



QuEd up for Education

People and programs impacting our QCSD community

"I take it personally when people don't feel safe going into schools."

QCSD hires a second SRO

By Gary Weckselblatt

With a new school year less than a month away, Quakertown Community School District parents will be comforted to hear from Richland Township Police Officer Brian Hendrzak, recently hired as the district's second School Resource Officer (SRO).

"I take it personally when people don't feel safe going into schools," Hendrzak said. "Instead of just sitting back and watching or being the one saying woulda, coulda, shoulda, I think we're better off with actions instead of words. I want the community to know that they can count on me, and their children will be safe when I'm there."

Hendrzak joins Quakertown Police Officer Bob Lee as another well-trained law enforcement official who spends his days in a district school. Lee has an office in Quakertown Community High School. Hendrzak will work out of Strayer Middle School.

"He'll be a wonderful addition to Strayer," Principal Dr. Jennifer Bubser said. "The presence of an SRO in the building really gives you that peace of mind."

The new SRO, much like Lee, will also be a factor in the educational process. "Officer Hendrzak will speak with students about the choices they make, deliver lessons about drugs and give presentations about social media," she said. "He'll also be able to speak with parents about the latest trends on a variety of topics."

The district's contract with Richland police is for three years and can be extended to five years with the agreement of both parties. QCSD picks up 75 percent



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**Officer Brian Hendrzak,
Richland Police**

of Hendrzak's salary, with grants covering a portion of the district's bill.

A Richland officer for 10 years, Hendrzak has been a member of the Central Bucks Special Response Team for eight years. Prior to joining Richland, he spent five years with the Pennsylvania State Police Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement. He's currently taking a 40-hour course developed by the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) on SRO training.

A youth coach in multiple sports, Hendrzak describes himself as "an approachable person." That's a good thing as his new role can be as much counselor and educator as it is police officer.

Superintendent Dr. Bill Harner agrees. Harner, as the leader of the Greenville (S.C.) County Schools, had 32 SROs.

"Our School Board has been very supportive of initiatives that help keep our students and faculty safe," Harner said. "A good SRO is priceless for a secondary school. When done correctly, students make the SRO the first person they approach to talk about a concern they may have."

Richard J. Ficco, Sr., chief of Richland Township police, said that having Hendrzak in schools "can build relationships with the community in a very positive way. Think of how many students will see this officer on a daily basis. I think this is going to be a great thing."

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