

# Transcript: Mayor Eric Adams, NYPD Deputy Commissioner Caban and DOE Chancellor Banks Speak About School Safety

May 25, 2022

**Mayor Eric Adams:** We're here today, really, to talk about this issue that you've heard me communicate over and over again. And when I reflect on what happened yesterday, I think about when Jordan was born. I remember when he came through to, about to come through the birth canal and his head came through, and the doctor went to touch and pull him out, and assist his mom. And I moved the doctor's hand away because I wanted to be the first person to touch my son when he was born.

**Mayor Adams:** We pour so much into our children. Our children mean everything to us. And it doesn't matter who you are, what state you live in. Yesterday, I'm sure you hugged your children a little harder, those of you who have children. You have to ask yourself, what have we become as a country that we are watching, as I say over and over again, children killing children? And it appears as though our children must be asking, "Mom, dad, what are you doing? What are you doing? How is this happening to us?" As they watch these cases over and over again.

**Mayor Adams:** And so I want to just take a moment just for us to reflect on 19 children, and two adults, were shot and killed by an 18 year old. 19 children, 19 babies were shot by an 18 year old and he injured his grandmother. This didn't happen in some random location. It happened in an elementary school. When you really absorb it, you have to say to yourself, "How could it happen?" And so our hearts all over the country, our hearts go out to the families and friends of those who were murdered. The pain is unimaginable. I could only think about what it is to lose a child, to get that call, that your child was part of a mass shooting.

**Mayor Adams:** And at this moment, we need more than thoughts and prayers. It's just so much more that needs to be done, and the irony is that it actually could be done. This is not beyond our reach. We live in a country where there are more guns than people. Looking at the numbers of school shootings, our numbers are in over 200 and every other civilized nation isn't just a fraction of what we are seeing every day. We're in a country where our legacy is clear, a country where kids kills kids. And all we need is 10 senators just to get in a room and put us in the right place to turn this madness around. And I'm hoping those senators get the moral courage to move in place the process of saving our children. And I'm also hoping the Supreme Court re-deliberate, think differently, about the open carry law that they may pass.

**Mayor Adams:** And the guns keep coming. Doesn't matter how much we take off the streets. There's an endless flow. Guns on our streets, guns on the subway, and guns in our schools.

**Mayor Adams:** Look at these pictures behind me. Last week, our school safety teams found two guns. With one in each chamber, eight more in each magazine, a total of 18 bullets. These guns here. Found in this knapsack. 18 bullets.

**Mayor Adams:** The next day, the Police Department responded to a 911 call about a student with a gun at a middle school in Brooklyn. A staff member overheard these students having a conversation and she took proper action and alerted the school safety team. They found a 13 year old boy with a backpack with that gun. The child, the boy, had a loaded 380 caliber semiautomatic firearm on the backpack there. Thanks to the work of the school safety team, our educators, they were able to prevent a tragedy. This time, this time.

**Mayor Adams:** Public safety can't be about luck and overhearing conversations. It must be about clear directions on stopping this violence. There's so many more guns out there. When you look at the fact that I say over and over again, we have removed 2,900 guns off our streets. These three guns we found, but the reality is we've recovered 20 guns in schools. 20 guns in school, in the start of the school year, last fall. 20 guns in school.

**Mayor Adams:** And that's why I'm here today with the school chancellor. We know in order to receive an academically sound education, we must be in a safe place and it's going to take so much more. And the police commissioner and I are focused on

partnering with our mental health professionals, our school chancellor, and all those who are involved.

**Mayor Adams:** But there's a missing piece that is part of the solution. As we look at these rolls of guns that are coming before us, these guns are not in a gun shop. They are in our schools that you see on the screen. The missing piece as part of our solution, we want to mobilize parents. We want to ask parents to join us in this partnership of saving our children. And this is not blaming parents. And we don't want that message out. This is not saying parents are responsible for the crime. We're saying just the opposite. These guns are being placed in the hands of their babies because of people who are dangerous to our city. And we want to arm them with tools and ways to identify this problem.

