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Dr. Dwight Bonk  
Superintendent of Schools

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June 7, 2022

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi  
Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell  
House Majority (Democratic) Leader Steny Hoyer  
House Majority (Democratic) Whip Leader Jim Clyburn  
House Minority (Republican) Leader Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority (Republican) Whip Leader Steve Scalise  
Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney – District 18

Dear Members of the United States Congress and Senate,

As Superintendent of Schools in the Wappingers Central School District, which is the 9<sup>th</sup> largest in New York State with over 10,000 students and 15 school buildings, I am writing this letter of correspondence to urge that Federal funding be made available immediately to assign a School Resource Officer at school buildings within our District. The addition of such positions that are federally funded is necessary as our country grapples with the school violence that has plagued school districts and has resulted in injuries and the loss of life. Unfortunately, the horrific events of what transpired in Uvalde, Texas has created much anxiety for the families, students, and staff in my school district.

Clearly, much discussion will occur at the Federal level regarding the best ways to keep students and staff safe. An armed uniformed School Resource Officer, who works at a State/County or local police department, will be one way in which immediate steps can be taken to begin to address this major concern. I have the utmost confidence in the seven municipal police departments within our school district as we have worked collaboratively with them in the areas of school safety and violence prevention. In addition, many of these agencies conduct training exercises in our buildings while school is not in session. These agencies include the New York State Police, Dutchess County Sheriff's Office, Town of East Fishkill Police, Town of Fishkill Police, Village of Fishkill Police, Village of Wappingers Falls Police, and Town of Poughkeepsie Police. The presence of a School Resource Officer in our schools that is affiliated with one of these departments will assist in keeping our students and staff safe, allow for continued collaboration, and will foster a school culture and climate that is safe and will allow teachers and students to focus on teaching and learning.

In the absence of Federal funding, many school districts may be forced to pay for such needed safety through their own school budget. As we have fifteen (15) schools, this will result in a cost of approximately \$1.5 million dollars for our district. I am hopeful that federal funding will be made available as the ability to have a School Resource Officer in each school building should not

be based on whether each local school district has the ability to expend resources on such. Everyone, regardless of the wealth of each school district, deserves the safest school environment possible where learning can occur on a daily basis! Thank you very much for taking the time to review this correspondence and I am hopeful this request will receive strong consideration.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dwight Bonk  
Superintendent of Schools  
Wappingers CSD

cc: Governor Kathy Hochul  
Senator Sue Serino  
Senator Shelley Mayer  
Senator Kristen Gillibrand  
Assemblyman Kieran Lalor  
Assemblywoman Didi Barrett  
New York State Department of Education Commissioner Betty A. Rosa  
NYSCOSS  
NYSSBA  
Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents  
Dutchess County School Boards Association  
Dutchess County Executive Marcus Molinaro  
Dutchess County Sheriff Kirk Imperati  
New York State Police Troop K Major Kathryne M. Rohde  
Town of East Fishkill Supervisor Nicholas D'Alessandro  
Town of Fishkill Supervisor Ozzy Albra  
Town of Poughkeepsie Supervisor Jon Jay Baisley  
Town of Wappinger Supervisor Richard Thurston  
Village of Fishkill Mayor Kathleen Martin  
Village of Wappingers Falls Mayor Rick Cerino