



Leading the Way

We support the proposal that enhances security at schools and establish statewide standards for school safety practices, including:

- Requiring school districts and law enforcement agencies to enter into a MOU if they choose to hire a police officer to work in their school, ensuring law enforcement's role in the school is clearly defined, separated from disciplinary functions of the school, and agreed upon by all parties;
- Directing School Safety Improvement Teams to develop a model MOU as a resource for school districts and law enforcement agencies; and
- The development of standardized training curriculum specifically designed for school resource officers.

We also support legislative proposals that allow school districts to opt out of being polling places for elections, and are encouraged that the governor has called for Election Day to be an official state holiday, which would in turn close all schools, thereby eliminating the security concerns of many in regards to schools as polling places. Allowing elections to be held in school buildings, which are typically secured from entry by non-school personnel, is a real security risk for students and educators.

Every Child, Their Safety: Keeping Our Children Safe in School

There is nothing more important than the safety and security of our children. NYS PTA has issued a statement, *Every Child, Their Safety*, which includes many initiatives in school safety and security:

- Many school security improvements may be a part of the school district's Smart School Bond Act plan, and we continue to call for plans that include safety and security measures be immediately expedited for approval, so that construction may begin and completed as soon as possible.
- We support increased funding for School Resource Officers at local discretion. This decision should be made in collaboration with parents, teachers, administrators, school boards, school-related professionals, with community input.
- We call for a tax-cap exemption for safety and security initiatives. School safety and security measures should be exempted from the state's tax cap, so each community can make a local decision on safety spending.
- New York State requires each school to develop a School Safety Plan. The plan must include both district-wide and building-wide information and planning. The district plan should outline district general policy, while the building plan should outline details and specific response strategies. District level plans are available for the public, building level plans are not public and available only to first responders.
- New York State should develop a highly secure statewide platform for detailed school building mapping that is accessible (only) to first responders, that includes vulnerability and threat assessments, within the current requirement for school safety plans.
- Local districts should look at increased safety measures, such as one button lockdown systems, security film on (especially) entry doors and large entry windows, and other measures, while balancing student needs.

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