

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

**School Safety and Security Committee Meeting**

September 26, 2018

MINUTES

**Members/Designees:**

Mr. Derin Myers, Designee for Chairman Ramsey  
Ms. Tara Breitsprecher, Designee for Acting Secretary Miller  
Senator James Brewster, Member  
Ms. Nikki Bricker, Member  
Representative Donna Bullock, Member  
Acting Commissioner Lt. Colonel Robert Evanchick, Member  
Mr. Mike Hurley, Member  
Mr. Mike Kelly, Member  
Senator Wayne Langerholc, Member  
Representative Jason Ortity, Member (by phone)  
Dr. Gennaro "Jamie" Piraino, Member  
Mr. Joseph Regan, Member  
Mr. Jeffrey Thomas, Designee for Director Flinn  
Dr. Helena Tuleya-Payne, Ed.D., Member  
Mike Vereb, Designee for Attorney General Shapiro (by phone)  
David Volkman, Designee for Sec. Rivera

**Staff:**

James Anderson  
Pamela Bennett  
Jeff Blystone  
Danielle Chubb  
Kathy Clarke  
Chris Epoca  
Nancy Heisler  
Kirsten Kenyon  
Geoff Kolchin  
Michele Pavone  
Mike Pennington  
Debra Sandifer  
Lindsay Vaughan  
Jackie Weaknecht

**Guests:**

Sean McAleer, PA Catholic Conference (PCC)  
Andrew Barnes, Governor's Office of Policy & Planning  
Hannah Barrick, PA Assn. of School Business Officials  
Chloe Bohm, Rep. Markosek's Office/PA House of Representatives'  
Appropriations Committee (by phone)  
Stephen Bruder, Sen. Costa's Office  
Erika Brunelle, PA State Education Association (PSEA)  
John Callahan, PA School Boards Association (PSBA)  
Gwenn Dando, Sen. Langerholc's Office  
Mike Deery, Sen. Hughes' Office  
George Giang, South Central PA Task Force (SCTF)  
Carol Kuntz, PA Department of Education (PDE)  
Kendra Nichols, abc27 WHTM  
Christine Seitz, PA House of Representatives' Education Committee  
Troy Vanatta, Information Network Associates, Inc. (INA)  
Vicki Wilken, Sen. Browne's Office  
Kirk Wilson, Citizen

**I. Call to Order and Adoption of Minutes**

- Call to Order
  - Chairman Designee Myers called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM
  - Welcomed participants and guests
    - A quorum of members was established
- Review and adoption of Minutes from the August 29<sup>th</sup> and September 5<sup>th</sup> meetings
  - Mr. Myers noted a correction, that Sen. Langerholc was on the call for the September 5<sup>th</sup> meeting
  - Mr. Myers stated that in the future the minutes will include the names of guests
  - There was no further discussion or public comment

**Motion to approve the minutes with the correction**

- Motion was made by Senator Brewster and seconded by Dr. Piraino
- The minutes were approved by unanimous vote of the members present

**II. Consideration of the School Safety and Security Assessment Criteria**

- PCCD staff Lindsay Vaughan provided an overview of the modifications made based on feedback received.
  - Page 13, #8 – concern that someone in the building might want to get out, so added a sub bullet b to have a tool to break through the glass
  - Page 27, #5 e – concern raised about some school police officers already having such a policy from their own police department
  - Need to clarify agreement between school entity and police department regarding policies
  - Added language regarding use of force policy with respect to SRO to be governed by municipal or state police policy
  - Other questions/concerns regarding the assessment criteria
    - Concern was raised regarding the ability to change or alter the assessment criteria in the future
    - Discussion confirmed that the Act allows re-evaluation as needed
  - The Auditor General’s office reviewed the assessment criteria and the PA Department of Education (PDE) reviewed against the Safe Schools Toolkit
  - Introductory language was refined in the first part; put introductory sections before each criteria section; and added glossary of terms and acronyms

**Motion to adopt assessment criteria as modified**

- Motion made by Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Thomas
- No further discussion ensued
- Called for a vote, no abstentions, the motion passed unanimously

