

# SCHOOL RESOURCE UNIT

Gainesville Police Department



# The origin of School Resource Officers (SROs)

- 1950's – Flint Michigan
- Flint's police department hoped to improve relationship between police officers and youth by installing plain clothed officers in schools there to protect students and staff.
- Over time SRO programs became adopted across the country.
- There is no government entity tracking the number of schools with SROs in them or the number of SROs operating today however the **National Association of School Resource Officers** (NASRO), estimates that between 14,000 and 20,000 SROs **are** currently in service nationwide.



# Gainesville's SRO Programs

- The Gainesville Police Department currently provides SRO services to all 16 ACSB schools in the city limits of Gainesville.
- 9 of these schools are elementary, 3 are middle, 2 are high school and 2 are alternative learning schools for kids with special needs.



*The Alachua County Sherriff's Office has an School Resource program servicing 17 ACSB schools  
High Springs has an SRO program servicing 1 ACSB School  
The City of Alachua has an SRO program servicing 1 ACSB School  
We also assist local charter schools with regard to active shooter training & safety assessments.*

# School Resource Officers

## ■ Law Enforcement

- *Safety for everyone on the campus – Prevention & Intervention & Response*
- *Enforcement: Referrals to: Parental Discipline, School Discipline, Counseling Programs, Juvenile Intervention Programs, \*Juvenile Court.*

*(\*Restricted Use of this option)*

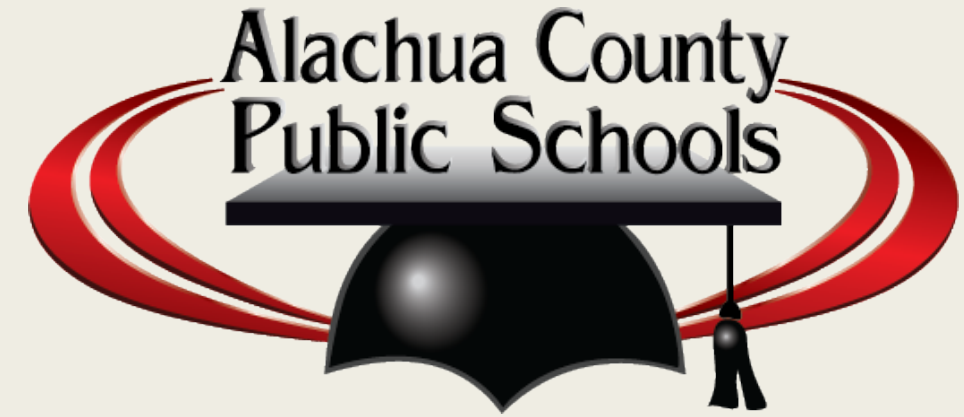
## ■ Mentor

- *Create & Maintain Positive Relationships with Students, Parents, Faculty & Staff.*
- *Along with other School Staff, provide students with encouragement to make good choices as they grow and mature.*

## ■ Educator

- *Provide Presentations and Instruction of various topics to students, faculty and parent groups.*

# Every school is different



- There are a few categories of schools in Gainesville
  - *Elementary, Middle, High School, Specialties*
- Every single school in our country is different and unique
- One of the jobs of the School Resource Officer is to understand their school's unique needs and meet them.
- They achieve this through collaboration with the ACSB, the school staff, the student population, interfacing with parents and through numerous other partnerships.

*Although the SRO reports to their police supervisory chain of command the principal is the campus CEO.*

*The SRO must always communicate clearly and work closely with the principal at all times to create and maintain the most effective working relationships.*



# Day in the life of an SRO

Because schools are SO different there is not a single template.

- Ingress/exit of students at start/end of day.
- Campus Perimeter Checks (Gates closed, Access Points locked)
- Response to requests from; school ADMIN, Behavioral Resource Teachers, ACSB...
- Assist on Threat Assessment Team investigating spectrum of school threats.
- Response to incidents (fights, criminal complaints, DCF investigations, truancy issues...).
- Proactive efforts (identify security issues and address, mentoring, instructing,...).
- Resource for parents, students and staff for spectrum of issues (we have access to community resources.)



