

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

**School Safety and Security Committee Meeting**

September 4, 2024

MINUTES

**Members/Designees:**

Lt. Governor Austin A. Davis, Chairman  
Maj. Michaelann Andrusiak, Member (non-voting)  
Ms. Sabrina S. Backer, Member  
Mr. Andrew Barnes, Designee for DHS Secretary Arkoosh  
Ms. Janice Bart, Member  
Maj. George Bivens, Designee for PSP Col. Paris  
Mr. Jeffrey Boyle, Designee for PEMA Director Padfield  
Senator James Brewster, Member  
Dr. Benjamin Feeney, Member  
Ms. Angela Fitterer, Designee for PDE Secretary Mumin  
Lt. Kyle Gautsch, Member  
Mr. Mike Hurley, Member  
Mr. Mike Kelly, Member  
Ms. Brittney Kline, Designee for Attorney General Henry  
Senator Wayne Langerholc, Member  
Mr. David "Randy" Padfield, Member  
Dr. Helena Tuleya-Payne, Member  
Rep. Regina Young, Member

**Staff:**

Pamela Bennett	Carol Kuntz
Kathy Buckley	Crystal Lauver
Matthew Conn	Jordan Lewis
Camila Contreras	Elizabeth Locke
Christina Cosgrove-Rooks	Levi Looks
Stephen D'Ettorre	Leo Lutz
Amelia Dizo	Betsy May
Jennifer Ely	Heidi Metzger
Chris Epoca	Zoe Miner
Alison Gantz	Ian Murray
Neil Hartnett	Derin Myers
Stacey Herman	Mike Pennington
Heather Hewitt	Debra Sandifer
Chuck Hogan	Kayleigh Siemer
Daniel Hull	Camille Traczek
Kirsten Kenyon	Lindsay Vaughan
Rebecca Kiehl	Emily White
Samantha Koch	Teresa Wilcox

**Guests:**

Diane Acri, PA House of Representatives  
Patrick Beaver, PA State Police (PSP)  
Sean Brandon, PA House of Representatives  
Erika Brunelle, PA State Education Association (PSEA)  
Mark Carollo, Keystone Purchasing Network  
Andrew Christ, PA School Board Association (PSBA)  
Gwenn Dando, PA Senate  
Mike Deery, PA Senate  
Tobi Downing, Office of the Attorney General  
Franck Felten  
Steve Fickes, Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LCFB)  
Heather Goldsworthy, Temple University Harrisburg Campus  
Bradley Keen, PA House

**Guests, Cont.:**

Kate Krueger, PA Association of School Business Officials (PASBO)  
 Scott Kuren, PA Department of Education (PDE)  
 Christopher Latta, Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LCFB)  
 Heather Masshardt, PA School Board Association (PSBA)  
 Alison Piccolino, PA Senate  
 Shawn White, PA State Police – Homeland Security  
 Vicki Wilken, PA Senate  
 Steven Williams, PA Office of the Lieutenant Governor  
 Unknown (415-852-0692)

**Call to Order of the September 4, 2024, Meeting and Adoption of Minutes**

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM and welcomed participants. A quorum of members was established. Moving to the agenda, Chairman Davis noted that the minutes from the August 7, 2024 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 August 7, 2024, meeting as submitted.**

**Motion:** Brewster. **Second:** Hurley **Abstentions:** None. **Not Present for Vote:** Padfield **Votes:** 15. **Nay Votes:** 0. **Motion Adopted**

At the conclusion of the vote, a member asked to make a comment and announced the current breaking news of a school shooting in Georgia.

**Violence Intervention & Prevention/BOOST Funding Framework****FY24-25 VIP Funding Framework**

Chairman Davis invited Ms. Samantha Koch to present on the funding frameworks for the VIP and BOOST solicitations. Ms. Koch reviewed a PowerPoint presentation, noting that the information was included in the meeting materials. She shared data on national and statewide crime trends, covered the current cohort experience, and highlighted additional initiatives addressing gun violence intervention. Ms. Koch noted national and state declines in homicide, local trends, and the challenge to sustain declines. She showed and briefly demonstrated the updated data dashboard on gun violence.