**III. Consideration of Assessor Registration Criteria**

- Made two minor changes/corrections to the draft final that was circulated
  - Page 2 #6, added “Agencies” to correct the national organization’s name
  - Added the word “or” between C 1 and C 2 at the bottom of page 2
- Important to note that the Committee will not be responsible for collecting the background clearances required by registrants in A 1

- Members responded to the request for feedback regarding how prescriptive the criteria are and the requiring of extensive experience
  - Recognition that having strict criteria is essential to ensure that the people have the correct experience
  - We can revisit the criteria if we find we're not getting qualified applicants
  - Noted the need to clarify #11 on page 2 that it's a registered architect and not just anyone working at a firm
  - Suggested considering a two-year minimum as more appropriate for the periodic review of criteria as noted at the beginning of the document, given the rapid progress of technology
    - That is the statutory language, but the Committee could review it more frequently
    - Option to review the applicants and use the results as a basis to bring back to the committee for a review within 2 rather than 3 years
- Discussed two considerations proposed by the Workgroup to add to Part A
  - The Committee agreed that it would be beneficial to add a check box to indicate willingness to sign a confidentiality agreement to the registration criteria
  - The Committee also agreed to add a check box further in the registration process that the applicant agreed to conduct assessments in compliance with the criteria and in conjunction and coordination with the identified school and/or county staff
- Discussed one related issue to consider for the future, of developing training workshops/webinars that are uniform and conform with what has been developed

**Motion to accept the Assessor Registration Criteria**, noting the changes that were made on the screen during the discussion

- Motion made by Rep. Bullock, seconded by Mr. Evanchick
  - No further discussion ensued
  - Called for a vote, Mr. Hurley abstained, the motion passed unanimously
- Optimistic that the Registry will be completed before October 31, will provide the link to Committee member prior to release

**IV. Consideration of the School Safety and Security Survey**

- Noted the requirement to create a survey instrument no later than October 31
- Jim Anderson provided an overview of the workgroup's efforts in the development of a survey instrument and the feedback and revisions made
  - Changes were primarily related to the behavioral health areas
  - Timeline necessitated brevity in the survey and not asking for information that was accessible other ways (i.e. from PDE)
  - Committed to getting the survey to school entities by the October 31 due date but after the deadline for the grant applications to be submitted (October 12)
  - Planning to circulate by a joint memo with Education Secretary Rivera strongly encouraging every school entity to complete the survey and providing the survey in both pdf and word format so the school superintendent can readily identify the best person (s) to complete
  - Considered key provisions of the criteria and what is currently in statute

- Survey identifies baseline information and just asking the questions will stimulate conversation at the schools as to what they can do
- Hope to receive surveys and get the responses back to school entities to strengthen the application process, whether to modify or reconsider their request
- It has been a very good process with the participation of PEMA, DHS, PA State Police, and others
- Discussed including several additional questions regarding the ratio of professional staff to students, came to consensus on asking two questions:
  - If current staffing for four professional school staff (psychologists, counselors, nurses and social workers – meets recommended national standards
  - How many additional full-time equivalent positions would be needed to meet the national standard

**Motion to adopt the School Safety Survey** with inclusion of the two additional questions regarding professional staffing

- Motion was made by Dr. Tuleya-Payne and seconded by Sen. Brewster
- Further discussion ensued
- Discussed concerns and recommendations regarding specific survey questions
  - Question #5 under School Climate/Student Assistance Program (SAP) regarding Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) programming
    - Agreed to modify the question to ask what Tier 2 and Tier 3 programs are being used and who provides the services
    - Clarification of MTSS and its components will be included in the accompanying glossary
    - Confirmed that completing the survey has no bearing on a grant application, but is provided as a support
    - Two caveats
      - Survey responses are not subject to the Right to Know Law (RTKL)
      - The system does not require responses to questions posed in the survey
  - Specification in question #9 under External/Internal Security that room numbers are flag-mounted to increase visibility for first responders
    - Concern of ADA compliance with things sticking out in the hallway
    - Also noted concern that students might rip them down
    - Agreed to reword without the stipulation that room signage be flag-mounted
  - Agreed to recommendations for two modifications to the Training section
    - To separate out suicide and bullying awareness in question #1
    - In question #3, add check boxes for social media and internet safety
  - Still refining language and will circulate the final version to participants