# The Impact of the Parkland School Shooting at Stoneman Douglas High School in Gainesville

- On February 14, 2018 expelled student Nikolas Cruz took an Uber to Stoneman Douglas HS, walked across part of campus carrying a rifle case, entered a 3 story student building and conducted a floor to floor assault on the building with a rifle killing 17 students and staff members and injuring 17 others.
- Prior to the shooting, warnings that a Nikolas Cruz had announced a desire to be the next school shooter were poorly investigated by the FBI.
- Issues with the response of the SRD assigned to MSDHS exposed weaknesses in SRD training.
- Issues with the overall response exposed opportunities for public safety improvement in many areas (prevention, intervention, active shooter response).



# Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act (Senate Bill 7026)

- Broad legislation *who's ultimate aim is to better address issues that contribute to active shooting incidents on school campuses.*
- Examples of Senate Bill 7026 initiatives and changes:
  - Fortify FL App
  - Removed impediments related to DOE sharing information with FDLE on students showing red flag behavior that could lead to active shooter
  - School Board Safety Chiefs (Yours is Chief Casey Hamilton)
  - Mandatory Safety Officers on Campus (SRO, Guardians, Safety Person)
  - Mandatory & Annual Safety Assessment's of School Grounds (FSSATs)
  - Accountability of Principals not meeting SB 7026 Mandates
  - Mandatory certifications for SROs (Crisis Intervention, Basic School Resource)
  - Mandatory school safety drills



# Some changes for GPD SRO since legislation passed (2018 vs 2019 School Years)

- 1) We added five new School Resource Officers to the unit thus ensuring every school has a dedicated officer,
- 2) We ensured that a School Resource Officer will be present at every school during school hours,
- 3) We ensured all our School Resource Officers are trained in Crisis Intervention, Basic School Resource, Handle with Care, and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design for Schools,
- 4) We now work with staff to complete Risk Assessments for every school,
- 5) We created Critical Incident Plans for all schools and update them regularly.
- 6) The ACSB chooses a Standard Response Protocol for response to critical incidents on campus and the SROs help train/drill staff and students.
- 7) Every year we deliver 3 days of “Single Responder to an Active Shooter in a Campus Setting” training to SROs.
- 8) Participate in unique projects ie: we worked with University of Florida’s College of Psychology to produce SRO training on identifying, predicting and stopping student trauma,

# ILOVEUGUYS Standard Response Protocol



HOLD



SECURE



LOCKDOWN



EVACUATE



SHELTER



STANDARD<sup>TM</sup>  
REUNIFICATION METHOD

# Commitment to keeping kids in school

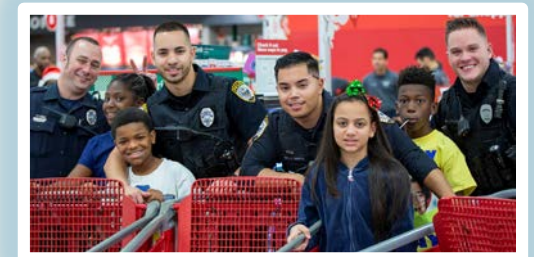
- In past years many students were sometimes arrested for fighting, disorderly conduct, threatening others and similar offenses on campus.
- This is now seen as non-beneficial to the student.
- GPD now has policies in place that look at juvenile arrests as a last resort especially for minor law violations you would likely see on a campus (like fighting, disorderly conduct, etc..). Most arrests now are related to death threats against students/staff, or forcible felonies.
- Mental Health is often a factor when issues of highly disruptive behavior emerge on campus. This can trigger a mental health assessment. Officers are empowered to Baker Act students if they believe the child is suicidal or an immediate danger to seriously harm others, but SROs always try to bring mental health experts to help in these assessments. (MRT's)
- SROs do not become involved in the matter of school suspensions, leaving this entirely up to school administration.



