



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ST. CHARLES COUNTY TO SPEND \$2.2 MILLION IN ARPA FUNDS TO PROTECT STUDENTS

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO – As the 2022-2023 school year gets underway this month, all schools in unincorporated St. Charles County, Dardenne Prairie, Weldon Spring and Augusta Elementary School in the Washington School District will have a School Resource Officer (SRO) from the St. Charles County Police Department keeping watch. They all will be fully equipped with everything needed to provide protection for students, teachers, and staff.

This, thanks to approval from the St. Charles County Council to hire 14 new SROs using funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), in the amount of \$643,461 which covers the cost through Dec. 31. County officials will budget the cost for the remainder of the school year in the County 2023 budget. An additional \$1,274,870 from ARPA funding for equipment for each officer also has been approved. Equipment includes everything from patrol cars, firearms, tasers, uniforms, and body and car cameras, to safety vests, gas masks, first aid kits, fire extinguishers and more. With the extensive training every officer has received, and the necessary equipment, they are fully prepared for any scenario, including an active shooter incident.

“While these types of incidents are not something anyone wants to think about,” says St. Charles County Executive Steve Ehlmann, “I hope the addition of these SROs and safety equipment will help parents and teachers in our schools breathe easier. Safety and education are two of my administration’s priorities, and they go hand in hand. The ARPA funding has allowed us the opportunity to provide this added security this year, and we will find the money to continue to provide it in the future.”

Every police officer in St. Charles County—including SROs—receive Multi-Assault, Counter Terrorism Action Capabilities, or MACTAC, training. School scenarios are included in the 10 hours of intense training; officers are reminded that incidents are spontaneous and that suspects are unpredictable and could be heavily armed.

“St. Charles County received \$78 million in ARPA funds from the federal government,” Ehlmann says. “We are scrutinizing every dollar, prioritizing needs, and making certain it meets criteria set for the funds. We are grateful to be able to use the funding in this way.”

In addition to the SROs, the \$78 million includes funding for improvements such as the St. Charles County Justice Center (County Jail) and St. Charles County Family Arena (which serves as the County’s mass casualty emergency center); the Developmental Disabilities Resource Board (DDRB); Community and Children’s Resource Board (CCRB); St. Charles County veterans organizations; the County Highway’s slab replacement project; and personnel to support the Police Department and Stormwater Management Program.

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About St. Charles County:

St. Charles County, Missouri, founded in 1812, is one of the fastest growing counties in Missouri. With a population of 405,262, it is the state’s third largest county. It is home to 21 scenic county parks of which four are in reserve, encompassing 4,197 acres.

With one of the largest economies in the state, St. Charles County is home to multinational companies including General Motors, Citi, MasterCard Worldwide and Boeing. It is ranked among the top 25 counties in the nation in high-tech job growth by the Progressive Policy Institute and consistently has the lowest unemployment rate in the Metropolitan St. Louis area.

St. Charles County Government has more than 1,170 employees in more than 30 departments and offices who work to make the county an excellent place to live, work and shop. For more information, please visit sccmo.org.