**Mayor Adams:** And yes, during the campaign trail, I was mocked over and over again by my video of examining backpacks. How dare Eric talk about examining backpacks? Looking in the rooms of your children, so if you see AK-47s, something is wrong. If you see boxes of bullets, something is wrong. Yes. Should we have to do that? No, we should not. But we have to stop living life the way it ought to be and live life the way it is. Guns are in the hands of our children. And I'm not going to try to see what's popular to address this. I'm going to be honest with parents. You must see what your children are doing, and we want to have you as part of the solution. So that gun won't only destroy the life of your child, but the life of a child in his school or on his block.

**Mayor Adams:** We need to make sure children are not in possession of guns like the guns we're seeing on the screen. It means being aware, being involved, and being direct. We're asking parents to sit down tonight and have an honest conversation with their children to save the lives of their children. We're asking them to foster their relationship with their child if they know of another young person in their school that's carrying a weapon. To communicate with the school personnel, so we can proactively save that child. If kids are getting involved in guns, we need to intervene and get help right away. We can't allow this cycle of violence and death to continue.

**Mayor Adams:** Last week, I stated the children was 11, 15, and 18. An 11 year old was murdered. A 15 year old pulled the trigger and an 18 year old drove the getaway vehicle. Look at the ages now. They continue to drop younger and younger. One life gone is a life too many and we can't just hope this carnage ends. We must be aggressively attacking this problems.

**Mayor Adams:** Parents are not only parents. They're the lifeguards. They're here to help their children protect from themselves and from others. And I stated that the sea of violence is fed by many rivers. We want to dam one of those rivers by allowing parents to get involved and be partners with us in this solution. And we're going to dam the rivers of those who carry guns. We need to dam the rivers of our court system that's bottlenecked, dam the rivers of allowing dangerous people to stay on our streets far too long. We have to continue damming the rivers until we dam every river.

**Mayor Adams:** And we're not blaming our children. Our children did not create this world. We did. Children don't manufacture guns, children don't pass laws, children don't sell guns. Children are put in harm's way because of the actions of adults. And we're betraying them. There's no freedom when you can't go to the school, to the supermarket, or ride the train. It's on us to create a better life for our young people and do everything we can to make sure they're on the right path.

**Mayor Adams:** And before we end, we want to talk about things that are working in the city, as we talk about the things that are not working. We saw a decline of almost 30% in shootings for the month of April. This has been continuing through May. Shootings have been declining week over week compared to last year for the past five weeks, there was a decrease of 43 shootings, or a drop of 29% for the month of April. Police officers are doing their jobs.

**Mayor Adams:** The decline in shooting incidents has continued through the first three weeks of May. May citywide shootings are down 36 incidents, or a drop of 30% for the month of May. Why? Because our public safety strategy is working. Our anti-gun unit, neighborhood safety teams they're out there precision policing going after the dangerous people. We saw what happened in the Bronx with D.A. Darcel Clark, and the detectives, and NYPD taking down a dangerous gang that is attached to a number of shootings.

**Mayor Adams:** These crime waves are attached to a small number of New Yorkers that we can't continue to protect. They say our city's a safe haven for shooters, and dangerous people. It must be a safe haven for innocent New Yorkers.

**Mayor Adams:** We've increased patrols on the neighborhoods that was experiencing the most violence. More cops in the subway 24 hours a day. The focused deployment of violence interrupters, a partner in our pursuit to fight violence. Increasing visualization

and inspections in our subway system. We're seeing the product that we are putting out producing the result that we expect. Our goal is to save New Yorkers from this. From this. This is not our future. And, in fact, this is going to destroy our future.

**Mayor Adams:** The day after the tragedy in Texas, only a few days from the tragedy in Buffalo. This is why I'm so committed to this. I'm committed to this with everything I have to create a safe city. 'Cause I can remember like yesterday what it felt like touching Jordan's head. And how devastating it is for parents to watch this and experience this. Chancellor?

