

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY
3101 North Front Street, Harrisburg, PA

School Safety and Security Committee Meeting

July 30, 2019

MINUTES

Members/Designees: Mr. Charles Ramsey, Chairman
Mr. Derin Myers, Acting Executive Director
Ms. Janice Bart, Member (via Skype)
Senator James Brewster, Member
Ms. Nikki Bricker, Member
Representative Donna Bullock, Member
Colonel Robert Evanchick, Member
Mr. David Hein, Member
Mr. Mike Hurley, Member
Mr. Mike Kelly (via Skype)
Ms. Charlene Koretz, Member
Senator Wayne Langerholc, Member (via Skype)
Representative Jason Ortitay, Member
Director David (Randy) Padfield, Member
Dr. Gennaro "Jamie" Piraino, Member
Dr. Kathleen Reeves, Member
Mr. Joseph Regan, Member
Mr. Jonathan Ross, Member
Dr. Sherri Smith, Designee for Secretary Rivera
Dr. Helena Tuleya-Payne, Member
Mr. Mike Vereb, Member (via Skype)

Staff: Pamela Bennett
Jeff Blystone
Lindsay Busko
Danielle Chubb
Christina Cosgrove-Rooks
Chris Epoca
Rich Finley
Kirsten Kenyon
Samantha Koch
Geoff Kolchin
Carol Kuntz
Crystal Lauver
Jennifer Moore
Robert Orth
Michael Pennington
Debra Sandifer

Executive Session
Guest Designees:

Hannah Barrick, PA Association of School Business Officials (per Mike Hurley)
Stephen Bruder, Legislative Staff (per Senator Brewster)
Gwenn Dando, Legislative Staff (per Senator Langerholc)
Mike Deery, Legislative Staff (per Senator Hughes)
Jay Himes, PA Association of School Business Officials (per Mike Hurley)
Christine Seitz, Legislative Staff (per Representative Ortity)
Jeffrey Thomas, PA Emergency Management Agency (per Director Padfield)
Vicki Wilken, Legislative Staff (per Senator Langerholc)

Additional Guests:

Jonathan Berger, PA School Boards Association (PSBA)
Rick Carpenter, Information Network Associates, Inc. (INA)
Angela Fitterer, PA Department of Education (PDE)
Gerry Huesken, PA Department of Education (PDE – consultant)
Tim Joyce, Senator Brewster
Julie Kane, PA Department of Education (PDE)
Brad Keen, PA House Appropriations Committee (D)
Vince Kovach, PA Department of Education (PDE)
Brian Krause, Vulnerability Solutions Group (VSG)
Pete Mango, Signal 88 Security
Jenna McCarthy, Malady & Wooten
Megan McDonough, PA School Boards Association (PSBA)
Preston M. Moretz, Temple University
Madeline Myers, Representative Roebuck
Anthony Piraino, Student
John Sancenito, Information Network Associates, Inc. (INA)

I. Call to Order and Adoption of Minutes

- Call to Order
 - Chairman Ramsey called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM and welcomed those in attendance and on the phone
 - A quorum of members was established
- Review and adoption of the minutes from the April 30th meeting

Motion to approve the minutes

- Senator Brewster made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Hurley
- There was no discussion or public comment
- The minutes were approved by unanimous vote

II. Introductions

- Provided background on expansion of Committee membership as part of Act 18 of 2019
- Welcomed new Committee members appointed by Governor Wolf and shared brief background information
 - Dr. Kathleen Reeves, Director of the Center for Bioethics, Urban Health, and Policy at Temple University's Lewis Katz School of Medicine and Senior Associate Dean of the new Office of Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as the *"subject matter expert in trauma-informed approaches from a state related institution of higher education"*
 - Mr. Jonathan Ross, principal of Lionville Middle School in the Downingtown Area School District and President-Elect of the Pennsylvania Principals Association as the *"school principal recommended by the Pennsylvania Principals Association with experience in behavioral health matters"*
 - Ms. Charlene Koretz, a certified school nurse within the Colonial School District in Montgomery County and Vice President and Communications Committee Representative for PSEA's Department of Pupil Services Board as the *"school nurse recommended by the Pennsylvania State Education Association with experience in behavioral health matters"*
 - Mr. David Hein, a two-term member and current Vice President of the Parkland School Board in Lehigh County and member of the Pennsylvania School Board Association Audit and Legislative Advisory Committees as the *"school director recommended by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association with experience in school safety matters or behavioral health matters"*
- Introduced and welcomed Carol Kuntz, who recently filled the new School Safety and Security Manager position at PCCD after serving as Director of the PA Department of Education (PDE) Office for Safe Schools
- Welcomed Committee Members and Designees, including Dr. Sherri Smith who is filling in as PDE Secretary Rivera's representative

III. Overview of the Amendments to Act 44 of 2018

- Reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on Act 18 of 2019
 - Noted seven points of significant change
 - Allows for the aggregate release of School Safety Survey data.
 - Supports the creation of a Trauma-Informed Approach Plan and provides for training of board members and employees in trauma-informed approaches.
 - Expands the School Safety and Security Committee membership.

