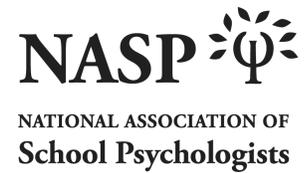


NASP Opposes Arming Teachers

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Bethesda, MD—The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) strongly opposes arming teachers as a strategy for preventing gun violence on school grounds. NASP joins virtually every other organization representing school and safety professionals in recognizing that arming school staff is wrong. Doing so places an unrealistic, unreasonable burden on America’s educators, has the potential to cause more harm from unintentional or inaccurate discharge of firearms, and can undermine the sense of safe, supportive learning environments. Equally important, the time and costs associated with training and arming school staff diverts critical human and financial resources away from strategies known to help decrease violent behaviors such as improved access to mental health services, effective threat assessment practices, properly trained school crisis response teams, and creating welcoming, inclusive school communities for all students.

NASP, along with the National Association of School Resource Officers, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the American School Counselor Association, and the School Social Work Association of America, released [A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools](#) outlining the core components of school safety. This includes improving access to school-employed mental health professionals like school psychologists, school counselors, and school social workers, who serve on the frontlines of meeting students’ mental health needs and provide threat assessments for students at risk of harming themselves or others. Additionally, we need improved coordination and collaboration between school staff, community mental health providers, law enforcement, and other first responders to close gaps in response to at-risk students and ensure they receive the interventions and supports they need.

NASP also strongly believes that possession of a firearm should be limited only to commissioned, trained school resource officers. Like other law enforcement agencies, the National Association of School Resource Officers has clearly articulated in [their most recent statement](#) the hazards associated with individuals possessing firearms who lack extensive law enforcement training and the sworn authority to enforce public safety. Among these risks are that an individual with a gun but not uniform could be mistaken for the shooter, firearm skills degrade quickly and require constant practice under high stress conditions, being able to shoot a gun does not mean an individual is psychologically equipped to shoot another person, and discharging a firearm in a crowded school setting is extremely risky.

NASP recognizes that more effective gun laws are critical to reducing gun violence. We need laws and policies that keep guns out of the hands of those who would hurt themselves or others and limit access to weapons intended to cause mass destruction in a short amount of time.

Our nation must focus on the approaches that genuinely safeguard the well-being of our children and the school staff who work to educate, empower, and protect them every day. Putting more guns in schools is not one of those approaches.

Resources Related to School Crisis and Violence Prevention

[Framework for Safe and Successful Schools](http://www.nasponline.org/schoolsafetyframework) (www.nasponline.org/schoolsafetyframework)

[PREPaRE Training Curriculum](http://www.nasponline.org/prepare) (www.nasponline.org/prepare)

[NASP Resolution on Efforts to Prevent Gun Violence](http://www.nasponline.org/nasp-resolution-prevent-gun-violence) (www.nasponline.org/nasp-resolution-prevent-gun-violence)

[NASRO Statement Opposing Arming Teachers](https://nasro.org/news/press-releases/nasro-opposes-arming-teachers/) (<https://nasro.org/news/press-releases/nasro-opposes-arming-teachers/>)

For additional information, visit www.nasponline.org or contact NASP Director of Communications, Kathy Cowan at kcowan@naspweb.org.