

**Scott W. DiMauro**  
President

**Jeffrey Wensing**  
Vice President

**Mark A. Hill**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Patricia Collins Murdock**  
Executive Director

March 23, 2022

On behalf of the 120,000 members of the Ohio Education Association, I offer the following public comments regarding the draft model curriculum for instruction on student interactions with peace officers.

The Ohio Education Association is pleased that the Ohio Department of Education convened a diverse workgroup and equally diverse advisory group to offer recommendations on the development of the proposed model curriculum. We also support the options for local control in the development of curricula that more closely align with the context of students within their communities. Finally, we are pleased that the model curriculum includes the following language, "This content can be sensitive and sometimes emotional for students," with respect to the required role-play and demonstration portions of the model curriculum. As Ohio has adopted a state strategic plan for education that includes attending to the social and emotional health and well-being of students, it is important that this language remain.

The Ohio Education Association suggests changing the order of the model curriculum to match the order of curriculum requirements within the law. That order is:

- (a) A person's rights during an interaction with a peace officer;
- (b) Proper actions for interacting with a peace officer;
- (c) Which individuals are considered peace officers, and their duties and responsibilities;
- (d) Laws regarding questioning and detention by peace officers, including any law requiring a person to present proof of identity to a peace officer, and the consequences for a person's or officer's failure to comply with those laws.

As currently proposed, the draft model curriculum focuses the content on the needs and interests of peace officers. A reordering of the curriculum as written in the law would begin with the rights of individuals conferred by the US Constitution, which are the foundation for all laws and/or regulations. As a social studies teacher, beginning with the Constitutional rights of individuals would center the conversation around students and community members' interests and would allow for discussion of how Ohio's laws align with federal laws. As this model curriculum is for high school students, their rights throughout interactions with peace officers should be the primary focus of the curriculum.

The Ohio Education Association understands that demonstrations and role-play

The OEA will lead the way for continuous improvement of public education while advocating for members and the learners they serve.

225 E. Broad St., Box 2550,  
Columbus, OH 43216  
PHONE: (614) 228-4526  
or 1-800-282-1500  
FAX: (614) 228-8771

activities in a classroom setting are required by the law. We have significant concerns about how these scenarios could affect the mental health of Ohio's high school students, particularly Ohio's students of color who may experience triggering responses based upon past experiences with peace officers. We believe that the use of active role-play scenarios be a last resort for fulfilling this section of the law, as students may not be prepared for the emotional realities of these situations. Additionally, we suggest the following regarding this section of the draft model curriculum:

- The Guidance on Demonstrations and Role-Playing Activities section should be re-ordered to emphasize written case studies and/or scenarios, then carefully created pre-recorded videos, and then, as a last resort, role-plays.
- This section of the draft model curriculum should include providing students and parents with opt-out language for those who could experience traumatic responses based upon previous experiences with peace officers.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments for the draft model curriculum for instruction on interactions with peace officers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott DiMauro".

Scott DiMauro  
President