**Edward Caban, First Deputy Commissioner, Police Department:** Thank you, mayor. Good morning everyone. Thank you for coming. We're here to talk about guns and other dangerous weapons in New York City schools. And while this news conference was in the planning stages since last week, we now find ourselves discussing this ever important topic in the aftermath of yet another tragedy in America.

**Caban:** The mass shooting in Texas yesterday breaks all of our hearts. And while this investigation there is still unfolding, we know that at least 19 children and 2 adults were shot and killed. The gunman is also dead. This is unconscionable.

**Caban:** Here in New York City, our public school system is unique in that it is the largest school district of the nation. But, at its core, it shares the ideals of any other institution of learning in the United States. The people who teach there, and learn there simply wish to do so free from the fear of violence. As public safety experts, that is our mission. That's what we work toward every day in our schools. And we understand there is no room for failure. We must be right every day in every school in every dismissal.

**Caban:** The NYPD School Safety Division stands at the forefront of that work. They must not only keep everyone in our public schools safe, but they must also ensure they actually feel safe also. Every single person who comes through those doors needs to feel safe. Students, teachers, administrators, custodial staff, everyone. The nearly 4,000 dedicated members of the School Safety Division bring enormous passion to that vital work.

**Caban:** One of the most crucial ways they ensure the safety of their schools is through the use of metal detectors. Through the end of last week, the NYPD school safety

agents have recovered 5,546 dangerous instruments so far this year. That represents a 124% increase over the last pre-pandemic school year from 2018 to 2019. During that school year 2,473 such weapons were recovered during the same time period.

**Caban:** Among the weapons recovered this school year are 20 firearms. This marks a 300% increase from the five that were recovered during the previous school year. One of the guns recovered this year was a nine millimeter ghost gun. And another was a 22 caliber pistol with a serial number intentionally scratched off. And just last Wednesday, the school safety agents in Queens recovered two nine millimeter handguns from a bag carried by a 15 year old. A 15 year old. 15 is the same age as a teenager responsible for pulling the trigger and killing an innocent 11 year old girl on a Bronx sidewalk last week. And while the NYPD detectives have arrested that shooter, and his 18 year old accomplice, it could never undo the fact that three young lives, as well as lives of their families are now changed forever.

**Caban:** Illegal guns seem to be everywhere in our streets. And the ease young people have in obtaining them, carrying them around, and actually using them to end someone else's life in an instance is absolutely staggering right now. So, I'm going to make a plea here. All New Yorkers in your own homes, you have the ability to help NYPD ensure public safety for all. And we need everybody's full involvement. Parents, grandparents, guardians, caregivers, anyone and everyone responsible for raising our city's young children need to have conversations with your children about illegal guns and other weapons. This is clearly not just a New York City issue. And with you and within the five boroughs, it is not an NYPD issue. It's in every New York City issue. This is what we mean when we say public safety is a shared responsibility. So, to all the people we serve, I say to you, your city, your NYPD needs your help to combat gun violence now, before it happens again. Thank you.

**Caban:** I will now turn it over to Chancellor Banks.

**Chancellor David Banks, Department of Education:** Thank you, deputy commissioner. Thank you, Mayor Adams.

**Chancellor Banks:** Our city and our country is at a critical juncture. Every single day we hear of these terrible things happening on the news. Just yesterday another senseless act of violence, committed to Texas taking the lives 19 children and 2 adults, as you've heard. As a country, we are grieving. As a school system, we are grieving.

And I know that all New Yorkers are feeling the weight of it. It's a weight that we carry together.

**Chancellor Banks:** After Sandy Hook, this country had an obligation to act. How many more times will we allow this to happen? Every single day, we are confronted with the names, and faces of young people who lost their lives to gun violence. At some point, our nation must come together, and decide whether it values easy access to guns, or the lives of our children. It is crystal clear, it's more important than ever that we do everything we can to keep our youngest New Yorkers safe and protected. And that vital work starts with our communities, our friends, our neighbors coming together to support one another to keep this city safe.

