

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

**School Safety and Security Committee Meeting**

February 26, 2020

MINUTES

**Members/Designees:**

Mr. Charles Ramsey, Chairman  
Mr. Michael Pennington, PCCD Executive Director  
Mr. Derin Myers, Designee for Chairman Ramsey  
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 (via Skype)  
Dr. Gerald Huesken, Designee for Secretary Rivera  
Mr. Mike Hurley, Member  
Mr. Mike Kelly, Member (via Skype)  
Senator Wayne Langerholc, Member (via Skype)  
Representative Jason Ortity, Member  
Director David "Randy" Padfield, Member (via Skype)  
Dr. Gennaro "Jamie" Piraino, Member (via Skype)  
Mr. Joseph Regan, Member  
Dr. Helena Tuleya-Payne, Member  
Mr. Mike Vereb, Designee for Josh Shapiro (via Skype)

**Staff:**

Lindsay Busko  
Christina Cosgrove-Rooks  
Chris Epoca  
Rich Finley  
James Haas  
Kirsten Kenyon  
Rebecca Kiehl  
Samantha Koch  
Geoffrey Kolchin  
Carol Kuntz  
Crystal Lauver  
Maddie Roman-Scott  
Debra Sandifer  
Lenore Wyant

**Guests:**

Jonathan Berger, PA School Board Association  
Sean Brandon, PA House Democrats  
Erica Brunelle, PA State Education Association  
Rick Carpenter, Information Network Associates  
Gwenn Dando, PA Senate  
Michael Deery, PA Senate  
Randy Fox, Center for Safe Schools  
Alaina Koltash, PA House of Representatives  
Vince Kovach, PA Department of Education (PDE)

Scott Kuren, PA Department of Education (PDE)  
Drew Lyons, Malady & Wooten  
Jenna McCarthy, Malady & Wooten  
Miguel Ruiz, GPO  
Christine Seitz, PA House of Representatives  
Vicki Wilken, PA Senate

## **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 present and participating by Skype/phone
  - A quorum of members was established
- Review and adoption of the minutes from the January 29, 2020 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. Chairman's Update**

- General Updates
  - NASRO-equivalent training update
    - PCCD has approved Cardinal Point Homeland Security Group, Inc. as an equivalent program to provide school security personnel trainings
    - There are two other organizations that are in the process of developing equivalent courses
  - Threat Assessment Team Training Solicitation Update
    - PCCD recently announced the availability of up to \$721,086 in federal BJA STOP School Violence funding to support the development of a "Pennsylvania K-2 Threat Assessment Technical Assistance and Training Network"
    - The competitive funding announcement closed on Friday, February 21; applicants had to demonstrate subject matter expertise in the field of threat assessment and have significant and recent experience working with state and/or federal agencies related to multidisciplinary assessment in education settings
    - PCCD received four completed applications as of the deadline and will work with partners at PDE, PEMA, and PSP in the coming weeks to review and score each application; Applications will be reviewed by PCCD staff to identify any potential fiscal and/or programmatic concerns
    - Goal is to present a final award recommendation to the School Safety and Security Committee in April; The project will run through September 30, 2022
  - Assessor Registry Update
    - Added seven more assessors to the registry since last meeting: three for physical assessments, three for behavioral health assessments and one for both; Brings total listing of approved assessors to 106
  - SchoolSafety.gov
    - U.S. Department of Education announced the launch of the Federal School Safety Clearinghouse website, SchoolSafety.gov; The website includes information for school administrators, educators, parents/families, and law enforcement to support prevention, preparation, response and recovery efforts; A link has been posted on PCCD's website

### III. School Safety and Security Grants

- General Updates
  - Mr. Myers provided an overview of the steps PCCD staff has taken since the January meeting
    - Followed up that meeting with an email summarizing our approach based on feedback from January meeting; heard no concerns
    - PCCD staff went back to applicants of Community Violence Prevention/Reduction Grants to address programmatic and fiscal concerns; recommended amounts are in the distributed summary and items that were reduced are included in the narrative of each summary
    - Staff also reached out to the community violence applicant that was brought to attention for additional clarification; Staff are recommending that a portion of their initial application be funded
    - PCCD went back and reviewed the items requested on the competitive school safety grants to ensure they were justified
      - If not justified as a security need it was recommended for removal
      - Some items originally questioned were justified, others were considered outside the scope of the grant
    - Document distributed last Friday contained the list of recommendations for the 2019-20 competitive grants; detail for each was included there
    - During school safety review with partial reductions made coupled with availability of interest and returned funds, we were able to fund four more school entities than originally projected
    - Recognize the difficulties to meet 474 applications requesting \$116M in competitive school safety grants when there is only \$35M to distribute; We are recommending funding of 134 school entities through competitive process and 496 school districts through meritorious process for a total of 524 school entities throughout the Commonwealth
    - If any member has a specific question about an individual grant, we have reserved time to convene an Executive Session; Is there anyone at this time who would like to make that motion? No motion was made