- Modifies the School Safety and Security Grant Program.
- Mandates the establishment of threat assessment teams in all school entities.
- Modifies PDE's Targeted School Safety Grants program.
- Expands the number of PA State Police (PSP) Risk and Vulnerability Team (RVAT) Units providing school safety assessments.
- Reviewed the timeline imposed by Act 18
 - By August 31, 2019, create and adopt a Model Trauma-Informed Approach Plan that school entities can use when applying for School Safety and Security Grants.
 - Implement School Safety and Security Grant Program changes and ensure awards are made by March 1, 2020 and every March 1 thereafter.
 - No later than December 25, 2019, provide model trainings and materials on threat assessment teams for all school entities.
- PCCD applied for federal funding around the model trainings and guidelines
- Will go into Executive Session in order to have deeper conversation around the option to release aggregate School Safety Survey data, along with review of the PSP RVAT report and an update from the Attorney General's Office on the Safe2Say Program

Motion to enter Executive Session

- A motion to enter Executive Session was made by Rep. Bullock and seconded by Dr. Tuleya-Payne
- There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously
- Everyone other than Committee members, designated PCCD staff and approved Committee member support staff left the room

Motion to leave Executive Session

- A motion to leave Executive Session was made by Rep. Ortity and seconded by Mr. Hein
- There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously
- Guests and staff returned and the Committee resumed its regular session
- Decision regarding releasing School Safety Survey Infographic and SSSC Survey Presentation
 - Consensus was not achieved during Executive Session
 - The Committee agreed to table any action to a future meeting
- Presentation on the development of a model Trauma-Informed Approach Plan
 - PCCD staff Geoff Kolchin provided an overview and summary of progress made
 - Convened a trauma-informed approaches workgroup, which has met twice thus far, to begin to layout the requirements for a plan that will be provided to school entities
 - Will incorporate feedback from the Committee in the draft guidelines
 - Goal to finalize a template for the SSSC to approve at the August 28 meeting
 - Briefly reviewed Section 1311-B of Act 18, covering expectations and requirements for developing a model Trauma-Informed Approach
 - Initial clarifications
 - Thanked legislative staff who have been participating in the meetings
 - The plan does not need to be finalized prior to applying for the grant, but the legislative intent is that they make creation and finalization of a plan part of the application process
 - Want to give schools guidance but not concrete requirements

- Want to lay out best practices and minimum standards
- Necessity to be culturally responsive, recognizing the uniqueness of school entities and individual buildings
- The workgroup recognizes all the work that's being done around this area already, so schools can build on what they are already doing, or start from scratch learning from what's been done in PA and around the country and build based on the knowledge base that's out there
- Want it to be an ongoing process – this is a beginning point, not a once-and-done approach
- Reviewed the workgroup's thoughts on the overall guidelines and parameters for each of the 5 areas
 - Designation of a point person – at least one individual
 - Noted debate over whether the person should be at the building or district level or if consultants are OK
 - Determined that it's up to the individual school entity how best to identify
 - There needs to be a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support buy-in by the school entity if it's an individual from an outside entity
 - Intend to recommend a team approach with a point person coordinating the work
 - Coordination of services
 - Schools to conduct a readiness assessment before starting
 - Recommend building on existing structures within the school (e.g. MTSS, SAP) to encourage their development and use those approaches as an integral part of the plan
 - Screening
 - ◆ Don't want universal screening for trauma, especially at Tier 1, as may risk inducing trauma
 - ◆ Recommend using a social emotional screening at Tier 1 and refer identified students for more specific screening for Tier 2 and 3
 - ◆ Need preparation to deal with students who have been identified
 - Parents must have the right to opt out of the screenings
 - ◆ Potentially use peer-to-peer support to help garner buy-in
 - ◆ Noted can still have universal precautions and trauma informed approach regardless of parental consent, though their buy in is important
 - Want to recommend a systems coordination approach, and involve community agencies and partners into the planning process
 - Provision of services
 - Ensure ongoing communication with community partners
 - Recommend that school entities do a mapping of available services and identify where gaps exist
 - Recommend an MTSS process for the caregivers and teachers
 - ◆ They are on the front lines, likely to either stir up previous trauma or secondary trauma, so want to ensure the supports are there
 - ◆ Important to engage both the administration and the union
 - Recommend building on SAP
 - ◆ They already do a lot around coordination of services
 - ◆ Can work with some of the regional SAP coordinators over training

