

## History of SRO Program

November 2018

- **1971-1973: Two SROs**

The original SRO program was instituted in 1971, funded in part by grants from the Federal government's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA).

- **1973-1977: Six SROs**

In 1973, the program was expanded from two LPD officers to six. These officers split their time during the week among Lincoln's elementary schools, junior high schools, and high schools.

- **1977: SRO Program ends**

The first SRO program ended in about 1977. Federal funding had lapsed, and a new police chief made the decision to return these resources to the street. In about 1988, however, the police department joined a national movement to institute a program known as Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE). This program originated in the Los Angeles Unified School District and consisted of a curriculum of lesson plans delivered by police officers to fifth grade students. Although not designated by the job title of SRO, the DARE officers worked in elementary schools full time, teaching the DARE curriculum. DARE continued for the next 12 years.

- **1994: Six SROs—four in high schools and two in middle schools**

- **1995-1998: Two additional SROs added to middle schools**

In 1994, LPD received a grant from the newly-created Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services (the COPS Office). This grant funded fifteen Lincoln police officers, six of whom were SROs assigned to Lincoln's four public high schools, and two of whom were assigned to middle schools. Over the course of the next few years, two additional SROs were added for middle schools.

- **1998-2000: Eight SROs—four in high schools and four in middle schools**

By the 1998-1999 school year, Lincoln had a total of eight SROs: four in high schools, and four splitting time among middle schools. In addition to these SROs, five officers taught DARE in elementary schools.

- **2000-2003: Thirteen SROs—four in high schools, four in middle schools, five in elementary schools**

In 2000, after considerable planning and public discussion, LPD ended the DARE program in elementary schools. LPD had essentially exhausted the supply of personnel who were willing to accept this assignment, which was somewhat daunting: each officer was teaching the same curriculum unit in about a dozen fifth grade classes every week. In addition, the growing research literature about the efficacy

of DARE was universally discouraging. As a way of easing that transition, the five DARE officers were converted to elementary school SROs for a short period of about three school years.

- **2003-2010: Ten SROs—six in high schools, four in middle schools**

- **2010-2018: Six SROs—all in high schools**

In 2010, the four SROs serving middle schools were eliminated and those positions returned to the street, largely in response to tightening budgets, lack of new officers to cope with population growth, and the belief that resources were not efficiently allocated when four officers were splitting time among eleven middle schools.

- **2019: Twelve SROs—six in high schools and six in middle schools**

As a result of the Safe and Successful Kids Interlocal Agreement, six additional SROs are added to serve LPS's twelve middle schools.