

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Unveils Statewide School Security Initiative

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\$6.5 Million in American Rescue Plan Funds Will Further Strengthen Efforts to Protect Students and Teachers

PARAMUS – Governor Phil Murphy visited East Brook Middle School today to announce a \$6.5 million investment in American Rescue Plan funds toward a statewide school security initiative to collect and digitize school building blueprints and make them available to first responders. Accurate and uniform maps are critical to enable law enforcement personnel to swiftly respond to emergencies in unfamiliar environments.

Currently, New Jersey first responders have access to Collaborative Response Graphics (CRG) for approximately 1,500 of the state's 3,000 public and private schools. The initiative unveiled by Governor Murphy today will help the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJOHSP) and the New Jersey State Police (NJSP) map the remaining 1,500 schools in an effort to further safeguard New Jersey students and educators.

"With the epidemic of gun violence reaching every part of our communities, including our schools, we offer our families not empty promises, but concrete investments in tools and resources that will keep our students safe," **said Governor Murphy**. "Nothing is more important than the safety of our children and the educators who help our children achieve their full potential. In order to protect our children and educators, we must equip our first responders with the most up-to-date 21st-century technology so that they can respond to emergencies without unnecessary delay."

"This new school security investment will ensure that law enforcement has immediately accessible digital blueprints of every school building in the state, God forbid there is an active shooter situation or other attack. This technology will help law enforcement act quickly and decisively," **said Congressman Josh Gottheimer**. "And this new investment was made possible by the federal American Rescue Plan that Congress passed last year. It's hard to think of a better use of these federal resources than to ensure we're protecting our schools, educators, and children by giving our law enforcement the resources they need to keep them safe."

"School building floor plans play an important role in how quickly and effectively law enforcement can respond to emergencies, and protect the lives of our children and educators," **said Acting Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin**. "By investing in digital blueprint mapping software for every K-12 school in New Jersey, both law enforcement and school administrators will have the information they need to act swiftly and with precision."

"Preparation is fundamental to our mission and our work at NJOHSP," **said NJOHSP Director Laurie Doran**. "I applaud Governor Murphy, my fellow cabinet members, as well as school administrators for recognizing the importance of our statewide mapping initiative and for allocating the resources to expand upon our ongoing security response efforts. Our agency stands ready to support this initiative knowing that building an effective resiliency plan requires all stakeholders to collaborate, to share information and to detect and respond to threats together in real time."

"The New Jersey State Police has more than 100 schools in State Police patrolled areas where we have a consistent uniformed presence to ensure the safety of students and staff," **said Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police**. "Ensuring that our children and school personnel are safe will always be an important part of our ongoing mission, and this new initiative will undoubtedly assist law enforcement during emergent times by affording first responders the resources to work quickly and more efficiently."

"Governor Murphy's initiative is an innovative action in school security," **said Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education**. "Every minute counts during a school emergency and making digital blueprints and maps available will assist law enforcement throughout the state in timely response, and campus navigation. We remain committed to using all resources so our students and educators maintain safe learning environments."

"Given the rise in school shootings around the country, it is paramount that, in addition to having among the strongest gun safety laws in the nation and bolstering mental health services, we also do all we can to protect our students through providing law enforcement and first responders with every available tool that could help save lives," **said Senator Joseph Lagana**. "Access to digital floor plans, will better prepare local law enforcement and first responders in the case of any emergency situation. I would like to thank the Governor for pushing this initiative forward and better ensuring the safety and security of our State's students."

"Establishing a common operating picture during a potential threat environment scenario is critical for emergency response personnel to do their jobs in the most swift and effective manner possible," **said Bergen County Executive Jim Tedesco**. "As County Executive and a long-time first responder, I have strongly advocated for the administration of digital mapping technology in our school districts and am glad several Bergen County districts have already done so. But now, thanks to Governor Murphy and his administration, this \$6.5 million in funding will allow even more Bergen districts to take advantage of this critical technology, further enhancing the safety of our children and educators at school."

Today's investment in the safety of New Jersey's future generations comes from the set-aside fund and will enable the NJOHSP and NJSP to contract with an outside vendor to assist with mapping. Once the schematics for every school building are collected, local law enforcement personnel will conduct annual walkthroughs of each building to ensure the mapping data is accurate and up-to-date.

Governor Phil Murphy

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