



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NYSUT President Andy Pallotta: Arming teachers won't make schools safer

ALBANY, N.Y. Feb. 23, 2018 — New York State United Teachers President Andy Pallotta, after receiving impassioned phone calls, e-mails and social media posts from educators across the state, today reiterated the union's long-held position that arming teachers is impractical and misguided.

"Arming teachers will not make schools safer. Schools must remain sanctuaries for learning and places where parents and the community know that their children are safe. It is misguided to think, however, that more guns in a school — in the presence of children, and in the hands of educators who don't want them — is an answer."

"Still, there are actions that state and national leaders can take. While teachers in Parkland, Fla., and elsewhere have demonstrated awe-inspiring bravery in the face of these tragedies, educators consistently tell us what's needed. Educators need a greater investment in mental health services, school psychologists, social workers and guidance counselors so trained professionals have a better chance of identifying a student in crisis and intervening before tragedy strikes. As part of the important conversations ahead, increasing school security must be on the table."

"Many of our members are responsible gun owners. Some belong to the NRA. These mass shootings have led to a great deal of soul-searching, and — we believe — increased support for commonsense gun control measures. We believe this will reduce the likelihood a parent ever again has to bury a child killed in a school shooting. Lawmakers of both parties must come together and act to protect students, schools and educators."

New York State United Teachers is a statewide union with more than 600,000 members in education, human services and health care. NYSUT is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and the AFL-CIO.