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PASA POINTS

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators

About PASA

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) is an organization that is instrumental in developing successful school leadership through advocacy, support, sustainment of high-quality school administrators and a statewide collegial network.

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PASA supports the reinstatement of arrest powers to school police officers.

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School Safety Personnel and Training

Returning Arrest Powers to School Police

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) supports the reinstatement of arrest powers for school police officers that was taken away with the passage of Act 67 of 2019. The loss of arrest powers for school police officers has created difficulty for school districts as well as municipal and state police agencies. In rural areas of the state, it may take as much as a half hour or longer for a state police trooper to respond to a school situation that could easily be facilitated by a school police officer.

As most of the incidents are of a low-level infraction, it is not the best use of time for a state police trooper or municipal law enforcement officer when a certified school police officer is already on site. Additionally, most school police officers are retired state police troopers and municipal police officers who are well-equipped and adequately trained on how to manage an arrest event. PASA is in full support of amendments to current bills or new bills that will restore arrest powers to school police officers.

Training for School Security Personnel

PASA agrees with the provisions in Act 67 requiring school security personnel to complete NASRO training or its equivalent to ensure that those providing security in our schools know how to work with children and adults in a school setting.

However, PASA is concerned with the February 28, 2020 deadline to train all school security personnel. We do not want to see a scenario where a district must send its entire security staff to a training site due to lack of options and availability, leaving the district vulnerable for a week of operation. PASA recommends that the training deadline be extended to August 15, 2020 to provide more time and flexibility for school districts to train their security staff.

*"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."
- Simon Sinek*



**Pennsylvania Association
of School Administrators**

Proud Leadership for Pennsylvania's Schools

PASA Principles

All partners in education must stand accountable for their contributions to public schools and the impact their role has on student learning. This includes:

The Commonwealth's commitment to public education and recognition of shared responsibility with local communities for providing resources adequate to comply with laws and regulations regarding public education and essential to support student learning in Pennsylvania's public schools

The teaching profession's obligation to utilize evidence-based and research-based instructional strategies

Administrators' obligation to ensure that high quality leadership is in place to lead efforts to improve student learning

Student and family commitment to pursue, promote and support the value of education and life-long learning

Higher education's commitment to preparing future teachers, offering dual-enrollment courses for students and partnering with school districts to ensure student readiness

Commitment from the profession, the public, the media and the wider community in acknowledging the high importance of public education and the teaching profession to ensure a strong democracy

The greater business community's commitment to workforce development and career and college readiness

Training for School Security Personnel (Continued)

PASA also recommends that some type of waiver to security training be granted for unarmed school security personnel that are used for school activities such as concerts and athletic events. PASA believes that NASRO training or its equivalent is not necessary for these security positions and will create difficulty for districts in employing these individuals or contracting with security agencies for these services.

PCCD School Safety Grants and Right-to-Know Requests

PASA recently received information from a school superintendent that the media was able to attain a copy of the district's Competitive Safe Schools Grant Application through a Right-to-Know Request. The superintendent and school board members are concerned that this information is considered public, as there are various components of the application that require the applicant justify the need for safety equipment, personnel and services. Many applications provide detailed information about vulnerabilities and weaknesses of a district's security to justify the need for grant funds.

PASA is alarmed that this highly sensitive security information can be easily retrieved and publicly aired in the media via the Right-to-Know Act. PASA strongly recommends that a legislative solution be addressed to ensure that all Safe School Grant Application details be kept confidential as a matter of security for the safety of school students and staff. This needs to be addressed as soon as possible to prevent the potential of tragedies from occurring.

Competitive vs. Non-Competitive School Safety Grants

PASA continues to advocate for the end of competitive grants for school safety. While we appreciate the increase in funding of the Non-Competitive PCCD Safe School Grants to more than \$18 million, we remain concerned that there are winners and losers in the competitive school grant process. School safety should never be a competitive process dependent on the expertise of grant writers and the evaluation system of grant readers.

PASA recommends that the formula used to distribute funds to school districts through the non-competitive process be used to distribute all the PCCD Safe Schools Grant money. It is more important to provide all districts with safety funds through the non-competitive formula than to award money to a select group of school districts through a competitive process. The safety of students and staff members in our schools should never be at the mercy of a competitive grant process.