

Summary
Education Work Group Recommendations
January 31, 2013

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER	PROPOSAL	BUDGET IMPACT
<p style="text-align: center;">E-01 Passed</p>	<p>Bullying: <i>That a definition of “bullying” be provided in the Code of Virginia, and that the Governor’s School and Campus Safety Task Force support legislation pending in the 2013 General Assembly which provides for such a definition.</i></p> <p>Although the <i>Code of Virginia</i> references bullying in several contexts, such as the requirement that school boards include bullying in their student codes of conduct, there is no specific definition of bullying provided.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NO</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">E-02 Passed with amendment</p>	<p>Required School Division Safety Audit Planning Teams: To amend the Code of Virginia to require school boards to establish a school safety audit committee to consist of representatives of parents, school personnel, local law-enforcement, fire and rescue representatives, behavioral health, and medical service agencies, and judicial and public safety personnel, as well as the community at large. Current law does not require such committees and only says “may” form such. Proposal would also require representatives from fire and rescue representatives, behavioral health, and medical service agencies.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In coordination with PS-13.</p>	<p>May be budgetary impact to address personnel, training and materials to provide technical assistance</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">E-03 Merged with PS-02</p>	<p>Lockdown Drills– Mandates schools to conduct one lockdown drill within the first 20 days of the fall and spring semesters.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Identical to Recommendation PS-2.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NO</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">E-04 Passed</p>	<p>Antibullying Training Funding: To provide funding for the implementation of recommendations set forth in the <u>Study of the Nature and Effectiveness of Virginia School Divisions’ Antibullying Policies</u> (House Joint Resolution No. 625, 2011); specifically to “provide technical assistance and training for school divisions and schools in best policies, practice, and procedures for implementing bullying prevention and responding to bullying incidents.”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">YES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">YES</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">E-05 Passed</p>	<p>Safety and Security Fund: the state establishes a recurring non-reverting fund to be made available for use at the discretion of schools and localities for school</p>	

	safety and security.	YES
<p>E-06 Failed VOTE on Original Recommendation 9 – Yes 20 – No</p> <p>Referred to Public Safety Workgroup and back to Education Workgroup to Assess the Training Needs of SROs.</p>	<p>School Resource Officers: School Resource Officers complete a required training program prior to assignment to schools, with curriculum components and standards determined by the Virginia Center for School Safety, in consultation with the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services. The training may be provided by VCSS through the <u>School Resource Officer Curriculum</u> or other means, or it may be provided by other entities meeting VCSS established standards and the mandatory components. The curriculum components and standards are to be reviewed and updated, if necessary, every two years.</p> <p>Assigned School Resource Officers also be required to complete training every two years, as determined by the Virginia Center for School Safety, in consultation with the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services.</p>	YES

Governor's School and Campus Safety Task Force Education Work Group

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

School Resource Officers

Recommendations addressing preparation, knowledge and skills, position expectations, and recruitment of School Resource Officers

Background: One of the topics discussed in the first meeting was the role of the School Resource Officers (SROs), including consideration of: (1) standard ratios of SROs to numbers of students; (2) position qualifications and hiring practices; (3) preparation and training for working with school aged children and within the school environment; and (4) curriculum requirements and continuing education opportunities.

School Resource Officers work in an environment where their role expands from strictly law enforcement to development of relationships with school children and youth and faculty and staff. Opening communication channels among student and school personnel, parents and community law enforcement personnel is one example. Given the multiple expectations for a SRO, and the impact that a SRO has on school safety, environment, and student development, a further discussion could lead to identification of standard and best practices in hiring and training support and for all SROs in school divisions across the state.

Recommendations

For consideration to provide consistency and support for statewide school-law enforcement partnerships and best practices:

- Biannual review of the *School Resource Officer Curriculum*, with consultation among the Virginia Center for School Safety, the Virginia Department of Education, and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services as to curriculum components.
- Required training components for SROs, such as those presented in *First, Do No Harm*, a policy brief prepared by Johanna Wald and Lisa Thureau of Harvard Law School: adolescent development and psychology; strategies for diffusing potentially volatile situations; recognition of symptoms of trauma, abuse, and exposure to violence; and recognition of manifestations of a student disability.
- Requirements for additional training for SROs after a certain number of years of certification.

