

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

**School Safety and Security Committee Skype Meeting**

October 27, 2020

MINUTES

**Members/Designees:** Senator James Brewster, Member  
Ms. Nikki Bricker Cameron, 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 Ortitay, Member  
Dr. Jamie Piraino, Member  
Mr. Joseph Regan, Member  
Ms. Wendy Robison, Member  
Mr. Jonathan Ross, Member  
Mr. Jeffrey Thomas, Designee for Director Padfield  
Dr. Helena Tuleya-Payne, Member

**Staff:** Pamela Bennett  
Christina Cosgrove-Rooks  
Chris Epoca  
Kirsten Kenyon  
Rebecca Kiehl  
Samantha Koch  
Geoffrey Kolchin  
Carol Kuntz  
Crystal Lauver  
Roi Ligon  
Derin Myers  
Debra Sandifer  
Jacki Weaknecht  
Shaun White

**Guests:** Jonathan Berger, PA School Board Association (PSBA)  
Sean Brandon, PA House Democrats  
Gwenn Dando, PA Senate  
Mike Deery, PA Senate  
Simon Mallett, RSM Corporation  
Heather Masshardt, PA School Board Association (PSBA)  
Christine Seitz, PA House of Representatives  
Jason Stephen, PA Department of Education  
Vicki Wilken, PA Senate

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

Mr. Myers called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM, welcomed and confirmed participants, and established a quorum of members in attendance. Mr. Myers noted that the minutes from the August 26, 2020 meeting were posted on the private side of the website prior to the meeting for members' review and asked for a motion to approve them.

#### **Motion to approve the minutes from the August 26, 2020 meeting as submitted**

**Motion:** Brewster. **Seconded:** Evanchick. **Abstentions:** None. **Not Present for Vote:** None. **Aye Votes:** 15, **Nay Votes:** 0. **Motion Adopted**

### **II. Status Update on COVID-19 School Health and Safety Grants**

Mr. Myers provided an update on the COVID-19 School Health and Safety Grants, noting that all 775 applications have been executed. He stated that final project modification requests are starting to come in, particularly as there are some issues with supply chain delays necessitating change and are being processed to meet the October 30 deadline. In addition, all 29 grants submitted by the Intermediate Units on behalf of the nonpublic schools have been awarded, and 45% have been reimbursed for expenditures. Mr. Myers stated that \$111 million has been issued, another \$27 million has been approved and processed and is awaiting further action, with the balance of \$150 million awaiting some action from either the school or PCCD.

### **III. Status Update on Community Violence Prevention/Reduction 2020**

Mr. Myers reviewed the actions taken by the Committee at the last meeting approving use of \$7.5 million for Community Violence Prevention/Reduction grants, prioritized towards evidence-based and evidence-informed projects working to address community violence, especially gun violence and gang violence. The funding announcement was released in early September and promoted through press releases and notification to legislative communications staff and was also announced at the October meeting of the Special Council on Gun Violence.

Thus far 85 applications have been started in the system and are in various stages of development, so Mr. Myers expressed confidence that they include some good proposals. The application period doesn't end until November 10, so applicants still have two weeks to submit their materials. Staff will review the proposals and present their final recommendations to the Committee at the January meeting.

### **II. COVID-19 School Health and Safety Grants (ESSER Funding)**

Mr. Myers informed the Committee that PCCD staff have been working with our counterparts at the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and came to an agreement regarding the \$49.8 million in federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding that Act 30 of 2020 directed to PCCD to mitigate the impact of the corona virus.

Referencing the two documents included in the meeting materials posted online, he related that the ESSER Funding Framework document is similar to the previously adopted CARES Act funding framework. Mr. Myers reviewed the minor changes that were made, including the longer project period (September 30, 2022 end date), the requirement that all funding be officially awarded (fully approved with all signatures and documentation in place) by May 5, 2021, and that funds must be paid on a reimbursement basis rather than in advance (though PCCD can work with schools on the timing of the reimbursement). In reviewing the Allocations document, identifying the amounts that school districts are eligible to receive, Mr. Myers noted that the funding is limited to school districts, as all other entities already received all their required allocation of funds.

