

## School Safety Technical Assistance Council

### Minutes

Tuesday, July 14, 2015

3 – 5 p.m.

Minnesota Department of Education, Conference Center A, Room 13

**Members Present:** Julie Blaha, Brenda Cassellius, Lisa Englestad, Julie Hertzog, Jon Hunt, Kevin Lindsey, Robyn Millenacker, Michael Reinhardt, Jeanne Swanson, Amanda Twite, Angela Willms, Bill Wyss.

**Members Unable to Attend:** Melissa Callahan, Joanna Carlson, Brad Johnson, Randy Johnson, Cathy Miller, Beth Ness, Dan Porter, Tony Porter, Zeam Porter, Jake Ross, Kelly Smith.

**MDE Staff Members Present:** Josh Collins, Heather Hirsch, Patty Mattern, Kevin McHenry, Craig Wethington.

**Guests Present:** Barb Anderson, Jess Brennan, Lyn Mitchell.

### Agenda:

- I. Commissioner Cassellius called the meeting to order.
- II. Approval of April 7, 2015 minutes. No changes were noted to the minutes. Jon Hunt moved to accept the minutes; Jeanne Swanson seconded. Motion passed.
- III. School Safety Technical Assistance Center (Center) Director Report. Craig Wethington noted that the center was funded for another two years by the State Legislature. Craig will share the center's work plan for the second year with the Council before the October meeting, as it is still being finalized. He noted that center staff will provide a full report of the center's fiscal year 2015 activities at the October meeting. On October 29, the center will host a policy institute in the St. Cloud area for school and district leadership with support from the National School Climate Center and Minnesota Association of School Administrators. The center has developed two training videos on bullying prevention and intervention. Staff will send the videos to the Council members.
- IV. Old Business
  - a. Bullying Prohibition Policy Non-Compliance Complaint Process

Craig reviewed the center's flow chart for handling calls and emails, the formal complaint process and the investigation process. Council members discussed: the authority of the center to issue corrective action; if the center or Council could

be held liable in a court case; how the materials will be disseminated to districts and students; and how callers are notified about the formal complaint process. The Council requested aggregate reports of the investigations that are handled by the center. Craig noted that this will be included in the annual report in October. Changes to the documents were suggested at the meeting and Council members requested additional time to review the materials. Craig will send the documents by email, giving Council members two weeks to respond with changes or comments.

b. Committee Updates

- a. Statement of Operating Principles. Craig reported on the research done based on concerns from the April meeting. Higher Education is mentioned in the law (and in the operating principles) as an acknowledgement that students in Minnesota high schools can attend courses on college campuses. There was discussion about what the Council's obligation was to protect those students from bullying. Craig will bring together people from the Office of Higher Education and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System to provide further guidance to the Council. Craig clarified the Council membership noting that the Minnesota Department of Health and the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools do not assign representatives and there is currently one extra student representative and one extra parent representative. One student representative has graduated from high school, leaving two student members – a change that further aligns the Council's membership with the statute definition. The Minnesota Department of Health and the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools have been asked to appoint a member to the Council. Jeanne Swanson motioned to approve the operating principles as amended. Robyn Millenacker seconded. Motion passed.
- b. District-wide School Climate Improvement Guide. Heather Hirsch gave a progress update on the guide. The Committee met twice and reviewed the first two phases of the toolkit. Their feedback was passed on to the contractor. The contractor delivered a final draft of the guide. Craig and Heather will revise it and call for a final review meeting in August. The center plans to make the guide available for school districts to use by September.
- c. Symposium Update. Julie Hertzog provided an update on symposium planning. The group met in June and will meet again in August. The plan is to host the symposium in January or February 2016 for 200-300 education professionals, parents and student leaders. PACER has stepped forward as a partner to help plan and host the event.

c. Workgroup Updates

- i. Social Emotional Learning Statewide Guidelines. Lisa Englestad provided an update to the Council. The group has met twice and has a half-day meeting planned for August. Nick Yoder from the Midwest Comprehensive Center provides technical assistance and guidance to the group. The group will present a work plan to the Council at its October meeting.

- ii. Framework Development for Training School Personnel. Heather provided an update. Since school personnel comprise the majority of this workgroup, the group will begin meeting in September.
- iii. Cyberbullying and Electronic Aggression. In the absence of Melissa Callahan, Heather provided an update. The group is developing: guidance for schools on how to handle cyberbullying; resource lists and guidance documents for school personnel and parents. They will also compile lists of free, high-quality training and disseminate that information. If gaps in training are identified, the group will also develop training to meet those needs.

V. New Business

- a. Non-operating districts (Franconia and Prinsburg). The center is tasked with collecting district bullying prohibition policies. Through the process of requesting policies, the center came across two districts that have boards, but do not have buildings, staff or students. Craig provided the relevant state statutes for the Council to review pertaining to these two districts. Prinsburg sends students to a private school, which is exempt in the Safe and Supportive Schools Act, so it was determined that district would not need a policy. Franconia busses their students to a Wisconsin school district. It was determined that the Wisconsin state bullying prohibition policy would be reviewed by the Minnesota Department of Education and guidance could be issued to the district if it is not on par with Minnesota's Model Policy.
- b. Dissemination and Information. Council members worked in pairs to provide information to the center about audiences that the council and center should be communicating with, including channels and contacts. Information will be compiled by the center and used to disseminate information about trainings, information and resources.
- c. What's Next? This agenda item was tabled for the next meeting.

VI. Public comment. There were no public comments.

VII. Other Business/Updates: Craig reminded the council that the next meeting is scheduled on October 27 from 3-5 p.m. at the Minnesota Department of Education.

VIII. Meeting Adjourned. Jon Hunt moved and Jeanne Swanson seconded the motion to adjourn. All voted in favor, and the meeting was closed.