SAFE AND SECURE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS, NOT MORE GUNS

Educators' number one priority is ensuring student safety and well-being. This can best be achieved with more counselors, not more guns.

Increase access to mental health services in schools

- Nearly half of all public schools have a police officer, but 43 percent of these schools do not have a mental health provider.
- According to TEA, nearly 7,000 Texas students shared one social worker, and 3,000 students shared one psychologist in 2018-19.
- The American School Counselor Association recommends a ratio of 250 students to one counselor, but the Texas ratio is twice that.
- Because schools are underfunded, counselors are routinely pulled from critical duties to help fill other staffing gaps.

Ensure the safety of safety drills

- Although it is important to prepare children for emergencies, we must do so thoughtfully.
- Mental health professionals are concerned about the traumatizing effect that simulated emergencies can have on children.
- There is little evidence demonstrating that active shooter drills with children are effective at saving lives in an emergency.
- Schools that choose this type of drill must do so with guidance from parents, educators and school-based mental health professionals.
- Students, families and educators must be allowed to opt out.

Take meaningful action on gun violence prevention

- We need common sense laws that protect our safety by ensuring that guns don't end up in the hands of people who shouldn't have them.
- We must require a background check of all firearms' purchasers.
- Assault weapons and high-capacity magazines are weapons of war and do not belong in our communities.
- Gun trafficking should be punished with strong penalties.

The epidemic of gun violence is much broader than school shootings. Texas needs to reduce gun access and gun violence everywhere and fully commit to supporting mental health services in schools. If students must use what they have learned in an active shooter drill, we already have failed.

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