



OHIO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



AS THE VOICE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

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

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An Affiliate of the National Education Association

June 1, 2022

The Honorable Governor Mike DeWine
Governor of the State of Ohio
77 S. High St. – Riffe Center, 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Governor DeWine:

On behalf of the approximately 120,000 members of the Ohio Education Association (OEA), I write this letter to express our opposition to House Bill 99. This bill would exempt a person authorized to go armed within a school safety zone from satisfactorily completing an approved basic peace officer training program and instead creates a new set of significantly lower standards.

The safety of Ohio’s students and educators is our utmost priority. Last week’s school shooting has left us all in shock and grief as another community has been forced to accept the loss of their children, siblings, teachers, and friends. While we all want to prevent this tragedy from happening yet again, House Bill 99 is not the answer.

Our legislative policy adopted by OEA members states that teachers and other school employees should not be asked to serve dual roles as educators and school safety personnel armed with weapons. However, where local policies call for the arming of school personnel, we believe that the training requirements must be rigorous, and that parents and the broader community must be adequately informed. By these measures, the current version of House Bill 99 remains inadequate.

Educators implore you to do the right thing. When you served as Attorney General you stated, “It’s not just about can I [armed school staff] shoot a gun. That’s just a small part of it. It’s: Do I have enough training to be able to react so that my training goes into effect, and I don’t end up shooting someone who’s innocent.” (*Dayton Daily News*, Jan. 28, 2014). You then asked the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission to develop recommendations for appropriate training for school personnel. The model curriculum recommended approximately 150 hours of training, including subjects such as school shootings, subject control, use of force, building searches, crisis intervention, as well as certification in first aid and CPR. What has changed that you now accept approximately 25 hours of training as appropriate to arm educators?

OEA

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175 YEARS

AS THE **VOICE** FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL
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Ohio's children deserve a broader conversation about how to prevent these tragedies from happening. This should include prioritizing the mental health needs of students and commonsense gun safety laws. Simply put, more work is needed on House Bill 99. OEA strongly urges you to veto House Bill 99.

Sincerely,



Scott DiMauro
President

