

# SCHOOL SAFETY TASK FORCE



Chesterfield County Public Schools

## Report To Chesterfield County School Board



## Background

- On February 23, 2018, the Chesterfield County School Board announced the creation of a School Safety Task Force to evaluate current protocols and best practices that ensure the school division is providing a safe, supportive and nurturing learning environment for all students, staff and administrators.
- It was announced that Virginia Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Brian Moran and former Virginia Secretary of Education Laura Fornash, both residents of Chesterfield County and parents of students at Chesterfield County Public Schools would serve as the co-chairs of the School Safety Task Force.
- Prior to the recent tragedy in Florida, two Chesterfield School Board members, Midlothian representative Dr. Javaid Siddiqi, former Virginia Secretary of Education, and Clover Hill representative Dianne Smith, a gubernatorial appointee in 2013 to the governor's School Safety Task Force, were actively looking into the creation of a task force.



## Background

- It was announced that the Task Force would examine critical issues surrounding education and safety, with four main topics established:
  - Partnership between Chesterfield Schools and Chesterfield Police
  - School Safety
  - Student Conduct and Student Discipline
  - Student Support Services



## Background

- The School Board accepted applications from community members to serve on the School Safety Task Force. After receiving more than 200 applications, members were appointed from each of the county's five magisterial districts and included parents, teachers, staff members, students and other community members.
- Also announced was the creation of a website that includes an open and transparent catalogue of all work and resources:

<http://mychesterfieldschools.com/school-board/schoolsafety-task-force/>



## Membership and Meetings

- On April 11, 2018, the Chesterfield County School Board named a roster of members to the School Safety Task Force and Working Groups. Task Force members also were able to select a Working Group on which they would like to serve.
- The Task Force held five meetings (April 24, May 23, June 12, October 2 and October 31, 2018) to receive general presentations and receive reports from the Working Groups. The Working Groups each held multiple meetings to discuss their objectives and scope of work in order to finalize a report to the Task Force with recommendations.



## Membership and Meetings

Co-Chair Honorable Brian Moran  
Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security  
Commonwealth of Virginia

Co-Chair Honorable Laura Fornash  
Former Secretary of Education  
Commonwealth of Virginia



## Working Group #1—Partnership Between Chesterfield Schools and Chesterfield Police—Objectives and Scope of Work

- Current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Chesterfield Schools and Chesterfield Police
- School Resource Officers in Chesterfield Schools
  - Role of School Resource Officers in schools
  - Cost/Number/Coverage of School Resource Officers in schools
  - School Road Traffic Management (and Parking Lot Traffic Management)
- Communications Among Schools and Public Safety (to also include Chesterfield Fire and EMS)
- Discussion Regarding Chesterfield Police Protocols for Arrests on School Property—to include discussion of protocol for arrests for off-property behavior



## Working Group #2—School Safety—Objectives and Scope of Work

- Role of Chesterfield Schools Office of Safety and Security
  - Role of School Safety Officers
- Critical Incident and Emergency Management Planning
- Individual School Prevention Efforts
  - Visitor Management System and Visitor policies
  - Interior and Exterior Security/Video Cameras
  - Video/Door Bell-Entrance System
- Traffic Management and Parking Lot Traffic Management—to include partnership with Chesterfield Transportation Department and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)



## Working Group #3—Student Conduct and Student Discipline— Objectives and Scope of Work

- Chesterfield Schools Code of Student Conduct
- Required By Law Reporting to Law Enforcement
- Student Disciplinary Actions and Discipline Disparities
- Alternative Approaches/Education for Student Discipline
- Bullying Prevention—to include cyber bullying prevention



## Working Group #4—Student Support Services—Objectives and Scope of Work

- Role of School Division Personnel (school counselors, psychologists and social workers)
- Partnership with Chesterfield County—to include Chesterfield County Mental Health, Chesterfield County Social Services, Community Services Board
- Suicide Awareness and Prevention Efforts
- Drugs in School and Opioid Crisis—to include discussion regarding school curriculum in Virginia Beach Schools
- Online Safety and Cybersecurity/Privacy



