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August 29, 2022

Michael J. Burke, Superintendent
The School District of Palm Beach County
3300 Forest Hill Boulevard, C-316
West Palm Beach, FL 33406-5869

Dear Superintendent Burke,

The Final Report of the Twentieth Statewide Grand Jury was recently released, identifying several findings and concerns pertaining to school safety requirements within the school district of Palm Beach County. I have significant concerns about some of the items mentioned.

We have reason to believe that some of the policies and actions the Grand Jury found are ongoing and require immediate action. Some of the district's identified failures and concerns include, but are not limited to:

- **Refusal or failure to follow the mandates of school-related safety laws, such as the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act, resulted in unnecessary and avoidable risk to students across the state.**
- **School officials violated – and continue to violate – state law by systemically underreporting incidents of criminal activity to the Florida Department of Education.**
- The district's executive cabinet chose private security guards as the only Safe School Officer option for charter schools.
- The district wasted a significant amount of taxpayer dollars by hiring a private security firm (Invictus) to train prospective Guardians in violation of the law.
- There is a problematic approach to the implementation of safety features exhibited in Palm Beach County, and specifically by the Palm Beach County School District Police Department.

Due to the gravity of the issues outlined above, the Florida Department of Education and the Office of Safe Schools will contact you to arrange an in-person meeting this week to investigate these major concerns. We expect your full cooperation to ensure that safety of our students is top priority.

Sincerely,

Tim Hay
Director, Office of Safe Schools

TIMOTHY HAY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF SAFE SCHOOLS