

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

School Safety and Security Committee Meeting

November 30, 2023

MINUTES

Members/Designees:

Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis, Chairman
Ms. Sabrina S. Backer, Member
Mr. Andrew Barnes, Designee for DHS Secretary Arkoosh
Ms. Janice Bart, Member
Senator James Brewster, Member
Dr. Benjamin Feeney, Member
Lt. Kyle Gautsch, Member
Mr. Mike Hurley, Member
Mr. Mike Kelley, Member
Ms. Brittney Kline, Designee for Attorney General Michelle Henry
Dr. Scott Kuren, Designee for PDE Secretary Mumin
Senator Wayne Langerholc, Member
Mr. Randy Padfield, Member
Col. Christopher Paris, Member
Dr. Jamie Piraino, Member
Dr. Kathleen Reeves, Member
Ms. Wendy Robison, Member
Dr. Helena Tuleya-Payne, Member

Staff:

Pamela Bennett	Crystal Lauver
Lindsay Busko	Elizabeth Locke
Christina Cosgrove-Rooks	Levi Looks
Amelia Dizo	Leo Lutz
Jennifer Ely	Betsy May
Chris Epoca	Heidi Metzger
Alison Gantz	Zoe Miner
Heather Hewitt	Kariem Morssy
Stacey Herman	Ian Murray
Chuck Hogan	Derin Myers
Kirsten Kenyon	Debra Sandifer
Samantha Koch	Lindsay Vaughan

Guests:

Diane Acri, PA House
Kirstin Alvanitakis, Office of the Lieutenant Governor
George Bivens, PA State Police
Sean Brandon, PA House
Andrew Christ, PA School Board Association (PSBA)
Kristen Daniels, PA State Police – Governor’s Office of Homeland Security
Mike Deery, PA Senate
Steve D’Ettorre, Office of the Governor
Tobi Downing, PA Office of Attorney General
Neil Hartnett, Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Jason Henry, Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Westburn Majors, PA Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)
Heather Masshardt, PA School Board Association (PSBA)
Sherri Smith, PA Association of School Administrators (PASA)
Shaun White, PA State Police – Governor’s Office of Homeland Security
Vicki Wilken, PA Senate

Call to Order of the November 30, 2023 Meeting and Adoption of Minutes

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM and welcomed participants. A quorum of members was established. Moving to the agenda, Chairman Davis noted that the minutes from the September 27, 2023 meeting were part of the packet of materials made available prior to today's meeting and called for a motion to approve them.

Motion to approve the minutes from the September 27, 2023 meeting as submitted

Motion: Tuleya-Payne. **Seconded:** Backer. **Abstentions:** None. **Not Present for Vote:** Bart & Hurley. **Votes:** 15. **Nay Votes:** 0. **Motion Adopted**

Chairman Davis noted the recent flurry of legislative activity and the movement of School Code bills addressing significant school safety and security amendments moving back and forth across chambers, particularly [HB 301](#) and [SB 843](#). He stated that in addition to the school safety amendments that were originally in HB 27, both bills contain simple directive language regarding the Violence Intervention & Prevention (VIP) grant program, which this Committee also administers.

Chairman Davis shared about his travels to various parts of the state and recounted visiting places where VIP grant funds have been put into place and seeing how beneficial those funds have been. He underscored the importance of the work and the impact they have on saving lives, stating that these programs are an essential part of addressing gun violence and ensuring safety.

Given the legislative activity and value of VIP programs, Chairman Davis convened the Committee so that the solicitation process for the VIP grants can begin. Since it has several moving parts that add complexity, he proposed bringing together a workgroup to assist in the process. He noted that the VIP Framework is fairly straightforward, similar to previous solicitations.

Violence Intervention & Prevention (VIP) Grant Program

Chairman Davis invited Zoe Miner to present information on the Violence Intervention & Prevention (VIP) funding framework which was included in the meeting materials. Ms. Miner reviewed the document that was approved by the VIP workgroup in October. She shared the major highlights and a few edits to bring the Framework in line with the recent legislative activity.

Ms. Miner reminded Committee members that this year's solicitation is for a total of \$40 million in VIP funding. While this is a \$10 million increase in state funding, it's an overall reduction from the total of \$105 million issued last year due to it not including any federal funds. Ms. Miner reviewed the two tracks of possible funding (the "regular" VIP grants and the Coordinated Community Violence Intervention (CCVI) strategies grants) and details of the funding components, including lower maximum award requests and indirect costs allowance. She noted that based on grantee feedback, the proposed Framework also increases the project period from 29 to 36 months to allow for additional planning and implementation time.