- Approval of School Safety Grants

#### **Motion to approve the 2019-2020 Meritorious and Competitive School Safety Grants**

- The SSSC is requested to take action on 630 applications from 524 school entities requesting a total of \$53,710,485 in state School Safety and Security Grant Program funds.
- Mr. Hurley made the motion, which was seconded by Col. Evanckick.
- A brief discussion on the grants was held, with members expressing interest in continuing the baseline criteria approach and adjusting the grants moving forward to reflect that approach.
- The motion was approved unanimously, with six abstentions.

- Approval of Community Violence Grants

#### **Motion to approve the 2019-2020 Community Violence Prevention/Reduction Grants**

- The SSSC is requested to take action on 30 initial applications requesting a total of \$7,547,747 in state School Safety and Security Grant Program funds.
- Representative Bullock made the motion, which was seconded by Senator Brewster.

- There was no discussion.
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

#### **IV. Discussion of Next Steps for SSSC and FY20-21 School Safety Grant Program**

- Review Preliminary Timeline of SSSC Meetings and Activities for 2020
  - March/April/May 2020
    - Baseline Workgroup will need to meet during the next few months if we hope to arrive at what items we want to prioritize in the next funding announcement
    - Survey Workgroup will need to reconvene to reexamine survey and make revisions; Section 1305-B provides for the SSSC to administer the survey every 2 years; last completed in November 2018
    - Criteria Workgroups will need to reconvene to further flesh out criteria
      - As part of our baseline discussion, it's come to our attention that we should also review the assessment criteria document
      - Statutorily, the Committee is required to conduct a periodic review at a minimum every three years and make revisions as needed
  - SSSC holds a short conference call on April 1, 2020
    - Adopt the threat assessment training provider and receive any other updates
  - SSSC meets on June 24, 2020
    - Discusses baseline work product, survey revisions and criteria revisions
  - SSSC meets on July 29, 2020
    - Adopts baseline work product, survey revisions and criteria revisions
    - Discusses preliminary framework for FY20-21 grants
  - SSSC holds meeting/conference call on August 19, 2020 to adopt funding announcement framework
  - PCCD timeline for grants
    - Monday, September 7, 2020 - Release three funding announcements simultaneously
    - Monday, November 2, 2020 - Close all three funding announcements
    - November 2020 – January 2021 - Scoring and review period
  - SSSC meets January 2021; Executive Session discussion of grants and survey results
  - SSSC meets February 2021
    - SSSC formally considers and approves all awards for both meritorious and competitive applications
    - All awards meet the March 1, 2021 deadline required by statute
  - FY20-21 Grants
    - General update on Governor's FY 2020-21 Budget Proposal
      - \$15M was included in Governor's Budget Proposal for School Safety Grants; Governor's preference is for these funds to support mental health initiatives
      - This is just an initial starting point; there will be additional discussions with the General Assembly as the budget process advances
  - Baseline Workgroup Update from Ms. Kuntz
    - Baseline Workgroup met on February 10 regarding the physical aspects of the criteria
      - When does a school take on the responsibility of oversight of the students' safety? Bus stop, on bus ride, walking to school, when they enter school?
      - The Workgroup also reviewed PDE's Safe Schools Incident criteria, which follows the student to school to determine the basics needed to keep students safe
      - Additional Workgroup responsibilities were covered during the discussion of the timeline

- Discussion ensued to continue the workgroup meetings and look at a tiered approach to determining need
- The next meeting is in the process of being scheduled and will begin the discussion of baseline items for mental/behavioral health criteria for schools

**V. Member Updates/Comments**

- Ms. Bart inquired about availability of NASRO training for school entities

**VI. Public Comment – None**

**VII. Adjournment**

- Chairman Ramsey thanked everyone for their time and contribution to today's meeting.

**Motion to adjourn the meeting**

- The motion to adjourn was made by Rep. Bullock and seconded by Ms. Bart.
- The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 2:07 PM.