

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY

MINUTES OF SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE
PCCD BUILDING
3101 NORTH FRONT STREET
HARRISBURG, PA
August 29, 2018

Before: Honorable Charles H. Ramsey, Chairman
Mr. Derin Myers, Chairperson Designee
Honorable James Brewster, Member
Ms. Nikki Bricker, Member
Major James Degnan, Designee
Mr. Richard D. Flinn, Jr., Member
Mr. Mike Hurley, Member
Mr. Mike Kelly, Member
Ms. Carol Kuntz, Designee
Honorable Wayne Langerholc, Member
Honorable Jason Ortitay, Member
Mr. Gennaro "Jamie" Piraino (telephone), Member
Mr. Joseph Regan (telephone), Member
Dr. Helena Tuleya-Payne, Member
Mr. Mike Vereb, Designee

Staff: Mr. Jim Anderson
Ms. Danielle Chubb
Ms. Kathy Clarke
Mr. Chris Epoca
Ms. Theresa Ford
Ms. Nancy Heisler
Ms. Kirsten Kenyon
Mr. Geoff Kolchin
Mr. Mike Pennington
Ms. Debra Sandifer
Ms. Jackie Weaknecht
Mr. Marcus Brown (guest of Chairman)

I. Call to Order and Adoption of Minutes

The School Safety and Security Committee (SSSC) Meeting was called to order by Chairman Ramsey at 1:02 p.m. The first order of business was to review the Minutes from the July 23, 2018 Meeting. *There was no public comment on the minutes. Mr. Mike Vereb made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 23, 2018 meeting as submitted. Major James Degnan seconded the motion and the minutes were approved by unanimous vote.*

II. Workgroup Reports and Consideration of Criteria

A. Governor and Auditor General’s Report

Mr. Marcus Brown provided an overview of the Governor and Auditor General’s School Safety Task Force Report. A task force was formed by the Governor and the Auditor General after the Parkland shooting in Florida. The Task Force held six meetings around the state and listened to what teachers, administrators, health professionals, public safety officials, elected officials, and students had to say about the issue of school violence.

Needs expressed during the meetings included: physical security, health professionals within the school, guidance counselors within the school, mentoring programs, community support, information sharing, teacher training, and student training. Meeting attendees also wanted leadership to know that all schools are not the same, which means that the solutions are not the same.

B. Conducting School Safety and Security Assessments

Ms. Lindsay Vaughan indicated that since the last SSSC meeting, workgroups met to develop the assessment criteria for the physical, policy, behavioral health, and registration criteria sections. The goal of the assessment criteria is to give guidance to assessors and to ensure that school districts are aware of best practices. Ms. Vaughan is looking for feedback on the proposed methodology and would like to hear about any concerns about the level of detail listed.

A member inquired as to whether or not there would be a rubric as part of the criteria that could give schools a sense of where they were with respect to best practices. In light of the development of the criteria as a series of best practice statements, it was ultimately determined that it would be up to a vendor to develop a rubric utilizing the criteria if that’s how they chose to do their assessment.

Membership also suggested that the criteria be aligned with existing best practice recommendations in the PEMA Safe School Tool and the Auditor General’s Safe School Audit materials. There were suggestions made about including criteria on being trauma-informed, criteria related to interventions after a potentially deadly incident and criteria about how schools can address youth with multiple referrals for the same issues.

C. Registration of Assessors Criteria

Ms. Vaughan informed the SSSC that the registration of assessors is dependent on the SSSC's assessment criteria. Individuals conducting a physical assessment would have a different skill set than individuals assessing behavioral health and school climate.

Jackie Weaknecht said that her workgroup has been working on outlining the school safety training policy and determining what type of credentials, certifications, training, and experience an assessor should have to be qualified to conduct an assessment. She said the workgroup struggled to develop a list of criteria that would identify the most qualified individuals, being mindful not to make the list so restrictive that it would limit the number of people that could do the assessments. She is looking for guidance from the SSSC. It was indicated that the behavioral health qualifications in the registration criteria could be more objective than they were currently written.

D. Survey Development Work Group

Mr. Myers informed the members of SSSC that Mr. Jim Anderson is chairing the Survey Development Work Group and they will meet next week. He indicated that it we need to develop a survey that collects good baseline information, but not include so many questions that the survey is overwhelming for schools.

III. Discussion – Funding Distribution

Mr. Myers indicated that at the last meeting, the group talked about a funding distribution model that would include a formula distribution to all school entities. Pennsylvania has approximately 800 eligible school entities. These include school districts, area vocational-technical schools, intermediate units, charter schools, and private residential rehabilitation institutions.

Mr. Myers informed the SSSC that there were issues encountered when staff went through formula distribution model scenarios. If a formula model was used, the model would dictate where resources would go and the SSSC would not be able to review and determine where funding should go based on school entity need.

Mr. Myers indicated that staff is proposing an alternative model which includes a release of a single funding announcement that would make \$12.5M dollars available to school districts making a meritorious application to the Committee, and \$40M dollars available competitively for all eligible school entities. The announcement would be released on September 7th and close on October 12th. Following the close on October 12th, all of the meritorious school district applications would be presented to the SSSC on October 30th. For applications not found to be meritorious by the SSSC, PCCD staff would work with applicants to revise their proposals or provide additional information.

By November 30th, the Committee will begin reviewing the school entity survey responses and any submitted pre-existing safety and security assessment reports and provide findings back to school entities. After feedback is provided, PCCD will reopen

each school entities competitive application for any revisions to their initial application. Resubmitted applications will then be reviewed competitively.

IV. Member Updates

Future meeting dates:

- Wednesday, September 26, 2018 – 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 30, 2018 – 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 28, 2018 – 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, January 30, 2019 – 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

V. Public Comment

Mr. Myers mentioned that there is a two-page document included in the members packet that includes information received through the Pennsylvania Youth Survey.

VI. Adjournment

Mr. Mike Vereb made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Richard D. Flinn, Jr. seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.