**The motion was still intact so moved to a vote**

- No abstentions
- The motion passed unanimously

**V. Discussion of the review of pre-existing assessments**

- Act 44 requires that the Committee review schools' pre-existing school safety and security assessments

- Act 44 provides for engaging registered assessors to help with the review, would compensate for that assistance, asked Committee members to consider that
- Don't want this to be an exercise and formality, but want it to be productive, fruitful, and valuable to school districts

#### **VI. Discussion on the Formation of Additional Workgroups**

- The use of subject matter expert workgroups has yielded good results thus far and it is being recommended that an additional workgroup be established to develop a funding framework for the Community Violence Reduction grant program
- Mike Pennington and the staff of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) have significant experience with these types of programs and would be well positioned to facilitate this discussion and bring back a recommendation
- Look to provide an update at the October meeting and final recommendation at the November meeting
- Committee members were encouraged to recommend workgroup members

#### **Motion to approve formation of a new workgroup**

- Motion was made by Rep. Bullock, seconded by Mr. Hurley
- No further discussion ensued
- Called for a vote, no abstentions, the motion passed unanimously

#### **VII. General Updates on Grant Program**

- Status of the School Safety and Security Funding Announcement
  - 420 applications have been initiated in the PCCD Egrants system
  - Help desk available to answer questions
  - Working with IT to ensure that the system doesn't go down with the influx
  - PCCD staff have tried to be helpful without providing detail that has not been approved by the Committee, though have had some challenging questions
    1. Question of an intermediate unit submitting on behalf of multiple school entities. Said yes, but not sure should have addressed that, though still think it's a reasonable answer. Comment – Don't think it's appropriate for administrative fees to come out of this money
    2. Question of meritorious application Part B
    3. Asked if they should apply for what was needed or the whole amount
  - PDE issued a communication clarifying that applicants who receive PDE grants for similar activities will know in time to be able to modify their PCCD grant application
  - The most challenging were questions regarding Supplantation
    1. It's a complicated issue and the scenarios vary
    2. Example of a school district that hired a counselor paid by the district but in anticipation of grant funding being available, is that supplantation? Yes

3. There's nuance in the supplantation funding issue, so are asking school entities to explain in the grant, and will bring recommendation to the Committee for consideration

- Paid reviewers
  - Getting ready and getting resources in place for the review of Part B applications. Using paid reviewers has been a good practice for PCCD historically. Finding sufficiently qualified volunteers is challenging.
  - Would ask for people with expertise nationwide to submit their credentials
  - Want to pursue the use of paid reviewers
    1. Would need two paid reviewers and a PCCD/State staff reviewer on every team
    2. Benefit from the expertise and also reduces conflict of interest when go out of state
    3. Not asking for a vote, just something to consider

**VIII. Status of hiring additional staff to assist the Committee**

- Received approval to hire four additional staff
- Are able to post specific qualifications, tailor request to need, and hire people interested and able to assist
- Will be posting through the Civil Service

**IX. Member Updates – None noted**

**X. Public Comment**

- George Giang, South Central PA Task Force
  - Think the requirements exclude a good portion of security individuals in the Commonwealth
  - Asked the Committee to consider amending to include something to involve people with security and safety assessment experience but just not with schools
  - Suggested the standard of security professionals with at least five years of experience in the security and safety assessment fields
  - Noted the caveat that non-disclosure agreements may preclude security individuals' sharing of previously completed assessments
  - Response by Chairman Designee Myers that there's not a restriction on other individuals being participants with registered assessors
- No other public comments were offered

**XI. Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn the meeting**

- The motion was made by Dr. Volkman and seconded by Ms. Breitsprecher
- The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 2:49 PM