



Dr. Arthur Tate, Superintendent  
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June 12, 2018

Ryan Wise, Director  
Iowa Department of Education  
400 E 14th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Director Wise:

In accordance with a unanimous vote of the Davenport Community School District (DCSD) School Board on June 11, 2018, I request on their behalf a meeting of the School Business Review Committee (SBRC). The purpose of the hearing before the SBRC is to consider an emergency request from DCSD to receive spending authority to use reserve funds for a security safety net to detect and thwart active shooter incidents in our schools. Immediate action by the SBRC is required because the personnel to form the safety net must be hired, trained and in place in time for the beginning of the 2018-19 school year.

Since Columbine on April 20, 1999, over 215,000 students have experienced an incident of school violence in 217 schools. During that time 141 children and adults have been killed and 287 injured. As the threat of mass shootings in schools becomes common place, there is an obvious increase in student mental health instability; school shootings contribute to heightened anxiety throughout society. In school year 2017-18 alone there have been 35 school shooting incidents, making this the deadliest school year in history. In the first 21 weeks of 2018 there were 23 shootings which covered the country from east coast to west coast and from Florida to Michigan. The closest shooting to Davenport was in Dixon, Illinois where a School Resource Officer confronted a gunman and saved student lives.

In April of 2018, I made five separate pleas to Iowa legislators to pass a bill to allow the use of reserve funds to hire safety net personnel. These appeals went out variously to all legislators, the governor, senate and house majority and minority leadership. I received no meaningful responses and no legislation was even considered. I provide below a quote from a letter I sent to all Iowa Senators and Representatives on April 5, 2018:

"I am weary of hearing that use of reserve funds is politically taboo because of the relationship to property tax. In Iowa, school districts hold a total of \$858,000,000 in cash reserves: my district has \$25,000,000 waiting for an emergency. The emergency is now. It would be obscene to not use a small portion of my reserves to make us more secure.

The entire nation is at the cross roads of societal stress, excessive mental illness, the breakdown of the family, and the dominance of social media over human relations. This is a dangerous concoction, and I firmly believe that every district in the state – rural, urban and suburban – is at risk. Based on my background, it is my opinion that an active shooter situation could occur at any school. Every school is vulnerable.”

In short, there is an emergency and immediate action is needed. Davenport School District has the cash reserves to fund the safety net and last until the legislature admits that there is a threat and takes action. The SBRC has the power to grant spending authority, and I urge a meeting be established immediately to review our plan and to consider an emergency motion to grant authority for this urgent need. You have to realize and admit that this is a serious matter involving the security of our children. I am accountable for their security; so are you.

I include a general outline of the DCSD security safety net plan, and as soon as we receive the approval for a meeting with the SBRC we will provide significantly more detail. Please respond at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully,

Dr. Arthur Tate  
Superintendent

C: Governor Kim Reynolds

**Davenport Community School District  
School Security Safety Net  
Positions Requiring Additional Spending Authority**

A. One district-level Security and Student Outreach Specialist

- Coordinate a formal program called *Student Voice*.
- Directly interface with students to use their insights to provide anti-bullying services.
- Elicit student assistance to recognize and thwart threats.
- Oversee the A.L.I.C.E. program including training and drills.
- Research best security practices.
- Provide professional development for all building security personnel.
- Coordinate the District Security Team.
- Manage the district social media monitoring system.

B. Two additional School Resource Officers, bringing the total in the district to six.

C. An additional 18 School Security Monitors, which will assure that every school in the district has at least one full-time security guard.