



Monroe County School Boards Association

Position Paper: Keeping Our Schools Safe and Secure

The number one priority for MCSBA member districts is to educate students in a safe and secure environment. Firearm injuries are a leading cause of death among young children and teenagers in the United States.

MCSBA requests: Due to limited local resources, our membership calls on both the NYS Legislature and the Federal Government to provide the following supports to help our school districts to continue their critical work of providing safe and secure places to learn, work, and play.

	SOLUTIONS
Fiscally Responsible Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → MCSBA asks that the costs associated with school safety and security be excluded from the NYS tax levy cap. We also ask for the immediate release of Smart School Bond Act dollars, which can be used for this purpose. → School safety is a critical part of a successful learning environment. The costs associated with school safety are over and above the traditional costs required to provide for the learning environment. With revenues from tax levies capped, expenses for providing school safety are diverted from funding for traditional school services. → Incidents of swatting are an example of disruptions caused and increase in costs, as well as a drain on resources.
Local control of any mandated and non-mandated safety and security measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → All MCSBA member districts work to diligently review and comply with mandated safety plans that provide appropriate lockdown and evacuation responses to a wide variety of potential threats. Plans are developed in coordination with local police, fire and emergency agencies to ensure coordinated and rapid response based on evolving best practices. → School districts are in the best position to make all security decisions. MCSBA asks that any new legislation or regulation allow for local control and contain flexible funding parameters (recommendations about the number of active shooter drills at the discretion of school leaders).
Enhancing Personnel and Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Schools must be available and accessible to the communities that support them as well as providing a safe and secure environment for students and staff. Therefore, good security strategies need to employ a layered approach to safety, including passive and active preventative and responsive capabilities. → MCSBA members support federal and state research to inform best practices for safety and security in school facilities, allowing districts to choose from a selection of proven strategies. → Create a waiver that allows school districts the ability to hire retired emergency response professionals without penalties due to the NYS retirement income cap, providing access to highly qualified staff. → School districts need funding streams to update infrastructure. MCSBA believes that professional development for staff and operations teams is essential to maintaining a secure learning environment. NYS should provide opportunities and funds to allow for security-related professional development.
Cybersecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Provide an insurance consortium for cybersecurity threats and attacks. → Fund professional development opportunities for staff and operations teams on security and cybersecurity to maintain a secure learning environment.

Schools are the safest place for children to gather. Schools need to remain safe havens for all who enter but also need to be open, engaging and supportive environments for learning.

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