

March 14, 2013

## **Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 186**

Chairman Ostmeyer and Members of the Committee.

I am Gene Johnson, Superintendent of the Shawnee Mission School District #512.

Shawnee Mission School District is opposed to Senate Bill 186. It is our belief that our school environment is best maintained through our current school safety strategies and investments in security.

Currently in Shawnee Mission:

- Shawnee Mission was the first school district in 1969 to form their own police force;
- Shawnee Mission employs police officers who are certified Kansas law enforcement officers who maintain 40 hours of annual training;
- The police officers are first responders in emergencies, as well as traffic officers patrolling all campuses;
- Shawnee Mission contracts with local law enforcement agencies to provide school resource officers (SROs) in each middle school and high school;
- Shawnee Mission police officers and SROs maintain close relationships and train with local law enforcement to respond to emergency situations;
- Shawnee Mission police officers, SROs, and local law enforcement provide security for athletic events and other school activities; and
- All Shawnee Mission schools have school safety procedures that are practiced on a monthly basis.

Everyone who sends their child or young adult to the care and safety of a school district is acutely aware of the potential risks. We have all pondered these issues with even greater urgency since the Newtown, Connecticut, tragedy. We have concluded that enhanced security, additional training, and greater vigilance -- not more guns in the midst of our students -- are the appropriate responses.

I would be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.