

## CCPS secured \$276,000 grant to provide more police coverage at schools

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Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is increasing the presence of law enforcement at some schools. The Office of School Safety and Security secured a \$276,000 grant that is allowing CCPS to enhance its security efforts through additional police coverage.

Jason Stoddard, director of school safety and security, said the grant is limited to increasing police presence at schools and will provide coverage at some elementary schools and the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center. CCPS selected schools in remote areas as well as some in more congested areas that can limit the School Resource Officer (SRO) availability to quickly respond. All middle and high schools have a full-time SRO who also covers the closest elementary schools to their regular assignment.

The extra officers will work each school day, and many will cover multiple schools. This is in addition to the regular SRO coverage for these schools. The officers are not trained SROs, so they will serve in a different capacity and generally remain outside the school in a prominent location near the main entrance. Officers may enter the school and interact with students in common areas.

If an emergency situation occurs, the officers will be available to assist staff until the assigned SRO can arrive. Their primary mission is to provide physical building security and maintain a visible presence while students are in school, Stoddard said.

Elementary schools receiving additional coverage include Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy, C. Paul Barnhart, Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, Billingsley, William B. Wade, Dr. Gustavus Brown, Arthur Middleton, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd, Mary B. Neal, Dr. James Craik, T.C. Martin and Malcolm. Police covering Stethem will work the entire school day at the center.

The grant continues through the end of the 2019-20 school year.

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