

Sheriffs and Chiefs,

The Florida Legislature passed HB1473 regarding school safety this year and it took effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>. The bill includes \$5 million for sheriff's offices and police departments across Florida to help provide certain school safety measures for private schools.

Despite having the same vulnerabilities as public schools, school safety requirements passed since 2018 as a result of the mass casualty attack at Stoneman Douglas High School have not applied to the thousands of private schools across Florida. The public school mandates are still not legally "required" in private schools but the Legislature has now authorized measures such as the use of armed Guardians and funded the implementation of other measures, including physical site security assessments at private schools.

The \$5 million in grant funding for sheriff's offices and police departments is available through FDLE as a reimbursement grant and it runs through June 20, 2025. The money may be used to pay for your deputies and officers' time to help the private schools implement these safety measures and fund tools necessary for assessments and training.

As the Chair of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Commission, I will hold a brief informational meeting via Zoom next Wednesday, September 4, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. During this virtual meeting we will provide some specific information regarding this funding opportunity and announce the opportunity for your personnel to attend a one-day in-person training in Orlando on how to successfully implement these school safety measures at Florida's private schools. We are also in the process of developing a toolkit that will assist your agency in implementing this important work.

Time is of the essence because the \$5 million is not recurring and expires at the end of June 2025. Please attend the virtual meeting next week, or have someone from your command staff attend, so that you can learn more about making the private schools safer in your area of responsibility. The Zoom link for the meeting is:

<https://flsheriffs-org.zoom.us/j/94895857949?pwd=wxRrXSld2JYo8aarGjYsU6llyIDabw.1>

Meeting ID: 948 9585 7949

Passcode: 248461

Dial-in: (312) 626-6799

I look forward to seeing you next week.

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