To: Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Government Operations

From: Dee Pettack, Legislative Liaison, DPI

Date: March 4, 2015

Re: **Statement in Opposition to 2015 Assembly Bill 46**

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) opposes 2015 Assembly Bill 46 (AB 46). This bill is in direct conflict with the narrow exemptions which already exist under the Gun Free School Zones Act of 1990 at 18 U.S.C. § 922(q)(3)(B); These exemptions, which already exist, include:

- being on private property (not school grounds),
- as part of a program approved by a school in the school zone, by an individual who is participating in the program,
- in accordance with a contract with a school in a school zone,
- by a law enforcement officer acting in their official capacity, and
- is unloaded and being possessed while gaining access to public or private lands open to hunting, if the entry on school premises is authorized by school authorities.

DPI believes these exceptions, currently in federal law, strike an appropriate and reasonable balance.

DPI is concerned this proposal will create dangerous situations where students and staff, including police liaison officers, will react to unidentified individuals carrying a gun. Our staff are trained to immediately follow school safety measures when there is a perceived threat. Former and current law enforcement officers who are not identifiable should not be walking with guns into our school hallways and classrooms.

Moreover, DPI is concerned about the details of the current and former law enforcement officer provision. Training requirements of current officers can vary from state to state. There are no details on how recently the former officer was working in law enforcement. There are no guidelines as to the reason the individual is no longer employed as a law enforcement officer.

We need safe and effective learning environments in our schools for students to achieve their fullest potential. AB 46, which provides an avenue for more guns to be present in our school buildings, runs counter to this effort.