



PASA POINTS

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators

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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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Nothing is more important than keeping our students and staff safe!

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THE PRIORITY OF SCHOOL SAFETY

Nothing is more important than keeping our students and staff members safe. School safety and security became an issue of tremendous focus in 2018 after the tragic school shootings in Parkland, Florida and Santa Fe, Texas. The governor and legislature responded with a bi-partisan effort to create Act 44 in an effort to make our schools safer. PASA supported this legislation and has been working with the Attorney General's Office, the Department of Education, Legislative Staff, Superintendents, and school leaders across the state to help implement these new laws.

This is a critical concern and need for our school leaders. Many districts are struggling to make difficult decisions on how to best use their financial resources to improve school safety. Risk assessments have been completed in many districts providing important recommendations to improve school safety. Unfortunately, the funds needed to enact these recommendations are lacking at the local level forcing districts to choose between safety upgrades and school programming.

The safe schools grants that were initiated as a component of Act 44 illustrates the need for increased safety funding to our schools. School districts requested \$318 million in school safety requests on their Part B Competitive Grant Applications. These were not a list of "wants" by school leaders, they were "critical needs" for school safety. Regrettably, only \$40 million was available to distribute to schools this year. While these dollars are greatly appreciated by school districts, much more is needed to provide the safety resources needed for our children.

PASA strongly recommends that the \$60 million allocated in the 2018-2019 state budget for school safety be increased in 2019-2020 and become a stable line item in the annual state budget. School districts do not have the financial ability to re-allocate dollars within their local budgets to meet the safety needs in their districts and provide the level of educational programming needed to meet the needs of their students. This is the time for the state to ensure that all districts have the financial resources needed to ensure the safety and security of their children and staff. We encourage the governor and legislature to provide significant and sustained school safety funding in a non-competitive manner to all public school districts in the commonwealth. **This must be a critical budget priority!**

“Leadership is not about the next election, it’s about the next generation.”

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

Three Imperatives to Achieving School Safety.

School safety will only be achieved when school districts have the resources they need to:

- enhance the physical and technical structures of their schools to promote effective security. The re-activation of Plancon is critical to this need.
- employ or contract with adequate security personnel positions for their buildings and school activity programs.
- hire or contract with the appropriate levels of social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, and mental health providers to meet the mental health needs of their students.

2019 PASA Priorities for Safe Schools Initiatives

General Principles:

- A safe and secure learning environment is critical to the overall mission of public schools.
- School safety is a public responsibility and requires the commitment and positive actions of all stakeholders.
- Safe school initiatives must include the physical, emotional and social well-being of all students.
- The Commonwealth must be committed to ensuring sufficient resources for student education, safety and mental health without imposing costly laws and regulations concerning school safety issues.

PASA:

- Supports new, sustainable and flexible funding for safe schools initiatives, including equipment, personnel, curriculum, training and infrastructure.
- Opposes any legislation that reduces local control for security measures without comparable and ongoing state funding.
- Promotes legislation that allows public schools to declare safe schools initiatives as an exemption under Act 1.
- Supports better coordination among state and county agencies resulting in comprehensive mental health services within the public school setting.
- Promotes the development of comprehensive programs that target drug and alcohol issues with an emphasis on prevention and rehabilitative services.
- Supports a review of recently-enacted truancy requirements.