in making this plan a reality."

“We have been working on this plan for over a year now. It’s certainly a conversation that every community should be having and acting upon,” said Zionsville Mayor Tim Haak.

“This is very important. These are *our* kids. And we’ve seen what can happen way too close to home,” said Whitestown Town Councilor Susan Austin.

ZCS Superintendent Dr. Robison said, “ZCS has benefitted from strong public safety partnerships for a very long time. This expanded set of partnerships is testament to the broad support for such linkage and its window to continuous vigilance and ongoing discovery of how best to reduce threat in a systemic way.”

**Lebanon Community School Corporation has its own police force that operates in collaborative partnership with the Lebanon Police Department.*

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