Ms. Miner stated that both VIP and CCVI grant applicants will continue to submit their initial requests through SurveyMonkey. To assist with the process, she noted that applicants can use a new word document template to draft their narratives and attach to their application. Ms. Miner added that PCCD staff will again host informational webinars on the application process to assist applicants. She concluded by stating that PCCD can open the VIP solicitation upon SSSC approval with applications due by January 18, 2024.

Chairman Davis asked if there were any questions. Upon hearing none, he called for a motion to approve the Violence Intervention & Prevention (VIP) funding framework as presented.

Motion to approve the Violence Intervention & Prevention (VIP) funding framework as presented

Motion: Brewster **Seconded:** Hurley **Discussion:** None. **Abstentions:** None. **Not Present for Vote:** None. **Aye Votes:** 17. **Nay Votes:** 0. **Motion Adopted**

Update on Senate Resolution (SR) 178

Chairman Davis invited Ms. Kirsten Kenyon to share an update on [SR 178](#), introduced by Senator Martin, which was included in the meeting materials. Ms. Kenyon reported that SR 178 was unanimously adopted by the Senate in November. Since it is a Resolution, it does not require mutual adoption by the House and so is a final product.

Ms. Kenyon noted that the Resolution references the initial passage of Act 44 of 2018 (which established this Committee, the school safety and security grant program and the Safe2Say program within the Attorney General's office) and goes on to direct the Legislative Budget & Finance Committee (LB&FC) to "gather input from our Committee and coordinate with PCCD" to conduct a study evaluating the outcomes of Act 44 of 2018 and the school safety program in general.

Ms. Kenyon stated that the LB&FC study includes an examination of the amount of funding each school entity received through the grant program and an aggregate analysis of the types of programs and services for which schools applied to use their funding, as well as analysis of any related data sources on school safety and student mental health. She said it will also compare the baseline criteria with national standards and review the standards required for both school security personnel and assessors on the PCCD Registry in comparison with national standards. Finally, Ms. Kenyon noted that the Resolution asks the LB&FC for a review of the safety and security best practices of other states. The LB&FC report will be due on November 30, 2025 and submitted to the House and Senate Education and Appropriations Committees. PCCD is looking forward to working on this project and will keep this Committee abreast as it progresses.

General Updates**Act 55 School Safety and Security Training Update**

Chairman Davis thanked Ms. Kenyon for her report and invited Lindsay Vaughan to apprise the Committee on the status of the Act 55 School Safety and Security Training. Ms. Vaughan noted that more than 8,000 school employees have taken one or more of the online modules that are currently live (Situational Awareness, Behavioral Health Awareness, Substance Use Awareness, and Recognizing Concerning Behaviors). She said that 85% of participants surveyed reported that they found the training helpful or very helpful.

Ms. Vaughan stated that two additional online modules on *Trauma Informed Approaches* and *Suicide and Bullying Awareness* will go live in December and January. Since the Emergency Training modules cannot be offered online, she said they will be administered using a Training of Trainers (ToT) model to prepare coordinators and other administrators locally to provide this module to their local schools and school entities. PCCD has scheduled 26 ToT sessions in the different Intermediate Unit (IU) regions across the Commonwealth. There have been 156 participants trained in the six sessions completed thus far, and another 457 participants registered for the remaining session dates, including two more dates being finalized for January.

Ms. Vaughan informed Committee members that 48 individuals have self-certified development of curriculum which meets the standards for one or more of the school employee topics. These individuals have been posted as [Act 55 PCCD-Recognized Training Providers](#). In addition, Ms. Vaughn shared that the School Safety and Security (SSS) Coordinator training curriculum is in the process of being finalized and approved. She stated that all 11 topics are on target to be ready for release in January 2024. At that point PCCD will alert school entities and SSS Coordinators that the training is available and remind them of the one-year timeframe to complete it.

Member Updates/Comments/Questions

Chairman Davis asked if any member had updates or other business to bring before the Committee, however none were offered.

Public Comment

Chairman Davis invited any public comment; however, none was received.

Adjournment

Chairman Davis noted that the next meeting date is tentatively anticipated for mid-December, contingent upon the timeliness of the passage of the fiscal code bills. Following the vote, the meeting adjourned at 11:19 AM.

Motion to adjourn

Motion: Backer. **Seconded:** Bart **Abstentions:** None. **Not Present for Vote:** Barnes & Langerholc **Aye Votes:** 15. **Nay Votes:** 0. **Motion Adopted**