



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: June 8, 2023

To: Local Educational Agency Leads, Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities, Nonpublic School Supervisors

Route To: Business Administrators, Principals, Directors of Buildings and Grounds, School Safety Specialists, School Administrators, School Social Workers, School Psychologists, School Faculty

From: Christopher Irving, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Field Support and Services

School Safety Speaker Series: Rethinking School Safety, A Parent's Perspective

The New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning (OSPEP) is hosting Michele Gay, the executive director of Safe and Sound Schools, as part of the *School Safety Speaker Series*, on July 10, 2023 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., at the Burlington Township High School Performing Arts Center, 610 Fountain Avenue, Burlington, NJ, 08016. The *School Safety Speaker Series* is being offered through funding provided by the Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Grant Program.

Mother, educator, and co-founder of Safe and Sound Schools, Ms. Gay will share her personal story and recount the lessons she learned on December 14, 2012, in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook School tragedy. She will share the inspiring way she has chosen to help school communities improve school safety in honor of her daughter, Josephine, and the memory of the other 19 children and six teachers lost in the Sandy Hook tragedy. Ms. Gay will share her perspective as the mother of a special-needs child and former elementary school teacher, providing unique insight and inspiration for school administrators, school staff, and school security personnel.

A highly recognized public speaker and school safety expert, Ms. Gay reaches audiences and consults with all levels of communities and institutions including schools; municipalities; houses of worship; educational and public safety leadership; state and federal governments; law enforcement agencies; and top news media sources.

Please register for the [School Safety Speaker Series - July 10, 2023](#) online.

School Safety Specialists who attend this event will receive appropriate hours toward certification renewal.

Questions can be directed to school.security@doe.nj.gov or (609) 376-3574.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group