Ms. Koch provided an update on VIP evaluation, recapping the progress to date and the new report from NORC & Temple University with findings from their survey of VIP grantees. She stated that the report is available on the [PCCD website](#) and was provided in the meeting materials. Ms. Koch went on to highlight some related initiatives supported by PCCD, including the [Gun Violence Victims Initiative](#), led by the Victims' Services Advisory Committee (VSAC), and the [Byrne State Crisis Intervention Program \(SCIP\) funds](#) supporting efforts to reduce gun violence. She added that PCCD will be applying for the next round of federal SCIP funding.

Next, Ms. Koch reviewed the VIP and new BOOST funding in the FY 2024-25 state budget. She compared the similarities and differences between the VIP and BOOST grant programs, including eligible applicants, range of eligible activities and commonalities, and highlighted the defining characteristics and primary focus of each funding opportunity. Sharing an updated list of eligible models and approaches, Ms. Koch stated that VIP was expanded to include domestic violence, whereas BOOST is much more prevention-focused.

Ms. Koch reviewed the plan for two solicitations with four application tracks for the VIP grants and one solicitation with two application tracks for the BOOST grants. She noted the timelines for the two funding opportunities, provided examples of eligible activities, and scrolled through the framework document that was shared in the meeting materials. In the absence of any questions, Chairman Davis called for a motion.

**Motion to Adopt the FY24-25 VIP Funding Framework, as presented.**

**Motion:** Bart. **Second:** Brewster. **Abstentions:** None. **Not Present for Vote:** None **Votes:** 16. **Nay Votes:** 0. **Motion Adopted**

### FY24-25 BOOST Funding Framework

Ms. Koch provided context for BOOST eligible items and source materials, noted the funding priorities and mentioned a few additional requirements for statewide applicants. With no questions raised, Chairman Davis called for a motion.

### **Motion to Adopt the FY24-25 BOOST Funding Framework, as presented.**

**Motion:** Tuleya-Payne. **Second:** Davis **Abstentions:** None. **Not Present for Vote:** None  
**Votes:** 16. **Nay Votes:** 0. **Motion Adopted**

### **School Security Personnel Waiver Criteria**

For the next item Chairman Davis invited Ms. Kirsten Kenyon to apprise the Committee on the school security personnel waivers for school districts. As she scrolled through the proposed School Personnel Waiver Criteria document (which was included in the meeting materials), Ms. Kenyon reviewed the new statutory requirement that starting this school year every school district must have at least one full-time school security personnel (School Resource Officer, School Police Officer, or School Security Guard) on duty during the school day. She stated that these school security personnel must meet all of the training requirements in [Article XIII-C](#) of the PA School Code.

Ms. Kenyon noted that the new statute allows school districts to request a waiver from the Committee for a one-year exception to this requirement. In doing so, they must attest that they attempted in good faith to meet the requirement, but that they were unable to hire or contract the requisite school security personnel. Ms. Kenyon stated that should the Committee approve the School Security Personnel Waiver Criteria, staff will present it to the Commission for formal adoption at their upcoming quarterly meeting.

A member asked if PCCD has any data that shows how many of the 500 districts do not yet have any school security personnel. Ms. Kenyon responded that school districts are required to self-report to the PA Department of Education (PDE) what school security personnel they have, but there's uncertainty regarding how complete that reporting might be. The member requested follow-up on that due to concern of not knowing the true need and potential frustration in perceiving this as an unfunded mandate.

### **Motion to recommend approval of the School Security Personnel Waiver Criteria, as presented.**

**Motion:** Brewster. **Second:** Davis. **Abstentions:** None. **Not Present for Vote:** None **Votes:** 16. **Nay Votes:** 0. **Motion Adopted**

### **Legislative Budget & Finance Committee Survey Data Request for SR 178 Study**

Chairman Davis noted that this agenda item involves a formal request (provided in the meeting materials) from the Legislative Budget & Finance Committee (LBFC) staff who are currently in the process of conducting a study on school safety as directed by [Senate Resolution \(SR\) 178](#). He reminded members that [Section 1305-B](#) of the PA Public School Code provides for the confidentiality of the school survey data but does allow the Committee to release aggregate data at its discretion. Chairman Davis invited LBFC staff to present their request.

LBFC Deputy Executive Director Steve Fickes, who was joined by Executive Director Christopher Latta and project senior analyst Matt Thomas, explained the informational request for aggregate data from the initial school safety and security survey conducted in 2018 per [Section 1305-B\(b\)](#) to show where schools were with doing assessments prior to Act 44 compared to where they are now. A copy of the letter from the LBFC detailing the request was included in the meeting materials.

