



Safe and secure learning environments, not more guns

Educators' number one priority is ensuring student safety and well-being. This can be achieved with more counselors.

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 the 2022 Mental Health Report Card, nearly 14,000 students share one social worker, and 5,000 share one school psychologist.
- The American School Counselor Association recommends a ratio of 250 students to one counselor, but the Texas ratio is twice that.
- Although recent legislation amended the law to minimize the time counselors can be required to conduct non-counseling duties, the law is permissive, and districts can exempt themselves from this requirement altogether. Additionally, TEA rulemaking seeks to place the burden of proving compliance on counselors.

Restrict guns on campus

- Educators are overwhelmingly opposed to arming teachers as a response to school shootings.
- According to an NEA national member survey, 61 percent of teachers who own guns oppose arming teachers and 64 percent say they would feel less safe if teachers were armed.
- There is no empirical evidence that arming school staff reduces gun violence.
- An armed teacher is much more likely to shoot a student bystander or be shot by responding law enforcement than to be an effective solution to an active shooter in a school.

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 fully commit to supporting mental health services in schools and reduce gun access and gun violence everywhere.