

Hilton schools to vote on gun resolution

Hilton

Certain security officers would qualify to carry

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The Hilton Central School District Board of Education will vote Tuesday on a resolution that calls for the district to arm some of its security officers.

The resolution is outlined on pages 12 and 13 of the agenda of the board's monthly meeting.

The measure would apply to certain security officers, officially called youth assistants, who have experience in law enforcement and mandated training. It said that the resolution is in response to "security issues" that have occurred at schools around the country, including "active shooter incidents."

The resolution would authorize some youth assistants to carry a firearm on school property if they are retired members of a police or sheriff's department, or division of state police; are licensed to possess the firearm; and are registered in New York as an armed security guard. The resolution specifies that assistants may be required to undergo additional training, but does not outline the training.

The 2018-19 school budget, which was approved in May, increases the budget for youth assistants by more than \$11,000, but includes no mention of the purchase of firearms or training for armed security. The resolution does not say whether the guns would be purchased by the school district, or how they would be funded.

Multiple calls to five school board members and superintendent of schools Casey Kosiorek were made, but were not returned Sunday.

The resolution references Board of Education Policy No. 3411, which allows for exceptions to the general

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prohibitions on the possession of firearms on school property if the board gives express written permission.

The superintendent will be required to ensure the resolution, if passed, adheres to the relevant laws.

The February shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, sparked discussion about whether or not to arm guards in New York schools. Following the shooting, which left 17 dead, the New York Sheriffs' Association urged state Legislature and Gov. Andrew Cuomo to help fund the placement of one armed officer in every school and President Donald Trump proposed arming teachers, but safety officials in Monroe County pushed back at the suggestion.

“If you’re going to put people in that situation who haven’t been highly trained, you may be causing more chaos than helping,” said Monroe County Sheriff Todd Baxter in February. “I’m very cautious when it comes to that [idea].”

Chief Patrick Phelan of the Greece Police Department echoed that at the time.

“I don’t know how effective it would be to have armed teachers,” said Phelan. “They just don’t have the training to deal with an armed gunman, nor should they.”

Baxter did, at the time, say that he’d like to see armed resource officers in each school (sworn members of the police force, employed by a local police department but assigned to work inside a school building), but that is different than what’s being proposed in Hilton.