***OUTPOST – is an alternative learning environment at A Quinn Jones for children who exhibit volatile behavioral issues that make learning for the school student population exposed to their behavior impossible.***

# What else are we involved in?

- Summer schools
- DC Safety Patrol Trip
- Project Heatwave
- Junior Police Academy
- Police Explorers
- Police Mini Academy
- Shop with a Cop
- Heroes and Helpers
- radKIDS
- Subject matter experts for the state on SRO
- Patrol Deployment (pandemic, hurricanes, major events, etc..)





# Shop With a Cop



*One of the highlights of the year for GPD is this SRO driven event.*

*Needy kids are identified at each school*

*Donations from WalMart, officers and private donors allow these kids to shop for Christmas gifts.*

*May spend their entire budget on their siblings and parents.*



*GPD's and ASO's SRO Units were recognized  
as the best in the state for a reason*



*Thank you!!*





Elementary



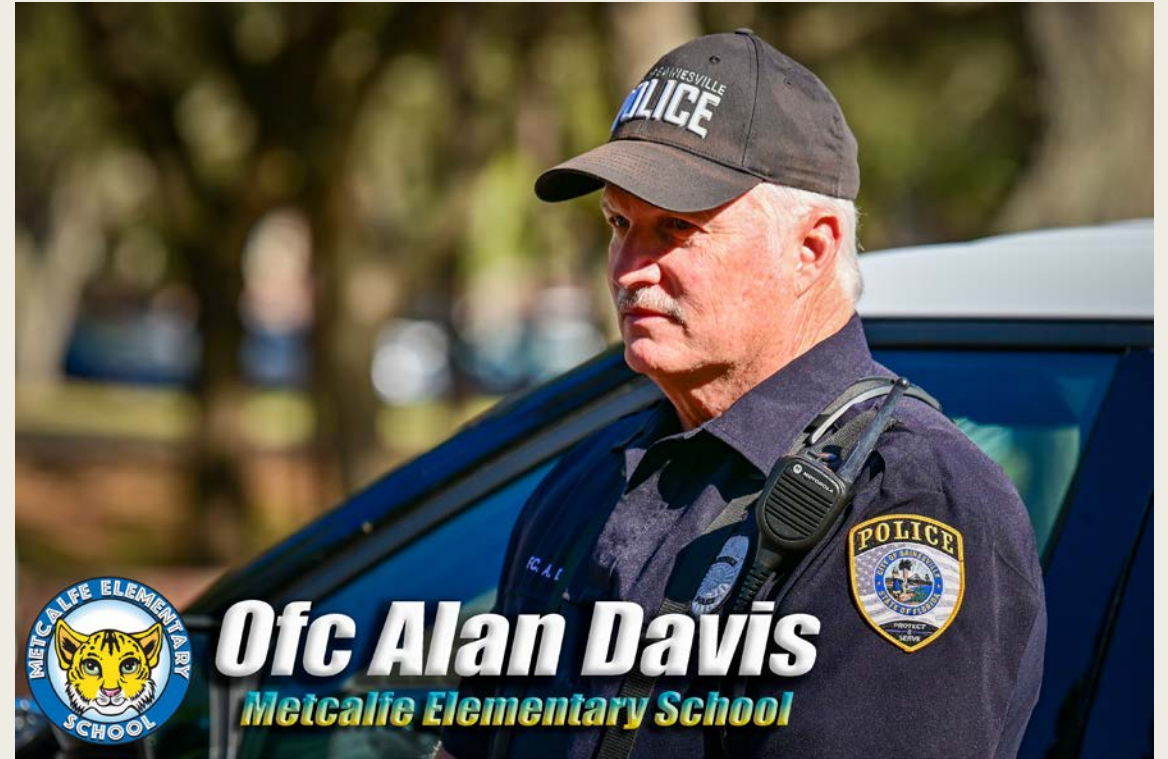
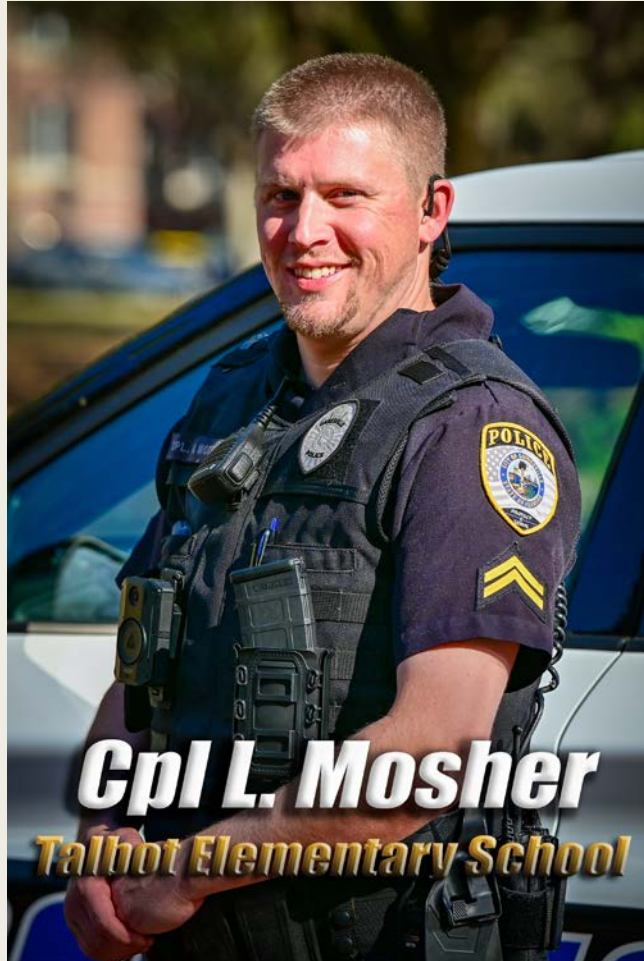
Schools