## Top 10 School Safety Task Force Recommendations

Each Working Group presented to the School Safety Task Force its top five key recommendations. All 20 key recommendations were endorsed by the School Safety Task Force. The Task Force completed a survey and determined the following recommendations as the top 10:



## Top 10 Recommendations based on survey

- Chesterfield County Public Schools should develop a five-year budget plan to increase School Resource Officer coverage to all schools with a focus on the elementary level. This plan should include a recommendation from the board to advocate for the General Assembly to provide an exception for recently retired law enforcement to retain their retirement benefits if they serve as School Resource Officers. (Working Group 1 – Recommendation 4)
- Increase funding for additional mental health staffing (Working Group 3 – Recommendation 2)



## Top 10 Recommendations based on survey

- Control access to schools through vestibules (Working Group 2 – Recommendation 3)
- Amend the Virginia Standards of Quality to align student support personnel ratios with best practices (Working Group 4 – Recommendation 1)
- Develop a plan to initially fund and sustain multi-tiered whole child frameworks, pre-K through 12th grade: Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Trauma Informed Care (TIC), Restorative Practices (RP), Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS) (Working Group 4 – Recommendation 3)



## Top 10 Recommendations based on survey

- The role of the School Resource Officer should be clearly defined to the staff, students, and the school community. (Working Group 1 – Recommendation 1)
- Examine School Security Officer Role or Mentor Role in Elementary Schools. (Working Group 2 – Recommendation 1)
- Ensure that crisis plans, maps, floorplans and overhead photos are shared with public safety agencies and use common terminology, labeling, keys and formats. (Working Group 2 – Recommendation 2)



## Top 10 Recommendations based on survey

- CCPS to provide a more comprehensive alternative education setting to include support services (Working Group 3 – Recommendation 1)
- Conduct a review of student support services' job responsibilities and reassign tasks that do not conform to professional training and expertise. (Working Group 4 – Recommendation 2)



## Next Steps

- The final report from the School Safety Task Force will be formally presented to the Chesterfield County School Board on December 11, 2018.
- It is recommended that this report is sent to the Governor of Virginia, Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates, Chesterfield legislative delegation, Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors, Virginia Secretary of Education, and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.



## Next Steps

- The School Board will determine the appropriate implementation of the specific recommendations.
- As such, the School Safety Task Force strongly encourages the School Board to prioritize implementation for:
  - Strategies that can be immediately endorsed/implemented
  - Strategies that might include a budgetary impact (and determine if the financial cost could be part of the upcoming budget process or if it should be phased in)
  - Strategies that might be included in the School Board's legislative program
  - Strategies that might be implemented over time"
- The School Safety Task Force recommends the Chesterfield School Board receive regular updates from staff regarding progress toward implementation of the recommendations.



## Next Steps—(Draft) School Board's 2019 Legislative Program

1—Chesterfield County Public Schools should develop a five-year budget plan to increase School Resource Officer coverage to all schools with a focus on the elementary level. This plan should include a recommendation from the board to advocate for the General Assembly to provide an exception for recently retired law enforcement to retain their retirement benefits if they serve as School Resource Officers. (Working Group #1, Recommendation #4)

2—Amend the Virginia Standards of Quality to align student support personnel ratios with best practices. (Working Group #4, Recommendation #1)—The work group recommends that the state amend the Virginia Standards of Quality to establish, and/or CCPS adopt, best practice staffing levels for School Psychologists (1 to 1000), School Social Workers (1 to 1000), School Nurses (1 to 550) and School Counselors (1 to 250).



## Next Steps—(Draft) School Board's 2019 Legislative Program

3—The Task Force requests that the Virginia Department of Education review the current attendance regulations. A bill should be introduced to revise 22.1-258 of the Code of Virginia, with a new timeframe of required staff intervention when students have eleven (11) unexcused absences and refer to court at eighteen (18) unexcused absences. (Working Group #4, Recommendation #6)

4—Request a review of federal, state, and local laws/policies governing special education procedures for students and how these laws/policies are implemented in CCPS. Request a Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) audit to review the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements (special education) and VDOE's mandates regarding IDEA. (Working Group #4, Recommendation #7)