- Development of a model position descriptions and agreements for school divisions and law enforcement agencies concerning implementation of the SRO program, and subsequent joint training of school and law enforcement personnel.
- Permit the use of grants provided for school resource officers to be used also for other school safety improvements, including security cameras, infrastructure improvements, threat assessment training, mental health professionals, school counselors, student assistance teams, positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies to reduce bullying, drug abuse, violence, and other problem behaviors.
- Require training for SROs on (1) adolescent development and psychology; (2) strategies for diffusing potentially volatile situations; (3) recognizing symptoms of trauma and abuse (and related behaviors) in children and adolescents; (4) recognizing manifestations of students' disabilities; (5) evidence-based programs for improving school climate; and (6) the short-term and long-term effects of court involvement on the likelihood of recidivism and disengagement from school

School Disaster Response Plans (DRP)

Background: Va. Code § 22.1-279.8. (School safety audits and school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plans required) applies to all public higher education and K-12 schools. Most private schools have also developed DRPs voluntarily. Most schools exercise some scenarios and some components of their plans periodically and students participate in exercises such as fire and tornado drills. DCJS, DOE and VDEM developed a general template for the DRPs and updates have been developed periodically.

Gaps:

- DRPs are not mandated for private schools.
- While the plans are required, the process for developing a plan may vary widely. Local police, fire and rescue forces are integral to the successful implementation of many elements of the DRPs, but there is no guarantee of their participation in the development and exercising of the plan.
- Plan review, evaluation and update are not mandated.
- Staff training and exercises are not required or standardized.

Possible recommendations:

- Review and revise template to insure coverage of various scenarios including active shooter situations.

- Require school DRP to include active shooter situations.
- Mandate DRPs for private schools.
- Require an annual active shooter exercise including students as part of annual exercise or incorporate elements of active shooter plan into other drills.
- Require participation of local first responders in planning process.
- Require periodic review and evaluation of school DRPs.
- Develop and mandate standardized training for school staff.

Antibullying Policies

Background: In 2011, the Virginia General Assembly passed House Joint Resolution No. 625, requesting the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to study the nature and effectiveness of local school divisions' antibullying policies. Specifically, the directive of the resolution requested VDOE:

to study the nature and effectiveness of local school divisions' antibullying policies, completing its meetings by November 30, 2011, and submitting to the Governor and General Assembly an executive summary and a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document...no later than the first day of the 2012 Regular Session of the General Assembly (January 11, 2012).

The following are recommendations stemming from the study.

It is recommended that the Virginia Department of Education develop a model comprehensive antibullying policy based on the ten components identified in the study, to include but not be limited to:

1. A definition of bullying that specifies: (1) aggression, be it physical, verbal or psychological, that is intended to harm; (2) repetition over time; and (3) a relationship with a power imbalance (psychological, social or physical) between perpetrator and target. The third component, that of an imbalance of power, should be added to the Board of Education's example/sample policy provided in the *Student Conduct Policy Guidelines* to support model policy at the division level.
2. Examples of behaviors indicative of bullying, that should be included in student codes of conduct. In this manner, all students and parents may better understand what behaviors are prohibited.
3. Alternatives to suspension and expulsion to address bullying behavior, as supported through research, including providing individual counseling for intervening with students identified as bullying others and individualized and group counseling for students identified as being bullied
4. Communication, education and outreach with staff and students, and parents and families

5. Expectations of staff and students in preventing and addressing bullying

It is recommended that the Virginia Department of Education provide technical assistance and training for school divisions and schools in best policies, practices and procedures for implementing bullying prevention and responding to bullying incidents, including:

1. Identifying bullying behaviors
2. Intervening at the time of the incident (s)
3. Notifying school administration
4. Following up after bullying incidents
5. Establishing an anti-bullying climate within school systems

Recommendation: Implement the study's second recommendation: to "provide technical assistance and training for school divisions and schools in best policies, practices and procedures for implementing bullying prevention and responding to bullying incidents."