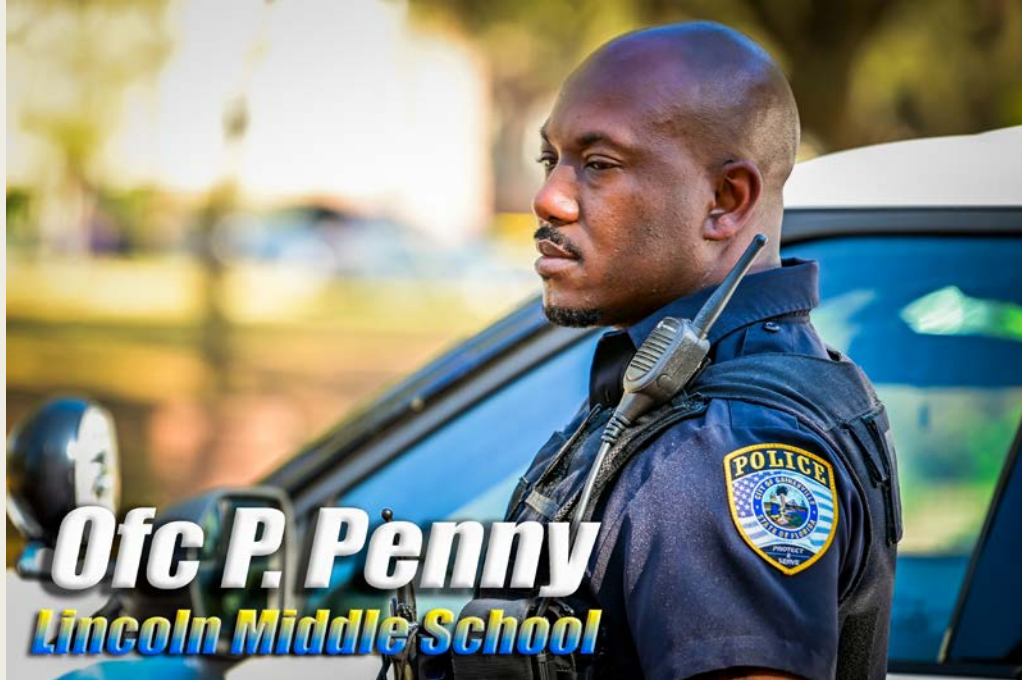




# Middle

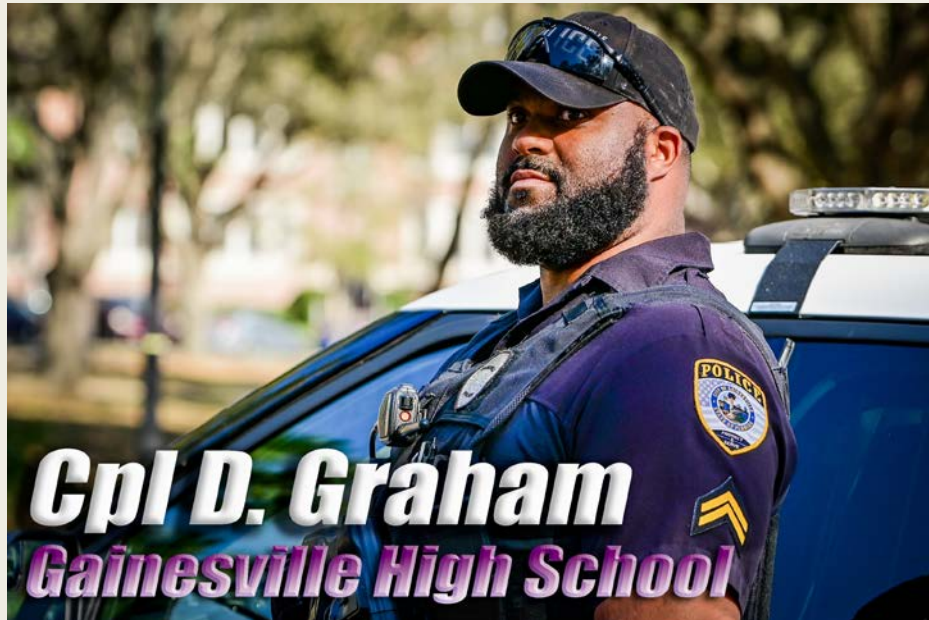


# Schools

