

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

School Safety and Security Committee Skype Meeting

April 1, 2020

MINUTES

Members/Designees: Mr. Derin Myers, Designee for Chairman Ramsey
Mr. Michael Pennington, PCCD Executive Director
Ms. Janice Bart, Member
Senator James Brewster, Member
Ms. Nikki Bricker Cameron, Member
Representative Donna Bullock, Member
Col. Robert Evanchick, Member
Mr. David Hein, Member
Dr. Gerald Huesken, Designee for Secretary Rivera
Mr. Mike Hurley, Member
Mr. Mike Kelly, Member
Senator Wayne Langerholc, Member
Representative Jason Ortity, Member
Dr. Gennaro "Jamie" Piraino, Member
Mr. Jonathan Ross, Member
Dr. Helena Tuleya-Payne, Member
Mr. Mike Vereb, Designee for Josh Shapiro

Staff: Pamela Bennett
Lindsay Busko
Chris Epoca
Rich Finley
Kirsten Kenyon
Samantha Koch
Carol Kuntz
Crystal Lauver
Debra Sandifer
Shaun White

Guests: Andrew Barnes, Governor's Police Office
Sean Brandon, PA House Democrats
Gwenn Dando, PA Senate
Michael Deery, PA Senate
Scott Kuren, PA Department of Education (PDE)
Jenna McCarthy, Malady & Wooten
Christine Seitz, PA House of Representatives
Vicki Wilken, PA Senate

I. Call to Order and Adoption of Minutes

- Call to Order
 - Mr. Myers called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM and welcomed participants
 - A quorum of members was established
- Review and adoption of the minutes from the February 26, 2020 meeting

Motion to approve the minutes

- Sen. Brewster made the motion, which was seconded by Rep. Bullock
- There was no discussion or public comment
- The minutes were approved by unanimous vote

II. General Updates

- Review of March 12, 2020 Baseline Standards Workgroup Meeting areas of discussion:
 - Want to break down the current list of items for the physical safety of the school into a tiered list to create a hierarchy of safety needs
 - Mental health
 - Identification of components necessary for schools
 - Would be beneficial to create a similar hierarchy to go from the very basics available (e.g. school counselor, psychologist, social worker) to networking within the community to provide services, and opportunities for social-emotional learning
- Survey and Criteria Workgroup meeting will be scheduled to convene in April
- Update on meritorious and competitive grants
 - Have been able to continue processing the grants in the current environment
 - Are holding Skype meetings with school entities that have issues with their grants
 - Are contacting school entities and other awardees through eGrants and email about any needed paperwork
 - Are in the process of establishing the receipt of an electronic signature on the grants
 - Will alleviate the burden of posting and inability to collect signature pages in the office at this time
 - Will simplify the process and facilitate getting the information so the grants can be executed and payments made
- Right to Know Request
 - Had a Right to Know request last year, received another request this year
 - This one is a broader request for the summaries submitted by all school districts
 - Are clarifying what the requestor is looking for
 - Will redact any potentially revealing information regarding security issues
 - Responded to questions raised by participants
 - Clarified that the request was from the media, not a business
 - Give guidance to schools of what can and cannot be provided for when they get requests? Had previously sent something out, but will send it again to the three contacts at each school entity and inform them of the media Right to Know request
 - Suggestion for the next round of grants to let applicants know that they are open to Right to Know; will remind in the funding announcement of what can be released
 - Clarified that the Right to Know request was for the summaries submitted for last round by school districts (not all applicants)
 - Will review the submitted executive summaries and redact as needed
 - Will let the Committee know in advance of releasing the requested information
 - Current due date is April 12, but given the current situation will request a 30- or 60-day extension