**Chancellor Banks:** As the chancellor, I will tell you, I am deeply grateful to the students, the teachers, the school safety agents, the parents, and all the community members who are doing their part to keep our students safe. They're doing the key things of saying something when they see something. But we need more of that to happen. We need everybody to say something when they see something.

**Chancellor Banks:** Just last week, we had an incident where community member came forward to let our school safety agents know about a dangerous weapon in one of our schools. In fact, with these weapons that you seen on display here today by the mayor, most of them were uncovered because there was someone who alerted a school safety agent who was then able to act. We seen this time after time community members coming together to make a difference. So, I know how hard it can be to step up, to speak up. And we're inspired to see those voices that do in fact step up. But we need everybody to take on that responsibility.

**Chancellor Banks:** But this isn't just about guns. Those are a symptom of other issues. And I know many of our parents know that. If you see a child being bullied on the street, children who are not in school when they should be, if a child you know and love seems to be struggling, seems to have some real mental health challenges, tell a member of your school community. Don't keep that to yourself. We have caring adults in all of our buildings who have the resources to help our kids when they're down. Every school at the very least has a school social worker, a counselor. Or some schools have a school based mental health center. And you know what every school has? Every school has caring teachers and principals. There are caring adults in all of our schools. We have to let them know when you see something that just looks wrong. Our in School Crisis

Team support our schools and facilitate guided conversations when students are experiencing grief. Over 70,000 school staff members have already been trained in trauma response education strategies.

**Chancellor Banks:** And let me just conclude by saying this, far too many of our young people do not feel safe right now. When you see these weapons, we have been very fortunate here in New York City. We have not had a mass shooting. Most of these weapons are being brought... When we talk to the students who brought them to school, they're not meant to resolve conflicts in school. They don't have a problem with their classmates. They're afraid when they're going to school and when they're leaving from school to go home. They don't feel safe in the streets. They feel that they are under duress. There are threats that are made against them. And they're saying to us, "I'm trying to protect myself so I can make it home."

**Chancellor Banks:** So we have an obligation to continue to do all that we need to do. I'm calling for a meeting with the union leaders for next week, that we're going to sit down. The top union leaders that affect every aspect of what we do in our New York City schools, and we're going to come up with some of the best ideas that we can. We're going to engage parents. We're going to ask our students themselves, "What are the things that we need to be doing?"

**Chancellor Banks:** I'll give you one example. I spoke with the head of the principals' union today, who suggested that we should lock our front doors. Once our students are in school, the front doors should be locked. And if people are coming to our schools, they need to press the buzzer. They need to do something where we can stop and we can identify who's coming in our schools. It shouldn't be such easy access. That's just one suggestion.

**Chancellor Banks:** There are many other ideas. The mayor is committed to ensuring that we have the requisite number of school safety agents that we need. We have a lot of people who say, "We don't need more school safety agents." You know the people who say that? Those are the people that don't work in schools. The people who work in schools every single day recognize that they want to be safe. School safety agents play a vital part. They don't play the entire role, but they play a vital part. School counselors, teachers, principals, administrators, all of us working together provide, and the NYPD provide a safe environment. But as the mayor said, and I'll stop after this, we need our parents. We need our parents to be even deeper partners with us at this time. We're at



a critical juncture in this city, and we can turn this thing around, and we will turn it around, but we will do it by working together. Thank you.

