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**Ohio School Boards Association applauds record investment in school safety grants**

COLUMBUS — The Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) today reacted to the signing of House Bill (HB) 687 by Gov. Mike DeWine. The capital appropriations bill contains \$100 million in school safety grants for physical security enhancement, equipment or inspection and screening equipment to improve the overall physical security and safety of school buildings.

“We commend Gov. DeWine, President Huffman and Speaker Cupp for their tremendous investment in protecting our students and staff when they come to school,” OSBA Chief Executive Officer Rick Lewis said. “The age and condition of Ohio’s public school buildings vary greatly and so too do their physical security needs. These critically needed resources will help school leaders implement 21<sup>st</sup> century security technologies and strengthen their ability to prepare for, prevent and respond to violent acts.

“The demand for this funding could not be greater. Out of the roughly 1,500 schools that applied for the first round of \$5 million from the School Safety Grant Program, only 89 schools received funding. The governor today referred to this round of funding as a ‘beginning downpayment.’ We look forward to working with his office and legislative leaders in the General Assembly to continue this extraordinary commitment and ensure our local schools have the tools they need to keep their communities safe.”

The \$100 million in school safety grants is supported by federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act and will be administered by Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) using procedures determined after consultation with the Ohio Department of Education and Ohio Department of Public Safety. Schools that have had their facilities constructed or renovated under any facilities assistance programs in the last five years or received a grant under the existing School Safety Grant Program are prohibited from receiving grants.

*OSBA 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.*