



## Indiana Department of Education 2019 Legislative Priority

### **Demand school safety remain a focus by expanding resources, enhancing readiness, and strengthening relationships**

Today's climate requires schools to remain vigilant in addressing safety. The Indiana Department of Education affirms that a one-size fits all approach does not move the school safety conversation forward. To that end, we expect all funding and resources focus on enhancing and strengthening readiness by allowing schools to remain proactive and continuously improve infrastructure. This can be accomplished by considering many of the 2018 Indiana School Safety Recommendations. This includes allowing opportunities for mental health or social emotional wellness services for students and elimination of the matching grant component in the Indiana Secured School Safety Grant. At a minimum, School Safety Grant money should remain funded at current levels.

Additionally, charter schools and accredited non-public schools are not statutorily held to the same safety standards as traditional public schools. School safety specialists play an integral role in schools and at least one trained specialist should be required for every charter and accredited non-public school. In addition, mandatory drills and comprehensive safety plans should be the minimum threshold for safety.

#### Quick Facts

- ❑ The Indiana Secured School Safety Grant provided by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security excludes grant money from being applied for mental health or social emotional wellness services to students.
- ❑ The Indiana Secured School Safety Grant requires schools to provide matching funds before grant consideration. Fiscally challenged schools often do not apply for this grant because it is difficult to find matching dollars.
- ❑ Existing funding mechanisms can create a lack of flexibility and inequity.
- ❑ According to Indiana Code 5-2-10.1-13, charter schools and accredited non-public schools are not required to designate an individual to serve as a school safety specialist, establish a school safety plan, or establish a safe school committee as required of traditional public schools.
  - ❑ As of October 9, 2018, there are 2,340 school safety specialists across Indiana.
  - ❑ Only 25% of Indiana's charter schools and 38% of Indiana's accredited non-public schools have a trained school safety specialist through the Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy. This compares to 100% of traditional public school participation.
  - ❑ The Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy comes at no cost. School safety specialist certification requires five days of basic training and two days of advanced training. Recertification requires two days of advanced training each year thereafter.