## Next Steps—Recommendations with Potential Budget Implications

1—Chesterfield County Public Schools should revise the current communication plan to building administration with the creation of a school command and emergency systems position and a school safety app that can be used in the school setting. (Working Group #1, Recommendation #2); and, Panic Button and Options (research and choose product that would alert first responders regarding a dangerous threat) (Working Group #2, Recommendation #4); and, Platform in which an emergency notification can be sent to students, faculty, staff, and first responders. (Working Group #2, Recommendation #2B); and, Online tools that use analytics to scan public social media for harmful and threatening language. (Working Group #2, Recommendation #3B); and, App or physical alarm that can alert administrators, law enforcement, and first responders regarding a dangerous threat. (Working Group #2, Recommendation #9—also include: Visual indicators of P.A. activation in noisy areas within a building like the gym, cafeteria, music rooms, etc.; and, Improvements with communication between school and learning cottages/ trailers/ field houses on campus)



## Next Steps—Recommendations with Potential Budget Implications

2—Chesterfield County Public Schools should revise the current communication plan to building administration with the creation of a school command and emergency systems position and a school safety app that can be used in the school setting. (Working Group #1, Recommendation #2)

3—Chesterfield County Public Schools should develop a five-year budget plan to increase School Resource Officer coverage to all schools with a focus on the elementary level. [This plan should include a recommendation from the board to advocate for the General Assembly to provide an exception for recently retired law enforcement to retain their retirement benefits if they serve as School Resource Officers.] (Working Group #1, Recommendation #4)

4—Begin a stipend position for a designated safety team leader at each school, not an administrator. The role of this position would be to conduct school drills, produce crisis plans, train school staff, and manage related documentation and maintenance of materials. (Working Group #2, Recommendation #5-A)

5—Improve PA System reach in building and all school grounds (Working Group #2, Recommendation #6)



## Next Steps—Recommendations with Potential Budget Implications

6—Radio communications Needs Assessment— Engage Motorola Solutions’ partners for help with Education Grants Help to provide free grant assistance for our school communications needs. For funding for the communications project, sign up for the free grant program. Develop a phased rollout of integrated digital radio systems across CCPS over a 5 year period. (Working Group #2, Recommendation #11)

7—Add SSOs at Middle School level like HS model period. (Working Group #2, Recommendation #19); and, Add a mobile security response team to assist with emergent incidents, SSO absence coverage, after school activities response with critical incidents. (Working Group #2, Recommendation #21)

8—As intrusion and fire alarm capabilities grow, IP-based camera surveillance systems are installed, and off-hours communications/tips/monitoring activities increase, in the future we should consider a 24/7 central monitoring station staffed with CCPS security staff rather than contracting out the various services. (Working Group #2, Recommendation #20) [The report from Working Group #2 includes specific criteria.]



## Next Steps—Recommendations with Potential Budget Implications

9—Study different options for Crossing Guard duties. (Working Group #2, Recommendation #22) [The report from Working Group #2 includes specific criteria.]

10—Increase funding for additional mental health staffing (Working Group #3, Recommendation #2)—...CCPS added two new mental health specialists as of last January and feel they are providing an invaluable service to our students...request adding to this team so that we have 3 specialists designated for the elementary level, 2 for the middle school level, and 2 for the high school level to improve the student to mental health professional ratio and ensure that we have the necessary staff to address all the threat assessments filed...also would like CCPS to consider assisting current high school counselors with the use of outside resource teachers from local community colleges that can provide college/career prep or vocational training, thus giving counselors more time with individual students.



## Next Steps—Recommendations with Potential Budget Implications

11—Develop a plan to initially fund and sustain multi-tiered whole child frameworks, pre-K through 12th grade: Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Trauma Informed Care (TIC), Restorative Practices (RP), Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS) [Working Group #4, Recommendation #3; and, Working Group #3, Recommendation #5 (“Continue the implementation of PBIS, SEL, and Restorative practices”)]

12—Explore the benefits and disadvantages of an anonymous reporting and messaging system for students to alert school personnel to concerns regarding student and/or school safety, for possible implementation in 2019-20 school year. (Working Group #4, Recommendation #8)

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