



Resources to Support School Safety

Providing students with a safe and secure learning environment is one of the most important responsibilities of a school district. Now more than ever, school boards and other district leaders are evaluating their current resources and plans to determine if there are additional or different programs, policies or resources needed to keep our students and staff safe.

Our communities, including school districts, parents, law enforcement, students and other stakeholders all have ideas about the best way to ensure that our school buildings are safe places for our students and staff. Consensus in one community may also be different than consensus among stakeholders in a neighboring community.

NYSSBA does not believe there is a single right answer to address these important issues. One size or style does not fit all. Some communities may determine that the best solution is to have a school resource officer employed by a law enforcement agency assigned to one or more of their school buildings. Another district may feel they can be better served by a security officer or team that is not affiliated with law enforcement, but rather selected and hired by the district. Others may determine their greatest need is to provide mental health services, while yet another may want to focus on the hardening of entrances or other security systems. This is not an exhaustive list. However, these and other options have one thing in common. Each will best serve students if they are adopted with local stakeholder input and support.

As the state considers legislative actions to support school safety and security, we ask that you consider the following:

- Any resources provided by the state, whether training, grants or other, **must** be made available to all public school districts, including Boards of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) and the New York City Department of Education.
- Any resources provided by the state should be as flexible as possible. Access to funding to support school safety should not be contingent upon a district's adoption of a specific approach to school safety and security selected by the State.

As discussions on this important topic continue, NYSSBA encourages State policymakers to ensure that school district have the resources and supports they need to provide students the sound basic education they are entitled it, in a safe and secure environment.

For additional information, please contact NYSSBA Governmental Relations at 518-783-0200.