III. Approval of FY2019 BJA STOP School Violence Technology & Threat Assessment Solutions for Safer Schools

- Review of Threat Assessment Summary document
 - Background
 - PCCD received the federal Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence Grant in the fall
 - Will continue and enhance the work that Pennsylvania has done to provide resources for threat assessment teams in schools
 - Goal is to develop and launch a statewide Pennsylvania K-12 Threat Assessment Technical Assistance and Training Network to deliver at no cost to school entities
 - ◆ Technical assistance supports
 - ◆ An evidence-based threat assessment training curricula tailored for K-12 multidisciplinary teams in PA, utilizing a train-the-trainer approach
 - PCCD released a funding announcement for nonprofit and for-profit organizations to submit proposals in January
 - Received 4 applications, 3 of which were viable proposals to be considered
 - PDE, PSP, PEMA and PCCD staff identified a proposal to recommend for the award following a competitive review and scoring process of the applications
 - Recommendation
 - PCCD, PDE, PEMA, and PSP staff recommend that the School Safety and Security Committee approve an award of \$677,339 in federal funds to RSM Corporation
 - A summary of the RSM application was provided with the meeting materials

Motion to approve an award of \$677,339 in federal funds to RSM Corporation as the provider for the threat assessment work to be done in Pennsylvania, based on recommendations of representatives from PCCD, PDE, PEMA, and PSP, pending resolution of any outstanding fiscal and/or program concerns

- Dr. Piraino made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Hurley
- PCCD staff noted that it's a cooperative award, so there are some negotiations that will need to occur before it's finalized
- Questions/Discussion
 - Has RSM developed a threat assessment program or is this something they will be creating specifically for Pennsylvania?
 - They do have work in other states that they can build on
 - Are planning to build a completely customized training program, both online and in person, for delivery here in Pennsylvania based on statutory requirements
 - Is it a mandatory requirement for schools to use the RSM threat assessment as the only designated program, or is it just offering one that provides training if schools already have a threat assessment program in place?
 - There's no mandate to use RSM's threat assessment
 - The goal is to offer at no-cost both a training option if schools don't already have that in place, and a statewide framework for technical assistance
- The motion was approved unanimously, with an abstention by Col. Evanchick

III. Member Updates/Comments/Questions

- In light of the current COVID-19 situation, is PCCD considering timeline extensions for school districts to initiate some of their 2019-20 grant implementations?
 - Member has had several districts contract with his organization to do assessments which are now on hold; will be reinstated when back in school, but with all the uncertainty not sure of the timeframe
 - PCCD is providing guidance around timelines, with the caveat that will be as flexible as are able to be
 - Clarifying expectations, as don't want school districts to be caught off guard in the fall with expired timeframes

- Legislator recommended having a contingency plan for next year's distribution; may only have the \$15 million the governor proposed available, if a budget even gets done on time
- With the impact of this situation on everyone's budgets, the Committee may want to consider previous discussion of pulling training components out of allowable activities in the grants and recommending regionalized and collaborative training efforts to better utilize sharing of resources; can consider incorporating that into the funding framework after we know more about the appropriation amount for the coming year
- Have heard questions by a number of school districts of reductions and potential impact on how much meritorious funding will remain and the possibility of the competitive grants going away, particularly with the potential big gap in school safety and security and building funding
 - PCCD staff responded that the discussion around baseline criteria establishment is good work to do in any scenario moving forward
 - Will run through the possibilities and present options to consider when talking about moving forward with the next round of funding
- Member noted receiving a letter at home regarding income, probably based on being part of this Committee
 - PCCD Counsel questioned if it was from the Ethics Commission or PCCD
 - Others identified it as the standard disclosure of financial interest form
- Member noted numerous contacts from school districts regarding their all-hazards plans
 - Revising to shift them from just active shooter situations, realizing they are unprepared for other situations, like the current COVID-19 pandemic
 - Gives validity to baseline planning to consider other areas that have the potential of creating a significant amount of disruption in our public education system
 - Need to take a serious look at how the information is put together and ensure not all focused on active shooter situations
 - May even need to take a look at the 22 items of eligibility listed in the Act about what the money can be spent on

IV. Public Comment – None

V. Adjournment

- Mr. Myers thanked everyone for their time and contribution to today's meeting
- Motion to adjourn the meeting**
- The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ross and seconded by Mr. Hein
 - The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 1:36 PM