

ACTION ALERT

Increase Funding for Nonpublic School Security

ISSUE: Governor Sherrill’s Budget Address contained the phrase “PROTECTING OUR KIDS” as the introduction to her section on Education. Unfortunately, neither the public or nonpublic accounts received an increase in security funding, which is a key component of “protecting our children” in school. The New Jersey Office of Homeland Security 2026 Threat Assessment contained the following: The Office received over 150 reports impacting religious communities, facilities, and schools. While all schools are vulnerable to attacks from extremists, religious schools, be they Catholic, Christian, Jewish, or Muslim are consistently targeted for their particular faith connection.

In the past four years, the nonpublic school security funding in the final Budget has been frozen at \$205.00 per pupil. In the past, much of this money has been used to harden the infrastructure against attacks. More money, however, is needed to equip security guards who should be available in the nonpublic schools during the time that staff and students are present. We are asking for an increase of \$55.00 per pupil because private companies continue to increase the cost of security personnel.

OUR

POSITION: The entire Catholic school community and supporters strongly support the request in this Alert.

ACTION: If your district legislators are on the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee and/or the Assembly Budget Committee, please contact them and ask that they submit a Budget Resolution to increase funding for nonpublic school security to \$260.00 per pupil. If your district legislators are NOT on the aforementioned committees, please contact them to ask them to encourage their colleagues on the committees to submit a Budget Resolution. Please encourage your family and friends to participate in the campaign.

**For your convenience, you can use the NJCC Voter Voice System
to contact your legislators:**

<https://www.votervoice.net/NJCC/Campaigns/137489/Respond>

Talking Points for Nonpublic School Security Funding

- A line item for the nonpublic school security was placed in the State Budget in Fiscal Year 2017. The amount was \$11,300,000 or \$75.00 per pupil.
- Since 2017, there have been more security breaches in both public and nonpublic schools in the state. The current funding for Fiscal Year 2026 for nonpublic school security is \$30,550,000 or \$205.00 per pupil per year. That funding has remained flat for the last four Budget cycle.
- The initial funding was primarily used for “target-hardening.” Many nonpublic school buildings were built without the anticipation of security risks, particularly in religious schools. The October 7, 2023, attack initiated antisemitic incidents in New Jersey, estimated at over 800 such incidents in the twelve months following the attack.
- Other nonpublic school religious denominations in New Jersey and across the country have demonstrated the need for an enhanced and detailed security presence (e.g. the mass shooting at the Church of the Annunciation in Minneapolis, Minnesota).
- The 2026 Educational Adequacy Report (a public school document) increases security for all public school students. While “target hardening” in nonpublic school buildings (the initial priority) continues, the major focus now is on security guards.
- Nonpublic schools find it necessary to hire security guards for the protection of students and staff during school hours. Security companies are charging costly rates for these individuals.
- We are seeking an increase in the Governor’s Fiscal Year 2027 Budget to \$260.00 per pupil to cover these costs for the protection and well-being of all nonpublic school children.