Chairman Davis asked if there were any questions or comments. One member asked about the reference of creating a baseline, as he views that as the responsibility of the SSSC and PCCD and something that already happens. Mr. Fickes clarified that it was not the best choice of words, but that the LBFC simply wants a picture of where assessments were in 2018, of how many had been completed prior to Act 44, and where schools are now regarding assessments to see how far and in which direction the needle has been moving.

Another member agreed, noting that it seems like there's a duplication of efforts and continual siloing of information by various organizations. He gave the example of reporting on school security personnel and the challenge of fragmentation of funding framework with not having appropriate data while the PA Department of Education (PDE) has been collecting that information from schools for the past 15 years as required in [22 PA Code Chapter 10](#). The PDE representative responded that most of the data is available on the Department's website and provided the [link](#).

Chairman Davis asked for a decision on whether or not to provide the requested data to the LBFC. A member stated that he does not want to hold up the process and supports sharing the information requested to comply with SR 178. Mr. Fickes acknowledged that the information on school security personnel is available through PDE, however that is not what they need. He clarified that the LBFC is requesting aggregate data from the initial school safety survey conducted under Act 44 regarding the assessments that were done. Hearing no objections, Chairman Davis indicated that PCCD staff should move forward with providing the requested information.

### **General Updates**

Moving on, Chairman Davis noted the absence of an Executive Committee update as the Committee does not meet until September 18. He invited Ms. Kenyon to give her update and turned the meeting over to Mike Pennington, as he needed to leave for another commitment.

#### FY24-25 School Safety Solicitations

Ms. Kenyon apprised members on the status of the solicitations received thus far. She acknowledged a bit of a lag in receiving applications which she attributed to schools focusing on the start of the school year. She noted that one-pagers with instructions, tips and resources were created to assist applicants with the solicitation process. Ms. Kenyon also reported that a webinar for the Targeted School Safety Grants for has been scheduled for September 9, 2024, and staff anticipate announcing a separate webinar for the public school entities' School Safety & Mental Health grants to occur later that week. Ms. Kenyon expressed appreciation for members' past assistance in prompting schools who had not yet applied to take advantage of their funding and stated that this help with stragglers will likely be requested again after the solicitations close.

#### Status of Act 55 School Safety and Security Criteria and Training

Next, Ms. Lindsay Vaughan provided a brief update on the requisite Act 55 training for school employees and safety and security coordinators. She noted the statute's changes requiring 3 hours of annual training for school employees and coordinators receive 7 hours of training on 11 topics.

Ms. Vaughan referenced the work with the selected vendor, RSM, resulting in the launch of the first online employee training module in October 2023 and the subsequent addition of five trainings on six topics. She reported that more than 30,000 individuals participated in one or more of these sessions in August 2024, bringing the total number of people trained since October 2023 on one or more topics to 132,011 with the majority indicating that the training was helpful or very helpful.

For the one course on emergency training drills that is required to be done in person, Ms. Vaughan stated that PCCD has conducted 37 training of trainers (TOT) sessions which have empowered over 800 individuals to conduct the training for their own employees. She noted that additional TOT sessions will be held this fall.

Ms. Vaughan reported that PCCD launched the safety and security coordinator (SSC) training on February 2, 2024 which started the one-year clock for all SSCs appointed prior to that date to complete the 7 hour training covering 11 different safety topics. She stated that 749 SSCs have taken the requisite training at one of the 29 in-person sessions offered thus far with 8 more sessions scheduled to occur later this year. The response has been overwhelmingly positive with over 85% reporting increased knowledge in the topic as a result. Ms. Vaughan stated that the online version is expected to be launched in a few weeks.

Finally, Ms. Vaughan noted that 102 trainers have been certified and added to the training provider list for those who wish to use that option for training school employees.

### **Member Updates/Comments/Questions**

Mr. Pennington asked if any member had updates or other business to bring before the Committee, but no one did.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Pennington invited any public comment, with none heard.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Pennington stated that the next meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2024 with the anticipated focus on considering awards for the competitive Targeted Nonpublic School Grant Program. The following meeting is tentatively set for December 11, 2024, though he noted that the date may change depending on the review process for the competitive VIP and BOOST grant solicitation applications. Following the vote, the meeting adjourned at 1:58 PM.

### **Motion to adjourn.**

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