

Ringgold School District Police Department

The Ringgold School District's School Board has asked that I provide information to parents and guardians of Ringgold students, specifically regarding our Police Department and officers. The officers are listed by their school assignment, police experience, and their training specific to their job as a School Police Officer. After, I will try to explain and communicate everything we do on a daily basis to keep your students safe.

First I want to explain the difference between a School Resource Officer and a School Police Officer. Some school districts utilize School Resource Officers. This is a municipal police officer that the school district contracts through the municipality. This is a common practice when a school district only has one municipality, example being Peters Township. However, Peters Township has only one police officer for all five of its schools. When a school district has more than one municipality within the school district, a school based police department is more common. That is the model that the Ringgold School District currently utilizes. There are seven municipalities making up our district, broken into two different District Judge's offices. Therefore, the School Code and Pennsylvania Law allow that a School Police Department can be formed and utilized.

Here is a list of our current department.

Officer Training Information

Acronyms:

NASRO, National Association of School Resource Officers (<https://www.nasro.org/>)

SRO, School Resource Officer

ALICE, Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate. Active Shooter/Violent Intruder Training (<https://www.alicetraining.com/>)

SAP, Student Assistance Program

RHS

Police Officer Rob Vitalbo

Previously served as a Patrolman, then Superintendent of the Donora Borough Police Department. NASRO Basic and Advanced SRO Courses. Certified ALICE Instructor.

Police Officer Paul Zubovic

Retired Trooper, Pennsylvania State Police. Retired from the U.S. Marshal Service.

Executive Security Officer Colleen Spahr

Act 235 Officer, NASRO Basic Security Officer Course, Pennsylvania Certified SAP Mentor (Student Assistance Program).

RMS

Police Officer Bob Boyer

Retired Monongahela City Police Officer. NASRO Basic and Advanced SRO Courses. NASRO Nationally Certified CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) Security Assessor and Auditor. Certified ALICE Instructor. Federal Firearms Instructor.

Police Officer Jeff Trypus

Retired Trooper First Class, Pennsylvania State Police, Criminal Investigator (Detective). Pennsylvania State Police Juvenile Case Officer. September 11th, 2001, assigned to the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF).

RESS

Police Officer Jeff Gillen

Retired Corporal, Pennsylvania State Police, Criminal Investigator (Detective) and Auto Theft Task Force member. Former California Borough Chief of Police.

Police Officer Wally Pustelak

Previously served as a Patrolman with the Donora Borough Police Department.

***Note:** Officer Gillen and Pustelak split one position. Each only works for five (5) of the ten (10) days in a pay period. So there is only one (1) Police Officer working on a normal day.

RESN

Police Officer Danielle Adrian

Police Officer in Smith Twp., Washington County. NASRO Basic and Advanced Courses. Pennsylvania Certified SAP Mentor (Student Assistance Program). U.S. Department of Transportation Certified National Child Passenger Safety Seat Technician.

RHS and RMS Campus Evening Officer (2:00pm-10:00pm)

Police Officer Nevin Beatty

Police Officer, Donora Borough Police Department. Former Southwest Regional Police Department, Fayette City Police Department, Lawrence County SWAT Team Member.

Police Administration

Chief of Police Clayton R. Shell

Retired Trooper First Class, Pennsylvania State Police. US Army, Sergeant First Class, Military Police Training Expert. NASRO Basic and Advanced Courses. NASRO Nationally Certified CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) Security Assessor and Auditor. Certified ALICE Instructor. U.S. Department of Transportation Certified National Child Passenger Safety Seat Technician.

Senior Security Advisor and Truancy Officer Thomas Thompson

Retired Washington County District Attorney's Office, Domestic Relations Investigator. NASRO Basic and Advanced Courses. Certified ALICE Instructor. Pennsylvania Certified SAP Mentor (Student Assistance Program). U.S. Department of Transportation Certified National Child Passenger Safety Seat Technician.

Additional Training and Security Procedures Used

All personnel have CPR and 1st Aid certification. All personnel have qualified with their carried firearms. Officer Boyer, Gillen, Trypus and Chief Shell are all qualified with patrol rifles and shotguns.

(Department does NOT currently carry patrol rifles or shotguns). All personnel are trained and issued critical incident rapid deploy body armor.

This past summer (June 2017) The Ringgold School District Police Department hosted the Washington County Chiefs of Police at the (Old) Ringgold Middle School in Finleyville. Numerous police departments, SWAT teams, Washington County Juvenile and Adult Probation Officers all attended Active Shooter training at the school.

The Ringgold School District Police Department also conducted SIMTAC School based training scenarios with all of our listed officers this past summer.

At the start of this school year RMS and RHS students and faculty were trained in ALICE training and procedures for an active shooter/violent intruder.