**Mayor Adams:** Thank you so much, chancellor. You know, I got my phone because I hope all of you would look at this video on Instagram a young person sent me, very concerned. I know you can't see it here, but it really makes it concrete of what we are saying about the culture of violence that has become pervasive in our city and country. This is a video of a group of young people who are saying they need a body. They need a body. They're all carrying guns, and the video is showing these young people talking about, they want a body. They want a body. All of them are carrying guns. On social media, receiving 275,000 views, calling for that they need a body, they want a body, a term used for killing someone. And they all are showing their guns as they-

[Plays video]

**Mayor Adams:** "I want to catch me a body." They're all putting up their nines, their semiautomatic weapons. This is what's being fed to our children, and social media knows this is going on, and they're allowing it to happen. So when you look at all the pathways, ready accessibility of guns, social media promoting it, the lack of engagement. Some of these children are coming from broken homes. This is a perfect storm of violence.

**Mayor Adams:** And so we want, we're going to, as we're open for questions, but we're also moving forward a major public relation campaign. We're asking all of our business leaders, all of our corporate leaders. I've been saying this over and over again. You have to support the police. This anti-police belief is not what majority of New Yorkers feel. We need billboards. We need PSAs, commercials, full page ads. The symbol of public safety rests in that blue uniform, and we've gone so far from just the basic support of our law enforcement officers.

**Mayor Adams:** And so tomorrow when I'm on the call with my corporate and business leaders, those are one of my asks. We have to send a signal that this is a city of law and order, not a city of unlawfulness and disorder. That is not how you run a city. And it starts with changing the tone. We're going to do our job to get rid of those numerical minority who are not suitable to lift up the nobility of policing. We will deal with that. But the countless number, overwhelming number of the men and women who put on that

uniform are here to protect our city. And it's time for New Yorkers to be part of the chorus of saying, "We are in support of public safety in our city." Open to any questions.

**Question:** Good morning, Mayor Adams. Just the other day, you mentioned modernization of the surveillance and subway systems for weapons. Are you also considering that for New York City schools? And if so, what type of modernization in terms of technology have you found in your research, and other [inaudible] use that type of technology?

**Mayor Adams:** We were at Kennedy Airport yesterday, communicating with the law enforcement team there, looking at some of their technology. It's going to be a combination. There's some really good new technology out there. It's going to be a combination of gun detectors. We have to go after the guns. And there are a few things they shared with us that we have to explore, that we're going to try to make sure before we roll it out, we want to make sure that we check all the boxes. That is it full proof? Does it pass constitutional muster? And how easy it is to move around. But that technology is focusing on gun detection.

**Question:** Just one quick followup. Do you have any specifics with regard to technology, examples of some of those options that you may be considering?

**Mayor Adams:** Well, they're going to be mobile devices that won't impede the movement of people, that can detect readily if someone is carrying a gun. And I'm excited about some of the things that we were able to discover. Traditionally, when you look at the traditional metal detector, people must put items on a belt. They must walk through one at a time. That is not what we're looking at. We're looking at the ability of a number of people walking through, not having to stop, and the technology that we're looking at can actually identify, if five people walk through at the same time, it could identify which person out of that five is actually carrying a gun.

**Question:** I just have two questions, one for the chancellor and one for the mayor. For the chancellor, you talked about the seizure at a Queens school, 15 year old with two guns. Did a student come forward? How did that information come to the attention of the school safety agent? And is that an example of the type of see something, say something [inaudible]?

**Chancellor Banks:** Yes, exactly. It is an example—

**Mayor Adams:** I'm his attorney.

[Laughter]

**Chancellor Banks:** So we've had several of these incidents, and that particular one, I believe it was the parent who alerted the school, so they wanted to look out for it. But in several of the other incidents we've had, there have been other students who have alerted the school safety agents, or they've told the principal or assistant principal in the school, who then alerted school safety. The point being that there are members of the community, including the parents, and including other students, who see things. Very often, when students are bringing a weapon or have something in their bag, they show it off. They show it to others. And in doing so, we've been very fortunate. Many of those students have quietly said to someone else, "Somebody better take a look, because a particular student has something." And that's how we've been able to uncover most of these.

