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## ***News Release***

September 17, 2008  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **DEA New Jersey Division and Bergen County Prosecutor's Office** *Announce the deployment of the Ballistic Shield to the School Resource Officer...*

**(Bergen County, NJ)** - Gerard P. McAleer, Special Agent in Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) New Jersey Division, Bergen County Prosecutor John L. Molinelli, and Det. Sgt. Patrick Kissane, President of the New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers, have partnered in a collaborative effort to provide Bergen County local law enforcement and the citizens they serve with the tools necessary to keep our children safe, should an incident of violence present itself in our schools.

Schools have been a safe haven where parents could send their children with the knowledge that not only were they receiving an education, but they would be kept safe and secure from unwanted and unwarranted intrusion. Recent history has shown that this comfort and security is no longer absolute. Tragically, the issue of violence in our schools and acts of violence visited upon our children while attending school has reached crisis and endemic proportions. Efforts by the law enforcement community to be proactive in their effort to combat such acts, while well reasoned and well intentioned, unfortunately can never be sufficient to prevent all acts of random violence.

Armed with this knowledge, the school resource officer program was created as a collaborative effort by certified law enforcement officers, educators, students, parents and the community at large to offer law related educational programs in the schools in an effort to reduce crime, drug abuse, and violence and provide a safe educational environment. In recognition of this effort, as such, each Police Department in Bergen County and each school resource officer assigned to a school district will receive a ballistic shield designed to protect the officer and facilitate the safe removal of our children from identifiable situations of danger.

These 112 ballistic shields have been purchased with money forfeited from those persons arrested, prosecuted and convicted of drug crimes by the Office of the Bergen County Prosecutor. As such, no cost will be borne by the taxpayers of the County.

"DEA has a responsibility to assist our law enforcement partners with the best training and operational tools available in order to protect our communities. We want the School Resource Officers (SRO) to be prepared to protect themselves and others," said Gerard P. McAleer, Special Agent in Charge of the DEA New Jersey Division.

The ballistic shield is a tool utilized by DEA Special Agents during enforcement operations on a daily basis. The Drug Enforcement Administration, New Jersey Division, will train the school resource officers on the proper use of the ballistic shield. It is the fervent desire of all law enforcement officials associated with this joint effort that these shields shall never have to be used.

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