The first recommendation of the study has been completed, with a draft model comprehensive antibullying policy under final review by the Virginia Department of Education. With its completion, implementation of the study's second recommendation, to "provide technical assistance and training for school divisions and schools in best policies, practices and procedures for implementing bullying prevention and responding to bullying incidents," would be accomplished in a timely and comprehensive manner with the financial support of a state budgetary amendment. Formerly, such training and technical assistance was supported through Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act funds, no longer available. There was no state appropriation of monies to support the recommendation in 2012.

HIGHER EDUCATION

VDEM Training for University Community

Background: CERT training provides basic emergency skills needed immediately following a major disaster, when emergency services may not be available and when individuals may have to rely on each other for life-saving and life-sustaining needs. CERT volunteers learn how to provide help for themselves or others in emergency. Instruction centers on disaster preparedness and response, fire safety, first aid, search and rescue techniques, and terrorism preparedness. Expanding a campus community's knowledge of how to respond in an emergency situation may help to save lives and assist law enforcement personnel in executing their duties during an emergency.

RECOMMENDATION: Expand the availability of the Campus Emergency Response Team (CERT)* training to all public higher education institutions in the Commonwealth by providing funding to ensure that

institutions can access the training. CERT training is provided by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. (This recommendation is based in part on the assumption that CERT training will include active shooter training.)

Funding to update Early Warning Notification Systems

Background: Legislation passed in 2008 (§ 23-9.2:11) required that the governing boards of each public institutions of higher education establish a comprehensive, prompt, and reliable first warning notification and emergency broadcast system for their students, faculty, and staff, both on and off campus. Such a system is to be activated in the case of an emergency and may rely on website announcements; email notices; phone, cellular phone, and text messages; alert lines; public address systems; and other means of communication. In addition, each institution is required to designate individuals authorized to activate the warning system and to provide such individuals with appropriate training for its use.

There is a need on public college campuses to increase and expand notification equipment. This unfunded requirement has placed a hardship on colleges to meet the minimum standards of notification. The notification technology has improved greatly however, many public institutions of higher education colleges require additional funding support to improve, expand, and in some instances replace outdated equipment.

Recommendation: Funding request to update or replace first warning and emergency campus notification systems at public higher education institutions. Additional annual funding for first warning and emergency notification systems will increase timely notifications to college communities and help replace outdated equipment currently being used.

Funding for Existing Crime Prevention and Safety Programs

Background: Currently the Department of Criminal Justice Services has grant programs such as Burn Grants to help Law Enforcement agencies purchase equipment, create crime prevention programs or support existing programs. There are no existing grant programs for public institutions of higher education that have only security departments.

Many public institutions of higher education have security departments that are responsible for Safety Programs, Crime Prevention and other campus preparedness initiatives but have no budget allocation to support these initiatives. Public institutions of higher education are required by §23-9.2:9 to provide crime education and prevention on campus. Additional funding through grants or in an institution's budget but earmarked for campus security department programs will ensure help to ensure consistent delivery of these programs and as a result increase campus community safety.

Most if not all public Institutions of Higher Education have crime prevention programs and safety programs but often do not have the funding to sustain them. Currently, there are no Department of Criminal Justice Services' Grant Programs that support campus security departments with crime prevention and safety initiatives on campus. Lack of funding puts security departments at a

disadvantage as they are unable to obtain much needed equipment. They also lack the resources to establish or continue safety programs on campus. Additional funding would increase the dissemination of crucial information to the college community and enhance communication and safety programs on campus. As an example of the need for funding is the RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) Program which requires the purchase of equipment and student training materials.

Recommendation: To fund existing Crime Prevention and Safety Programs on campuses.

OTHER

Recommendation: Clarify that Va. Code 22.1-279.3:1 does not require delinquency charges to be filed for minor school-based offenses.

Recommendation: Support Governor McDonnell's budget proposal to expand Effective Schoolwide Discipline (\$618,000)