- Evidence-based/-informed approaches
 - Use the definition in the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) as the basis for meeting the requirements – would be a clear understanding and in line of other funding requirements
 - Needs assessment data should be used to drive program selection, and pick programs that have been shown effective in meeting those needs
 - Teachers and other line staff working directly with kids should be involved in the selection and implementation of programs, especially at the universal level
 - Build in a quality improvement process, for guiding decisions moving forward
- Professional development
 - Will show options and not mandate specific training
 - Work with PDE on developing a repository of examples nationwide on trauma-informed approaches
 - Train all personnel, not just teachers, especially those who are working at a higher level with students with trauma issues
 - Should be a dedicated approach, not just a one-day in-service session
 - Focus on resiliency, not just addressing trauma, build on strengths
 - Coordinate with PDE and the Department of Human Services (DHS) regarding other state initiatives
 - Recommend referencing the option of braiding funding to support, build and advance this approach, so schools don't just rely on Act 44 funds
- Responded to questions and comments from Committee members
 - Will the school be notified if the child is exposed to trauma outside of the school environment? Noted improving communication and collaboration with outside entities (law enforcement, county partners, etc.)
 - Underscored coordination, noted upcoming PaTTAN training on 9/17/19
 - Encouraged developing some sort of informative guide for parents on what this is
 - There's a lack of familiarity and/or a misunderstanding of what this is
 - Important that they understand that it's an up-front approach, not just after the fact (e.g., a shooting or other traumatic event)
- School Safety and Security Grant Program – Framework Discussion
 - Discussed the letter circulated by Senator Brewster, who gave an overview
 - He had introduced a bill to create a baseline for school safety and security, then thought that this is the group that should develop do that to eliminate inconsistencies
 - Baseline could be adjusted, funds could go to help less fortunate districts
 - Physical security, mental health, and environmental are the 3 basic categories
 - Act 44 funds should help school entities meet those baselines
 - Don't want to strip local school boards with their authority, so they can go further if they want to
 - Idea that everyone has the plan in hand, and can share at the macro level what to do if they encounter an issue of mold, asbestos, mental health, physical security, etc.
 - Things in the baseline should be attainable and affordable

- Sen. Brewster asked for the Committee to authorize a subcommittee to look into this and develop a baseline, rather than introducing a bill
 - Chair asked PCCD staff to reach out and see if there's interest in developing a subcommittee
 - Participants were invited to join and were asked to let PCCD staff know
 - PCCD will conduct preliminary exploration and bring the formation of a subcommittee as an action item for the August meeting
- Noted that they may still need to look at adding to the legislation
- Concern about the auditor general reviewing the standards – can look at other ways to review it while still ensuring consistency and accountability
- Changes made in Act 18 to how the grant program is to be structured
 - Reviewed chart, highlighting some of the pertinent changes
 - Continue to have concern around winners and losers in competitive grants
 - The ability to pay should be part of the discussion and determination of awards
 - School safety and security should not be based upon zip codes and/or a school's ability to write grants
 - Recommendation that schools be allowed to submit one application for a meritorious award and another application for competitive grants
 - Highlighted Considerations
 - Shift to a 12-region model that reduces the number of grants per reviewer to be more manageable
 - Ability to prioritize for funding
 - Question of the basis for the average daily membership (ADM) – would probably use the 2017-2018 data from the PDE website
 - Most significant change is the maximum award being reduced from 6% of the total amount allocated (i.e., \$6 million in total) to \$450,000 plus the meritorious application amount for all but the two most populous districts
- Discussed using the same 12.5% of the available funds to support the Community Violence Prevention/Reduction Grant Program that was adopted last year

Motion to approve distribution of funding for the Community Violence Prevention/Reduction Grant Program