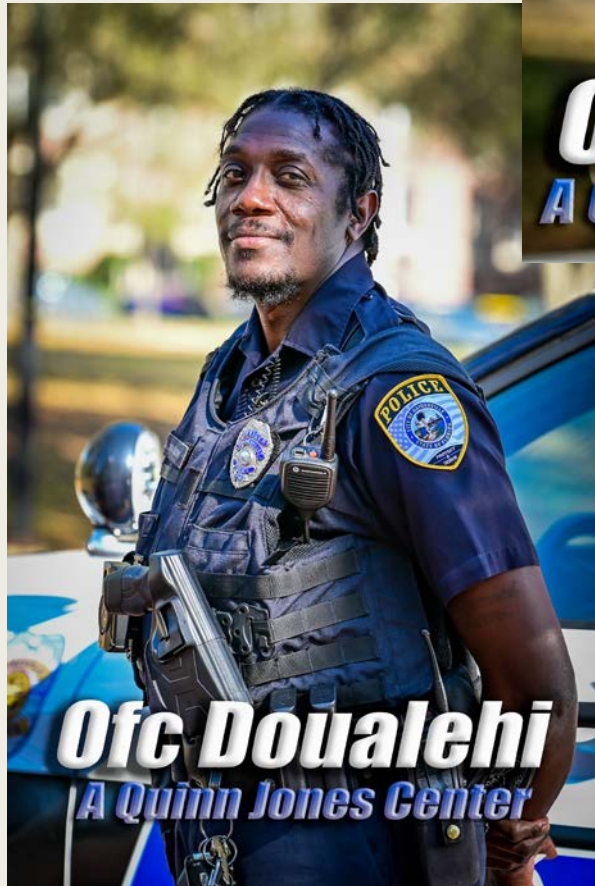




# High Schools







# Specialty Schools



# S.R.O. Unit



# Supervisors





