



River Valley Local Schools

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January 13, 2023

River Valley Parents, Staff, Students, and Community,

At the January 12th meeting, the River Valley Local Board of Education approved a resolution authorizing the use of armed staff in the district. House Bill 99 (HB 99) allows districts to give written authorization for the use of armed staff in Ohio school districts.

The River Valley Board had previously approved the use of armed staff for the 2020-21 school year. At that time the use of armed staff for the 2020-21 school year was confidential as protected by Ohio Law, as part of the District's Safety Plan. However, with the passage of HB 99 a school district Board of Education that chooses to use armed staff must inform their community through a public notice. This announcement serves as that notice to our community.

Among the requirements outlined in HB 99, authorized staff must:

- receive written authorization by the Board of Education to be armed within a school safety zone;
- complete 24-hours of initial training on Active Shooter Response, firearms training, and school safety as detailed in HB 99 by the Ohio School Safety Center, or by an approved trainer;
- complete an 8-hour annual requalification training;
- hold a valid Concealed Handgun License; and
- complete an annual Background Records Check.

The main reasons for adopting the use of armed staff in the River Valley School District include:

- Our schools will no longer be soft targets and unprotected.
- As a rural community, response times can often be minutes away in the event of an active shooter. The use of armed staff in our buildings can potentially save lives by providing a more immediate response to the threat.

Finally, every safety measure we take at River Valley, including the use of armed staff, is put in place to try and ensure our staff and students can go home safely to their families and loved ones each and every day.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and, as always, we appreciate your support of our schools.

Thank you,

Adam Wickham
Superintendent