

#counselorsnotcuffs Campaign Principles
August 2018

#counselorsnotcuffs is a campaign of Ohio organizations, teachers, and students calling for effective school safety investments in the state.

We believe:

- 1) School shootings are not a certainty and can be prevented.
- 2) Students are safest when they are positively supported by individuals trained to identify students who are struggling and have routine access to licensed and trained mental health and addiction prevention and treatment services and quality professionals, such as counselors, nurses, and social workers.
- 3) Schools are safest when they create a positive school climate that includes trusting, respectful relationships between adults and students and a clear protocol to respond appropriately – and without over-responding – to threats.
- 4) Decisions about school safety must prioritize the voices of students who are most directly impacted by violence inside and outside of school, including students of color, students with disabilities, and LGBTQIA students.
- 5) Punitive approaches to school safety – such as investments in hardware (i.e. metal detectors, cameras, gun lockers) – can actually make schools and students feel less safe. In addition, School Resource Officers (SROs) are not a comprehensive solution to safety and can actually escalate situations, increase the number of youth referred to the courts (particularly students of color), and damage community-police relations. SROs or armed guards do not prevent all school violence; SROs and armed guards have been present in four out of five of our nation’s most deadly school shootings.
- 6) To effectively address school safety, Ohio must invest in research-based approaches, including improving school climate, establishing threat training and protocol, and providing effective student supports – like routine access to licensed and trained mental health and addiction prevention and treatment services and professionals, such as counselors, nurses, and social workers – to prevent school shootings altogether, while having emergency plans with outside law enforcement agencies in place when a rare incident does occur.

#counselorsnotcuffs Campaign Supporters:

ACLU of Ohio	Ohio Federation of Teachers
Children’s Defense Fund – Ohio	Ohio Poverty Law Center
Children’s Law Center, Inc.	Ohio PTA
Disability Rights Ohio	Ohio Student Association
Equality Ohio	Ohio Transformation Fund
Legal Aid Society of Columbus	Policy Matters Ohio
National Association of Social Workers – Ohio	Justice for Children Project
Office of the Ohio Public Defender	Juvenile Justice Coalition
Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics	The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Services Providers
Ohio Children’s Alliance	Voices for Ohio’s Children
Ohio Education Association	