The Ringgold School District Police Department uses the RAPTOR Visitor Management System in all four (4) of our schools. All Officers are trained in its use. RAPTOR determines if a Visitor is a sexual predator and on the Megan's Law list. The Ringgold School District Police Department has also upgraded our system to alert an officer if the Visitor has a Protection From Abuse Order (PFA) or custody order involving a registered Ringgold Student. Ringgold updates its database with RAPTOR every Friday. Ringgold has also customized our system. If a person attempting to enter one of our schools does come up as a predator/violator, the officer is alerted immediately and must confirm the "hit". Our system has been customized to immediately send a text alert to the Principal of that school, the Superintendent, the Ringgold School District Chief of Police and the corresponding municipal Chief of Police. The officer also has a silent alert mechanism on that RAPTOR system that alerts all of those persons as well if needed.

Our Police Officers carry two (2) radios on their person while on duty; a school radio and a police radio. The school radio allows the officer to communicate with other Ringgold police officers, Ringgold Principals, custodians, the main offices and our school buses. The police radio allows the officer to communicate directly with the Washington County 911 center and local police departments, fire departments and ambulances. Our police officers call in service everyday as do local police departments. Each police radio is programmed to a specific call sign and officer. Each police radio has a panic button on it. If that button is pushed, the Washington County 911 and all surrounding police departments know specifically which officer at which school needs immediate assistance.

All officers are annually trained and refreshed in the VICON video surveillance system utilized by the Ringgold School District. There are currently 375 cameras district wide that are recording 24 hours a day. These cameras are placed on the interior and exterior of the schools. The Ringgold School District Police Department also employs license plate cameras. All vehicles entering and exiting school district property have their license plates recorded. These cameras are continuously being monitored by the officer in the security vestibule at each school.

Every morning at RHS and RMS buses are randomly selected for those students to be searched by metal detector and to have their bags searched. On average, a bus is searched two (2) or three (3) times a week. All student drivers and car riders are required to go through the metal detector and bag searches every morning. All late students must go through the Security Vestibule, metal detectors and have their bags searched. The Ringgold School District Police Department has the assistance of the RHS and RMS faculty. Teachers conduct the searches of bags and monitor the metal detectors as students enter from those selected buses. A Police Officer is outside to randomly select those buses and then ensure students selected or required to go through the screening process comply. That officer is also monitoring the entrance to ensure Visitors and deliveries proceed to the security vestibule to check in. He also is there to help get students, faculty and staff across the crosswalk safely as buses are dropping off. He is very busy out there. At RHS and RMS, there is an officer in the Security Vestibule during arrivals to screen Visitors. At RHS there is another officer moving randomly between the cafeteria and the Main Entrance (metal detectors) patrolling, ready to assist faculty at either location.

After the late bell every morning in all of our schools, every exterior door is checked to ensure it is locked and secure by our officers. After completing those door checks the Principal is notified by radio that the building is secure. Throughout the school day doors are randomly checked numerous times to ensure they are locked and secure. Ringgold School District Policy prohibits anyone from "propping" a door open unless an Officer is physically standing at that door monitoring it. After school hours this policy is still enforced. Our evening officer makes periodic checks to ensure doors are locked and secured.

In ALL of our schools, ALL Visitors must enter and exit at the Security Vestibule. All Visitors that will need to actually enter the school must provide a state issued license or ID card. All Visitors must be searched by metal detector and have all bags or items coming into the school searched. All Visitors will be checked through the RAPTOR system. If cleared, all Visitors must wear the printed and issued RAPTOR Visitor sticker.

All deliveries to a school will be escorted and monitored by an officer. If all officers are tied up on other pressing issues, a custodian may act as an escort. (Custodians carry radios).

RHS and RMS have random K-9 narcotic searches throughout the school year. Only the Superintendent and the Chief of Police know the dates and times of those searches. Principals are advised an hour before the time on that date. An announcement is made by a Principal to clear all hallways of the school being searched by K-9 units. All students, faculty and staff remain in their class rooms and offices during the searches. Two (2) K-9 units are used for each search. A Ringgold School District Police Officer, a Principal, and a Guidance Counselor are assigned to each K-9 unit team. It only takes approximately 20-25 minutes to search either RHS or RMS.

The Ringgold School District Police Department is a state recognized Police Department and carries a Pennsylvania mandated ORI (Originating Identifier) as does every state recognized police department. PA0635800. The Ringgold School District Police Department's jurisdiction includes all school district property and up to 500 feet from that property. In addition, our jurisdiction covers any incident that occurs on a Ringgold School District bus, no matter its location. Our officers are all sworn in before a Judge in the Washington County Court of Common Pleas and derive their authority from the Pennsylvania School Code. All officers are required to display their badge and ID card while on duty. The Ringgold School District Police Department has a Rules and Regulation Manual that has been approved by the Ringgold School District School Board. All procedures listed in this document have also been approved by the Ringgold School District School Board. The Ringgold School District Police Department and the Chief of Police report directly to the Ringgold School District Superintendent of Schools.

Please feel free to call should you have any questions or concerns relating to the safety and security of your student.

Respectfully,

Clayton R. Shell
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