- A motion to approve distribution of funding for the Community Violence Prevention/Reduction Grant Program was made by Rep. Bullock and seconded by Mr. Hurley, no abstentions, all in favor
- Feedback from experience last year
 - The dollar amount didn't fund a large percentage
 - ◆ Looked at what's the right amount and the right mix
 - ◆ Staff responded to some inquiries
- Noted the timeline
 - Looking to release both funding announcements in September and close them in mid-November
 - Required to do some informational training, will host events to review how to do
 - The review process will occur mid-November to January
 - Any interested member is invited to participate in a cursory review in January
 - Recommendations will be presented to the Committee in February

- Threat Assessment Teams Model Trainings – PowerPoint overview
 - Historically, it has been utilized for the past two decades in schools and universities
 - Reviewed definition
 - Helps with mitigating risks and identifying protective factors
 - It's part of the puzzle – it's not meant to replace but complement as part of a broader effort within schools
 - Referenced the safety concerns highlighted in the [Pennsylvania Youth Survey \(PAYS\)](#) and PSBA [2019 State of Education](#) report
 - PA joins seven other states in developing and requiring this model
 - Reviewed requirements from Article XIII-E, Threat Assessment, within the school code
 - Threat assessment is a model, meant to be flexible and adaptable to school's need
 - Reviewed required members and optional members
 - Important for school members to know about the team, who is on it and when/how to report concerns
 - Law reiterates exceptions regarding access to student information
 - Reviewed requirements for the SSSC
 - Act 18 institutes a deadline of December 25, 2019 to identify best practices and create model trainings, materials, procedures and guidelines
 - Mandates review, revision and notification of updates on an annual/ongoing basis
 - Recommend development of an SSSC Threat Assessment Workgroup
 - Identify potential members and finalize recommended list at August meeting
 - Start formally meeting in September
- Article XIII-C School Security Amendments
 - Reviewed PowerPoint overview of Act 67 of 2019 covering the three main components, affecting school resource officers (SROs), school police officers (SPOs) and school security guards (SSGs)
 - Standard that they all SROs, SPOs, and SSGs take the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) 40-hour basic training or an equivalent course approved by the Commission
 - Concern that the NASRO training is well regarded, but has limited availability
 - The legislation currently states an “equivalent”, which is strong language
 - Needs to be pretty much the same, not just curriculum
 - Necessitates expert review in the comparison
 - Access and cost of NASRO are the biggest concerns
 - Previous understanding that those who were accepted into NASRO's training were limited to law enforcement, but that has changed, and it's now open to anyone who wants to participate
 - Noted challenges and concerns
 - Concern of investing that time and cost if there's not longevity in the staff, especially for school security officers
 - Challenge of contracted third party vendors
 - Are currently in the process of approving contracts and now questioning whether or not they will know if they are certified prior to approving that contract
 - How to know if that agency is/will be certified?
 - Anticipate having more information for the August meeting

- Concern with schools that hire fire-police for traffic and security for football games – with language around “routine”, do they also need to go through this training?
- Suggestion of NASRO doing a training of trainers, noted that cost and willingness might be a challenge, but will look into it more

IV. General Updates

- Status of FY2018-19 Grant Awards
 - 219 of 234 applications approved by the Committee have been officially awarded
 - 181 of those have been paid a total of just under \$27.5 million
 - There has been \$455,000 in application budget reductions, mainly due to supplantation issues discovered during application review by PCCD staff
 - The funds sit in an interest-bearing account, and as of June 30, the fund has accrued over 643,000 in interest
 - Thought there would be reduced amounts from April with supplantation, but not as much as anticipated, so will need to use the interest accrued to offset the grant amounts, as previously received really strong pushback on needing to cut amounts
- Assessor Registry Update
 - Have received a total of 139 provider assessor applications
 - 81 have been approved
 - Physical: 65
 - Behavioral: 13
 - Dual: 3

V. Member Updates/Comments

- Comment regarding the number of behavioral health assessors, that there are only 13, which seems really low, so many need to look at revising criteria moving forward
- Question regarding any updates on arrest powers delineated in Act 67, noted that it was changed, reviewed what’s now in the law

VI. Public Comment

- Guest with background and expertise in security raised concerns regarding the training requirements of Act 18
 - Stated that the timeline issue will create a problem because of the NASRO training requirement, especially for unarmed school security officers
 - Also said that 30-40% of the NASRO training content is not appropriate for what schools need, so only need about 2.5 days of the content required
- No other public comments were heard

VII. Adjournment

- Noted that the next meeting is on August 28 from 1:00 – 3:00 PM, will consider the trauma-informed approach model and grant funding
- Thanked everyone for their time and contribution to today’s meeting

Motion to adjourn the meeting

- The motion was made by Sen. Brewster and seconded by Rep. Ortity
- The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 3:05 PM