



STATE OF INDIANA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
State House, Second Floor
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Eric J. Holcomb
Governor

March 9, 2018

House and Senate Leaders:

Thank you for your recent involvement to take a close look at our state's programs and procedures that contribute to school safety. Immediately following the horrific events in Florida earlier last month, I started to take my own top-to-bottom look at the scope of Indiana's programs and solicited advice from our state's experts to determine how we can improve in the area of prevention and response.

Most recently, I convened executive branch agency leaders and asked them to share their agency's role in school safety and to gather potential recommendations for improvement. There were a few key takeaways worth sharing.

First, we should be proud of the training administered through the Department of Education to provide certified school safety specialists in each school corporation. In fact, this training has exceeded expectations and we now have approximately 2,400 active certified school safety specialists statewide. Currently, Indiana is one of two states in the nation that requires a safety specialist in every school corporation and a regularly updated school safety plan.

Second, each year the General Assembly appropriates over \$10 million toward school safety. These funds may be used to tailor the needs of each school or school corporation through matching grants. I have also learned that a significant portion of the appropriation is used for School Resource Officers (SROs) every year.

Lastly, Indiana's statewide collaboration on school safety among law enforcement, educators, and our health partners is commendable. And with your continued partnership, it is my hope that we can capitalize on this collaboration to propel our state to institute improvements.

Therefore, I request that you authorize an additional \$5 million to the Indiana Secured School Fund. The most recent round of grant applications exceeded the appropriation by \$3.5 million. This increase will allow us to not only increase the state match for the Indiana Secured School Safety Fund Grants but also expand the uses for Secured School Safety Funds.

In addition to all the work Attorney General Curtis Hill has initiated to educate prosecutors and law enforcement on the state's red flag statute, I am also directing State Police Superintendent Doug Carter to immediately provide their Red Flag Statute curriculum to all local law enforcement agencies in Indiana.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Jennifer McCormick leads our state efforts to ensure our school safety plans are well-defined, practiced, and continuously updated. So, I will ask Indiana Homeland Security Director Bryan Langley in collaboration with David Woodward, Indiana Department of Education's Director of School Building Physical Security & Safety, to assemble a team to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations by August 1, 2018 to help prepare all schools for today's unique threats.

I hope we can have the opportunity to discuss these ideas and others at your earliest convenience. There is no time to waste.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric J. Holcomb".

Governor Eric J. Holcomb

cc: Representative Tim Brown, Senator Ryan Mishler