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**ASCA Issues Statement Opposing Any Proposal to Use Federal Education Funds to Purchase Firearms**

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**ALEXANDRIA, VA** – The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) issued the following statement in response to U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos’ proposal to allow gun purchases with federal funds appropriated under the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (SSAEG) in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) as reported by The New York Times.

ASCA adamantly opposes any effort to arm educators by directing funds away from programs that directly help improve student learning and academic achievement. The SSAEG grants funded under Title IV, part A of ESSA are intended to provide students with a safe and supportive learning environment, a well-rounded education and increased access to innovation and technology. We are dismayed that the public comments made by ASCA and other educators at the listening sessions hosted by the Federal Commission on School Safety, which urged the federal government to invest in more student support professionals, prevention and early intervention services, have been ignored. Instead, Title IV is being used to circumvent the explicit intent of Congress that federal funds should not be used to purchase firearms and to train educators to use firearms in schools. We applaud and support the efforts of Sen. Chris Murphy to protect funding for programs that directly improve student learning. We look forward to working with Sen. Murphy and other

lawmakers to create alternate proposals that include evidence-based and common sense approaches to school safety and student well-being.

### **About ASCA**

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) professional organization based in Alexandria, Va. ASCA promotes student success by expanding the image and influence of school counseling through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change. ASCA helps school counselors guide their students toward academic achievement, career planning and social/emotional development to help today's students become tomorrow's productive, contributing members of society. Founded in 1952, ASCA has a network of 52 state and territory associations and a membership of more than 34,000 school counseling professionals. For additional information on the American School Counselor Association, visit [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org).