**Question:** And then my question for the mayor. Mayor, you described yourself as the new face of the Democratic Party in some venues. I'm wondering if you plan to use some of that political capital in trying to speak to Republican senators or anyone who's been in the way of passing background checks and other gun reform laws. Are you going to try and make the case to the Mitt Romneys of the world that is time to act?

**Mayor Adams:** Yes. And I communicated yesterday, last night with the mayor of Chicago. We talked about, "How do we take the large cities in America, Atlanta, Detroit, Chicago, New York, St. Louis," we're all experiencing this gun violence, and we're stating, and we're looking at, "How do we come as a unified body to speak with our federal lawmakers, as well as our state houses?" This is a window of opportunity, after such a horrific incident like this. I believe we have America's attention, and we want to mobilize that with our young people to deal with that. But yes, we are.

**Question:** This is a question for, I guess, the mayor and the chancellor. You said 20 guns have been confiscated in schools since the start of 2021. How does that compare to 2019? And then I also have a followup.

**Mayor Adams:** Well, we'll get the exact numbers for 2019, and this is the start of the school year, but we'll get those exact numbers for 2019.

**Question:** So it's just 2020? I'm sorry. It's been 20 guns since 2021?

**Mayor Adams:** From the beginning of the school year in 2021.

**Question:** Got it. And then also in the metal detectors, or the gun detectors in the subways, and then that also goes over to schools, how will that work? Does a cop need to be with these metal detectors?

**Mayor Adams:** I'm sorry. I didn't hear the first part.

**Question:** The metal detectors, when you had the demo over at City Hall—

**Mayor Adams:** Yes.

**Question:** ...an officer had to be physically present at a detector. So will you be adding more officers? How will that work? Will that mean, again, more officers, more funding?

**Mayor Adams:** School safety agents would be when we're dealing with schools. If we're dealing with the subway system, it would be transit officers. As you know now, when you enter the transit system, we're doing spot bag checks. Certain stations, random bag checks. You check to make sure that no one is bringing on an explosive device. I want to make sure we do a similar spot check, but we're specifically looking for guns in those areas where you have high gun violence. We could use those location, or high traffic.

**Question:** So would that require more school safety officers, and then also at the subways, more transit officers?

**Mayor Adams:** Well, we're looking to increase the number of school safety officers, but that is not going to require more school safety officers to carry out this action of doing the spot checks. We already have a roving unit that now goes unannounced to schools to do checks. So those areas where you have a high level of shootings or a high level of gun crimes, those are the areas that we can zero in on, but we can do spot checks in all of our schools by having a roving method to do so. Because remember, we're thinking not only about where you have gun shootings, but there are a lot of communities where young people are sitting at home, fixated with guns, fixated with social media, and it's

not a community where traditional gun violence come from. And so we have to keep our eyes on all our schools and students now.

**Question:** Yeah, mayor. So after the tragedy yesterday, there's been all this clamoring across the country for direct government action to stem this violence, this gun violence in schools. Yet your announcement today is focused on families. So what does this announcement offer to families who may be scared, who may be saying, I'm doing everything I can, but we need government intervention and support.

**Mayor Adams:** Okay. And we did not focus on families. We said, that's an added part that we have ignored. Our focus is on the entire community. It's focused on government. It's focused on law enforcement. It's focused on teachers. It's focused on empowering parents to be a partner. So this is not about, hey parents, we are blaming you. We need to be very clear on that. We're saying, we want to give you information. We want to recruit you on how to be a partner to the solution.

**Mayor Adams:** And I'm making another video. I knew I should have ignored everyone when I made the first video, and I'm making another video. I'm modernizing the video to show parents what social media should do. Many parents don't know how to go on their social media accounts of their children. Look at all of these issues that we're seeing. People, children are on the social media, and they've been indoctrinated outside of what they're learning inside their homes. And so you'll see another version of my video of showing parents what to do to protect their family.

