

School Safety Advisory Committee Meeting

NOTES

April 5, 2018

SIGNED IN ATTENDANCE: Brian Smith, Chair; Ailey Kato, Senate Aide; Karen Davy, KCSO; Andrew Rauch, WFIS; Greg Lynch, ESD 114; Kathryn Hobbs, WSPTA; Suzie Hanson, WFIS; Emily Cimber, SAO; Everett Tyrrell, WSRMP; Gerald Martens, WSRMP; Kristin Dixon, Archdiocese of Seattle; David Corr, WASPC; Nancy Bernard, DOH; Megan Wargacki, House Aide; Heather Lewis-Lechner, Senate Aide; Mike Donlin, OSPI.

ZOOM ATTENDANCE: Andrea Dombroski, ESD 121; Peggy Sandberg, ESD 112; Nancy Cartwright, NSD;

After introductions around the room and on Zoom, the meeting began with a discussion of the Parkland, FL, shooting on February 14. The conversation led to a variety of topics and observations. The first major issue was gun control. Following the tragedy, there were public discussions around gun control and many attempts to move legislation forward which attempted to address gun control from different perspectives. One major issue which arose was that of use of force, and arming teachers and school marshals' programs.

There was agreement around the table that this was not a good idea, and it also led to conversation around its impact on risk management and insurance. Questions arose around training, background checks, and costs. Currently in Washington, there are no requirements, guidelines or definitions around school safety and security personnel: SRO's, SSO/CSOs or privately contracted security services.

It was also noted that the Parkland shooting was also different in the way it was carried out. The shooter had not been a student at the high school for about a year, and had made no imminent threat to the school or students. He had apparently Ubered to school, carrying his weapons on a guitar case. After shooting, he dropped his weapons, raised his hands and walked out of the school with other students.

Within this context, the question of "threat assessment" also came up. There was discussion around the meaning of the term, and the need for clarification as it often seems to be used incorrectly. **"Threat Assessment"** is a term of art; it is a structured group process used to evaluate the risk posed by a student or another person, in response to an actual or perceived threat or concerning behavior. Threat assessment as a process was developed by the Secret Service as a response to incidents of school violence. The primary purpose of a threat assessment is to prevent targeted violence.

It was also noted that threat assessment training, using the Salem-Keizer model, is provided by the ESDs around the state.

The conversation also pointed to the suggestion that it appears that many people who should know, do not know that the School Safety Advisory Committee, us, exists and is working toward school safety. It was interesting to point out that, although the legislature often assigned tasks to the SSAC, after the Parkland shooting, there seemed to be several calls for a "school safety committee", task force or work group. Mike noted that, in the past, the SSAC has held meetings in different ESD locations across the state. That provided a bit more visibility, but it was a challenge for consistency in attendance and discussion.

Paralleling the discussion of a definition of "threat assessment", the committee again asked for and reviewed our definition of "school safety." The definition was arrived at by the SSAC several years ago:

School safety supports student learning by creating and promoting a physically, emotionally, socially, and academically secure climate for students, staff, and visitors. A focus on school safety helps create a learning environment which has a positive impact on behavior, attendance/drop-out rates, and ultimately, academic achievement. It involves planning for the prevention, and mitigation of, protection from, response to, and recovery from the variety natural, physical, social, biological, and technological threats to the school and the entire school community.

Finally, since February, OSPI has received many, many letters from people around the country with “the answer” to ensuring school safety. We have also received an increased number of correspondences from vendors, also with answers.

The topic of planning came up. It was noted that districts and schools need a plan for safety, for implementing threat assessment, etc., and that not all districts and schools have the same resources. Mike agreed and noted that ***districts and schools are required to have comprehensive safety plans***. They are required to include their local law enforcement and first responders in the planning process – and that, due to needs, geography, resources, etc., each plan must be tailored to the needs of the district/school – and, although they follow the same process, they will be different. We have resources on the Safety Center web site to assist in this process.

