

# **Ohio School Boards Association**

8050 North High Street, Suite 100  
Columbus, OH 43235-6481  
(614) 540-4000 • fax (614) 540-4100  
[www.ohioschoolboards.org](http://www.ohioschoolboards.org)

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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For more information contact:  
Damon Asbury,  
director of legislative services  
(614) 832-6663  
[dasbury@ohioschoolboards.org](mailto:dasbury@ohioschoolboards.org)

### **Forty-two percent of Ohio districts use school safety officers, more are interested**

COLUMBUS — Roughly two out of five Ohio school districts currently have school safety officers, but many more districts are interested in acquiring them, according to a new survey.

Forty-two percent of superintendents and treasurers reported using school safety officers to help ensure school security, according to an informal poll recently conducted by the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA). The survey found police officers and sheriff's deputies are most commonly used (90%), followed by security guards employed or contracted by the district (10%). Sixty-three percent of the districts with school safety officers have a single officer, 28% have two or three officers and less than 10% have four or more officers.

"In the wake of the tragic school shooting in Newtown, Conn., schools districts in Ohio and around the U.S. are taking extra steps to ensure students and staff are as safe as possible," said OSBA Executive Director Richard Lewis. "It's up to each district to decide the best way to ensure security, but school safety officers are one possible response to a complex problem."

Fifty-six percent of Ohio school district leaders said their school safety officers are funded by the school district; a quarter said their school safety officers are funded through a shared service agreement. Among districts that do not currently use school safety officers, 58% of school leaders said they are interested in acquiring them.

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OSBA Director of Legislative Services Damon Asbury noted that finding funding to employ school security officers is difficult for the majority of Ohio's cash-strapped school districts. He pointed out that a proposed state law, Senate Bill 42, would provide an avenue for districts to submit levy requests for funds to sponsor school safety measures, including resource officers. The bill is sponsored by Sen. Gayle Manning (R-North Ridgeville) and Sen. Randy Gardner (R-Bowling Green).

Results are based on nearly 300 responses to an OSBA survey conducted electronically this month. For survey results, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/33436/>.

In its 58<sup>th</sup> year, the Ohio School Boards Association leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service, unwavering advocacy and creative solutions.