**Mayor Adams:** So this is not about parents. This is about all of us. That was a missing piece. I want to give parents information that they could use to see the warning signs. If your child, if everything they seeing on social media is mass shootings, is everything they see is people committing crimes or looking at music that, like we just saw with these young people. Parents need to know that. And someone need to give parents information, and I'm willing to do so.

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor. My question is about that Instagram video you showed us, is anybody reaching out to the NYPD going to look at those [inaudible]? Are they from here, do you believe?

**Mayor Adams:** We're trying to get the exact location of where it was filmed. It was on Instagram, and the danger of Instagram that it can influence outside of one location.

And so we're trying to get the exact location of where it was filmed. We're not aware of it, where it was filmed. But trust me, if it wasn't filmed in New York, you should look at some of these drill rap videos. It is unbelievable how social media is being used to indoctrinate hate in our children. And because we don't see it, we think that this is not happening. We're not letting bad people in our homes, but bad people are coming in our homes through our cell phones, through our computers, and through the iPads.

**Question:** Now Mr. Mayor, given that the chancellor just spoke about students who were worried about going home and fearful, and that's why that they're carrying weapons. Is there any thoughts of making safe streets or corridors for kids getting released from school? That they're protected in some way?

**Mayor Adams:** And we love that idea. And that is what we're looking at, having a clear corridor for our children, and so that they can have this safe corridor. That not only are the police aware, but the storekeepers, the stakeholders, the families, creating safe havens. If you feel you're threatened, this store, this bodega, this supermarket, have a safe space for children and directly interact with our law enforcement people to let them know that they have a child that's fearful.

**Mayor Adams:** And also we had the safe shopper to use those corridors with cameras. So we could detect those types of behavior. You're 100% right. We believe that those safe corridors is something we have to create so parents can instruct their children, this is the route home. The days of taking any route you want home, those days are over. Here's the route you are going to take home, that is a safe corridor that we're going to coordinate with our local precinct personnel.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, in light of what happened in Texas, I wonder if you're taking any steps to protect New York City schools. The governor of [inaudible] upstate till the end the school year. Since this is the largest school system in the nation, so many schools, are you increasing police presence at these schools? And are you afraid that there could be a copycat incident here in New York City? What actions are you taking to protect those schools?

**Mayor Adams:** The goal, you are always fearful of copycats. You're always fearful of copycats. We see what happened after school shootings of across the country, things can happen. But we have some of the best school safety agents, apparatus, and combined with our Police Department. That is why I went against the thought of taking

school safety from under police, and I'm not going to do that. They're going to stay in coordination with the police department, and we're going to make sure... And when we sit down with the chancellor to find out, to get you the numbers that we need, that he feels comfortable enough that we have the right coverage throughout the city. It's important, and his case is showing that. But the goal is to stop the guns from coming into the school, and make sure our children are safe getting to school.

**Question:** [Inaudible] increased police presence today, tomorrow, just to send a message to people that they should consider [inaudible] principal [inaudible] students [inaudible]?

**Mayor Adams:** We're not going to put police officers physically into school buildings. That's the role of school safety agents. But all of our schools, the police commissioner is going to make sure we do what's called SA, special assignment, to drive by the schools, particularly while children are coming out. We're going to pay special attention to the schools, particularly in light of what happened in Texas.

**Question:** [Inaudible] extra drive by patrols [inaudible]?

**Mayor Adams:** I'm sorry?

**Question:** Are you talking about extra drive-by patrols [inaudible] from the local precincts?

**Mayor Adams:** Yes. That's the goal.

**Question:** Just to follow up on Marcia's question. What's the standard protocol across all schools to ensure that a shooter doesn't get into the school? Is there something standard? I heard you say you're looking at the idea of locking doors. But besides that, can you talk a little bit about, I know students do drills.