The discussion moved to the recent legislative session. There had been several bills – and amendments to bills – moving through the House and senate. In the end, none of the bills, per se, passed; however, the language in budget bill [ESSB 6032](#) does provide funding for several safety-related items. The largest and most striking was a \$722,000 allocation:

“\$722,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2019 is provided solely for the superintendent of public instruction to provide grants to educational service districts and school districts to develop or expand regional safety programs to address student safety.

At a minimum, programs must implement a multitier threat assessment system; develop a process for notifying schools, including private schools, of safety emergencies; and make recommendations or implement appropriate safety technology consistent with regional need.”

Greg walked the committee through this allocation. Several proposed pieces of legislation spoke to establishing regional safety centers at ESDs. Funding for 9 regional centers was reduced and focused into two, one east and one west of the mountains. This funding will jump start that process. OSPI is in the process of developing a process of allocating this one-year funding.

There were a couple other quick items related to fiscal matters. The FY 2018 Comprehensive School Safety Initiative” has been cancelled. In its place, there will be new [Student, Teacher’s Officer’s Prevention \(STOP\) School Violence Act](#) grants. The total allocations are expected to be \$50M for training and other safety-related efforts, and \$25M for physical improvements. As of this date, there are no details.

It was also noted that this year’s [Great ShakeOut](#) (10.18 @ 10:18) contract had to go out to bid. The notice of sole source contract was seen by an entity which wanted to also have a chance to bid on it. It will close on April 13. Reading responses will take place the following week.

The State Auditor’s Office gave a brief update on the progress of their ongoing safety audit. Background information can be found at [this link](#). They hope to have more detailed information by the time of the Summit.

Committee discussion turned to the next (3rd) Safety Summit:

1. Date: We'd talked earlier about the need to be strategic in planning the time of the Summit to allow for maximum participation.
A two-meeting Summit was suggested: mid-to-late June followed by a 2nd date in Sept./Oct. This would allow for early planning, time in the interim for fleshing out potential legislative asks, and time for finishing up and polishing off prior to session. Several committee members thought that the June timeframe was too early, and that perhaps 2 meetings in Sept/Oct. would be better.
Mike will follow up with potential dates for the 3rd Summit.
2. Location: We discussed the need for a location which is easily accessible, has good parking, and is convenient for people coming from various locations. Nancy offered the DOH facility, noting that it had good air quality and air flow, as well as good parking.
Mike noted that it'd be great to also consider food in the mix. We have no budget for food, so any ideas around providing coffee/breakfast and lunch would be great.
3. Agenda: The Safety Summits have a specific mandate: to develop, implement and monitor a plan to fund school safety. School safety is a broad, multi-faceted area, encompassing natural, technological, biological, and human made/adversarial threats and hazards.
For the record, Summit #1 was designed to provide context and historical perspective around safety funding in WA. The breadth of the issues and a perspective on funding were addressed. Various efforts to study the cost of school safety and current initiatives were also considered. Summit #2 took a first look at immediate funding needs.
Summit #3 will build on these, use the study documents to work from, and begin to develop the plan.
4. In the meantime: things we know:
 - although there is a requirement for districts and schools to have comprehensive safety plans, there is no process for documenting that they have been done, and no process for assessment/evaluation/feedback on plans.
 - although most of the people called for in legislation for Summit participation have been identified, we still need 2 Republican Senators and a rep. from the Governor's office.
 - as we prepare for the next Summit, there are likely to be additional documents for everyone to read.

In addition to planning dates for the Summit, we are also looking for a date for the mapping work group which was started a while back. That group will look at the legislation around mapping with an eye to answering the questions about what is actually mandated for schools, who is required to do what, and what the fiscal impact on districts and schools is.

The SSAC has traditionally held a retreat in August. No date was set for this as yet. That' too, will be determined. Mike will also look for a date for that effort.

The next regularly scheduled SSAC meeting: **June 7**, OSPI, Brouillet Room – 4th Floor. Given planning for the Summit, we'll hold this as a meeting date – unless another meeting is scheduled.

May 3rd will still be "held" although no meeting scheduled as of now.