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CASE Statement on Release of School Safety Commission Report

Warner Robins, GA - December 19, 2018 - Dr. Luann Purcell, Executive Director of the [Council of Administrators of Special Education](#) (CASE) issued the following comments upon the release of the [final report](#) from the Federal School Safety Commission.

“After making [several recommendations](#) to the School Safety Commission in July, we had high hopes the school safety commission would move forward in the best interests of student safety. Instead, the recommendations represent a review of basic information for schools across the country, no additional sources of funding to protect students, and a recommendation to rescind critical discipline guidance designed to protect students with disabilities and students of color from discrimination.”

“All children have the right to attend a school where they are safe. This is common sense. CASE has advocated for an approach where policy and appropriations are tied to evidence-based practices so school shootings and other violent incidents can be prevented. Yet, there is no base of research to support the idea of arming school personnel. We continue to believe arming teachers is an ill-conceived and counterproductive idea with the potential for making schools less safe.”

“CASE also has serious concerns about the recommendation to rescind the 2014 school discipline guidance. This guidance addresses the disproportionate impact of harsh and inappropriate discipline, such as the overuse of suspension and expulsion, on students of color, students with disabilities, and other vulnerable youth. According to research, students with disabilities disproportionately receive harsher punishments, contributing to poorer academic and behavioral outcomes. CASE urges the Department to maintain this critical guidance and promote policies and practices that result in a safe climate for learning for all students.

“While we are pleased with some of the recommendations that reiterate best practices in school safety including providing access to universal screening and a gentle reminder to schools to take students with disabilities into account when planning for school safety, we had hoped the commission would take into account the thousands of written statements and hundreds of hours of written testimony to develop a higher standard for keeping all students safe. Instead, we will settle for a mixed bag of recommendations while educators across the country actively seek real solutions for the safety issues in our schools.”

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About CASE

CASE, [The Council of Administrators of Special Education](#), is the largest division of the [Council for Exceptional Children](#). With close to 4000 members, it is the professional organization of choice for special education administrators across the country. CASE’s mission is to provide leadership and support to members by shaping policies and practices that impact the quality of education.



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Administrators
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