**Chancellor Banks:** Yes. And...

**Question:** How many drills do they do? How often? What else is in place already?

**Chancellor Banks:** Yeah. So all of our schools have crisis teams that have been trained, and we work really through those crisis teams. They provide a level of training, also in the schools, in case there's a worst case scenario. And the building in fact has to go into lockdown, and how teachers are to move and what students are to be able to do, and the direction that they take. Much like you knew as the old fire drills, if there was ever fire in the school, what happens. We have those kinds of drills that we do as well.

**Chancellor Banks:** But we all feel the necessity to do more at this time. That's part of the reason why we're here today, is to say that the ante has been raised here, and we've got to do more. And that's why we're talking about perhaps even just locking our doors once our students are in school, and making visitors have to stop and identify themselves before they come in.

**Chancellor Banks:** Currently, as it stands, now, you don't have to do that. The buildings are still open. So if somebody meant to do harm, they will be stopped by a school safety officer, but they're already in the building. So that is just one example of something that we're looking at right now.

**Question:** [Inaudible] like something very easy. I mean, what's stopping you from just deciding to do that tomorrow?

**Chancellor Banks:** It used to... Nothing is easy in New York. Right? And so there are conversations that you have to have with lots of people. But we are certainly looking at that right now. And we are also ... And I think it's important to know, we are asking the general public, we're asking our parents, our students, and the folks who work in our schools. We're asking them for some of the best ideas as well. What are the other things that we can do?

**Chancellor Banks:** And the mayor talks about a new technology. That's really [inaudible], we won't necessarily have that tomorrow, but we think that that is coming. No child wants to go to school and be scanned. You feel like you're going to jail just to go to your English class. So we are looking at technology that is much less invasive, still preserves the integrity of just being a student and going to school, but yet you can have the assuredness that nobody's walking in this school with a firearm. That's critically important.



**Chancellor Banks:** Although, most of the issues that we have in our schools are not firearms. They're box cutters, and they are all kinds of other things that kids bring to school. They're also part of the issue. And the technology we're looking at is going to seek to address all those issues.

**Mayor Adams:** Are you a parent?

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, chancellor, for Univision. Mr. Mayor, I guess to protect somebody, truly the only thing would be to have bullet proof all around the school, which is nearly impossible. My question today is for parents, because we've had a lot of parents reaching out to us telling us how do I speak to my children about this? And I'm just wondering, chancellor, if today this is being discussed with teachers and students to prepare them for something like this. Already, they've been having issues with the pandemic, and now you have a situation like this.

**Mayor Adams:** No, so true. So true. Two things, my observation. There is a real philosophical battle going on in our city and country right now. The overwhelming number of New Yorkers and Americans understand what we're doing. They understand that we have too many guns, that it's too dangerous, that we need to make our city safe. But I say this over and over again, there's a small number of sophisticated social media users, they have hijacked the opinion of Americans.

**Mayor Adams:** So when I talk about scanners and those sophisticated folks, all of a sudden attack me for using technology. When we talk about school safety agents, and they attacked us for putting school safety agents in schools. When we talk about putting in place neighborhood safety team to take 2,900 guns off the street, all you're trying to go back and criminalize communities. So there's this philosophical group that's out there that basically they've controlled the whole narrative, but that's not what New Yorkers want. And New Yorkers are saying, Eric, we're with you. We're with you and the police department. We have to stop this violence. And one way we are going to do it is we have to give parents and families, big sisters ... Who raised my big sister, played the role in my life. Big brothers of community groups, pastors, we need to give them information on how to share it in multiple languages, because we're not only an English speaking language.

**Mayor Adams:** So by giving people information, those telltale signs, you see a box of bullets in your child's room. It's a possibility he has a gun. Sit down. How to have those

conversations. Bring social workers on board. People who are used to dealing with conflicts, we want to really roll out a real plan to empower parents to be partners, to speak to their children. And if they don't feel comfortable with doing so, who is in the community that can play that role of doing so? That is what our goal is to give those parents information. Cause parents, they're so busy running their lives, trying to keep the lights, on dealing with COVID, trying to keep food on the table. We have to be there to give them the information that they need so they can be our partners to fight this.