



# **Blueprint for Action to Enhance School Safety**

PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY:  
THE SUFFOLK COUNTY SCHOOL  
SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

FALL 2018

# OVERVIEW

- HOW WE GOT HERE.
- WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BASED ON WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED?
- WHO NEEDS TO DO WHAT?
- WHERE DO WE START?



# HOW WE GOT HERE

- NYS SAVE Legislation (2000) in the aftermath of Columbine changed the relationship of schools and law enforcement in NYS.
- Districts closely examined infrastructure and procedures from a security perspective, while developing district and school safety plans and codes of conduct.
- Nature of school/law enforcement relationship intensified; strong interdependence started to evolve.



# HOW WE GOT HERE

- NYS SAFE legislation (2013) in the aftermath of Sandy Hook demonstrated that much more aggressive action was necessary.
- Unfortunately, the rest of the country has not followed the legislative lead of NYS.
- Mass shootings have continued to occur at an alarming rate. There were 23 school shootings nationwide in the first four months of 2018.



# HOW WE GOT HERE

- We learn from each horrific incident and identify steps that should be taken to improve the safety and security of our students.
- The “Blueprint for Action to Enhance School Safety” – the SCSSA’s five-point plan – itemizes what needs to be done based on what we have learned.

SS1



**Slide 5**

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**SS1**

Should this be "School"?

Susan Scheck, 8/9/2018

# WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BASED ON WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED?

1. Invest in school resource officers.
2. Pass legislation to enhance school safety.
3. Make SAFE the “law of the land.”
4. Take action to support the social, emotional and mental health of children.
5. Take action to increase state support for school safety measures.



# WHO NEEDS TO DO WHAT?

## SROs

**ACTION: The SCSSA, SCPD, and Town and Village PDs can:**

- Develop a “Roles and Responsibilities” statement for SROs.
- Establish consistent best practices in lockdown, sheltering and campus hardening protocols.
- Coordinate training and educational activities for SROs.
- Ensure SROs work with existing school safety officers to increase training opportunities.



# WHO NEEDS TO DO WHAT?

## SROs

- Establish communication protocols between SROs and school districts.
- Involve SROs in annual review of school and district safety plans.
- Establish guidelines to integrate the SRO into school community.
- Expand technological access to schools through CCTV and one-button lockdown abilities.
- Expand technological solutions that expedite emergency response in crisis.



# WHO NEEDS TO DO WHAT? CAMPUS SAFETY

**ACTION: The New York State Legislature can:**

- Amend the relevant sections of NYS Criminal Procedure Law dealing with setting bail, including Sections 510 and 530, to include “red flag” provisions.
- Amend Election Law Section 4-104(3) to add public school buildings to the list of groups that can file written requests of cancellation.



# WHO NEEDS TO DO WHAT? SAFE LEGISLATION

**ACTION: The United State Congress can:**

- Use the NYS SAFE Act as a template for federal action.



# WHO NEEDS TO DO WHAT? MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

**ACTION: The County, State and Local School Districts should work together to:**

- Provide Mental Health Education Literacy initiatives to successfully integrate the state requirements for mental health education in schools.
- Require the use of social-emotional screening programs to help identify emotional instability and apply appropriate interventions at an early stage.
- Incorporate Sandy Hook Promise Training Programs to address gun violence.



# WHO NEEDS TO DO WHAT?

## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

- Replicate Suffolk County's G.R.E.A.T. Program (Gang Resistance Education and Training) to empower students to make healthy associations.
- Pursue research-based programs that address substance abuse disorder and addiction to address the country's opioid crisis.
- Explore the concept of social media monitoring to identify at-risk behaviors and flags for individuals who need support and intervention.
- Pursue advocacy to address "red-flag" provisions related to gun access in the home.



# WHO NEEDS TO DO WHAT?

## STATE SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL SAFETY

**ACTION: The New York State Legislature can:**

- Establish a new, expense-driven categorical state aid designation, “School Security Aid,” to partially reimburse school districts for expenditures related to school security in a wealth-sensitive manner.
- Expedite the review period for submission of Smart Schools funding to assist districts in making essential upgrades to safety-related items within districts.
- Allow expenditures for school safety to be included as expenses that are exempt from the tax levy limit calculation.



# WHERE DO WE START?

- Solicit support for the Blueprint from all members of the educational community and establish implementation target dates.
- Urge elected officials at the federal, state and local levels to implement the provisions of the Blueprint.
- Solicit support from organizations and agencies that serve the social, emotional and mental health needs of children and students.



# WHERE DO WE START?

- Work with state and local law enforcement officials to implement recommendations related to SROs.
- Support state legislation that authorizes school officials to advise the courts of concerns about individuals' access to firearms as well as access to school grounds.
- Work with elected officials in Washington to promote SAFE as a template for federal action.



# WHERE DO WE START?

- Work with state, county and local officials along with mental health professionals and child advocates to assure that a range of mental health and social services are readily available to schools and families.
- Work with elected officials in Albany to establish aid categories to offset the cost of security measures.



# ABOUT THE SCSSA

- In 1954, several school superintendents formed what is now the Suffolk County School Superintendents Association.
- The primary goals of building camaraderie and improving communication among superintendents were the cornerstones of their efforts. They are as relevant today as they were more than 60 years ago.
- Association members include the chief school administrator of every school district and education service agency (71) in Suffolk County.
- There are 242,000 pre-K-12 students enrolled in Suffolk County.



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