Pending the Committee's approval, Mr. Myers stated that the funding announcement would open sometime next week. Applications will be reviewed and approved on a rolling basis as

they are received. Mr. Myers also pointed out that while items a through g under 5. *Eligible Program Activities and Expenses* in the Funding Framework are the Act 30 eligible criteria, item g also includes other programs, items or services allowed by the ESSER, as referenced in the [CARES Act Section 18003\(d\)\(1\) through \(d\)\(12\)](#).

**Motion to approve the adoption of the ESSER Framework for FY 2020/2021**

**Motion:** Hurley. **Seconded:** Piraino. **Abstentions:** None. **Not Present for Vote:** None. **Aye Votes:** 15, **Nay Votes:** 0. **Motion Adopted**

### III. General Updates

Mr. Myers invited PCCD staff Carol Kuntz and Samantha Koch to provide their updates. Ms. Kuntz provided updates on Workgroup activities, Provider Registry Assessors, Coordinator report collection, and NASRO and equivalent training. She reported that the School Safety Survey Workgroup met twice and is nearing completion of their efforts. They added cyber security and what is needed in schools to the survey and are currently reviewing the latest draft. The final version will be presented to the Committee for review at the next meeting.

The Assessment Criteria Workgroups have similarly made good progress. Ms. Kuntz informed the Committee that the physical and behavior health components have been completed, and the policy and training section is under review and development to incorporate current statute. The Baseline Standards Workgroup finished the physical and behavior health portions and are working on fleshing out the environmental piece.

Regarding the Provider Registry, Ms. Kuntz noted the recommendation in the meeting materials for another assessor to be approved, bringing the total to 111 approved assessment providers, including 83 physical/security assessors, 20 behavioral health/school climate assessors, and 8 assessors qualifying for both categories.

Ms. Kuntz provided current data on the collection of School Safety and Security Coordinator reports. She related that 476 school entities have submitted their reports, including 350 school districts; 68 Charter Schools; 19 Intermediate Units; 38 Area Vocational Technical Schools; and 1 Approved Private School.

Finally, Ms. Kuntz gave a brief update on the completion of NASRO and equivalent training. She informed the Committee that during the 2019-2020 fiscal year, 2095 School Resource Officers and School Police Officers were trained as well as 325 School Security Guards.

Following Ms. Kuntz's report, Ms. Samantha Koch provided an update on the status of the threat assessment team training under development through the federal STOP School Violence Threat Assessment Grant. She stated that good progress continues to be made. PCCD is working with project partner RSM Corporation on developing a needs assessment survey, which will be piloted with a small group of subject matter experts and education stakeholders before being disseminated more broadly among staff and administrators at K-12 school entities across the Commonwealth. Ms. Koch highlighted information from the summary memo included in the meeting materials outlining the proposed approach to collecting and reporting project data and performance measures.

Building on this work, PCCD was recently awarded a \$524,547 grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security through the Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grant Program. In partnership with federal, state, and local agencies, PCCD will use this federal funding to develop and launch a Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Threat Assessment Hub pilot focused on enhancing the region's capabilities by linking existing targeted violence prevention and threat assessment initiatives in Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Washington, and

Westmoreland counties. The Hub will facilitate formalized information sharing protocols and promote professional development and training opportunities for participating organizations and key stakeholder to increase collective understanding of threat assessment and management practice, bystander intervention, and awareness of hotlines/tip-lines (including the Safe2Say Something Program managed by the PA Office of Attorney General). PCCD will continue to keep Committee members apprised of relevant project activities as work gets underway on this 2-year initiative.

Mr. Myers concluded the general updates by thanking participants for their support in providing feedback as part of the agency strategic planning process. He stated that PCCD now has a near final draft and PCCD will let members know and provide a link when it is finalized.

#### **IV. Member Updates/Comments/Questions**

Members did not provide any updates, comments or questions.

#### **V. Public Comment**

There was no public comment offered.

#### **VI. Adjournment**

Mr. Myers noted that the next meeting is anticipated to be in January, at which time the Committee will consider the Community Violence Prevention/Reduction grant applications and revised school survey. He thanked everyone for their time and contribution to today's meeting. Following the vote, the meeting adjourned at 1:28 PM.

#### **Motion to adjourn**

**Motion:** Ross. **Seconded:** Hein. **Abstentions:** None. **Not Present for Vote:** None. **Aye Votes:** 15; **Nay Votes:** 0. **Motion Adopted**