

School Safety Technical Assistance Council Minutes

Wednesday, November 15, 2017

3 – 5 p.m.

Minnesota Department of Education

Conference Center A, Room 13

Members present: Leah Zhu, Darren Kermes, Tom DeGree, Bill Wyss, Lisa Engelstad, David Wicklund, Melissa Callahan, Melissa Heinen, Eric Leander, Cathy Miller, Danny Porter, Jenny Larrive (sitting in for Randy Johnson), Jake Ross.

MDE staff present: Daron Korte, Craig Wethington, Patty Mattern, Heather Hirsch, Nancy Riestenberg, Emily Bisek.

1. Welcome and Call to Order. Assistant Commissioner Korte called the meeting to order.
2. Approval of August 29, 2017, Meeting Minutes. Melissa Callahan made a motion to approve the minutes. Danny Porter seconded the motion. Minutes approved.
3. School Safety Technical Assistance Center Director Report. Director Wethington highlighted portions of the council and center's annual report to the commissioner.
4. Old Business
 - a. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Update. School Climate Specialist Heather Hirsch updated the council on the social and emotional learning resources the center is developing. The Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act calls for school districts and schools to use evidence-based social and emotional learning practices to prevent and reduce bullying, discrimination and harassment. An increasing number of school districts and schools have been seeking technical assistance on SEL from the center.
5. New Business
 - a. Investigation Procedures for District Non-Compliance of Bullying Prohibition Policy. Director Wethington shared updates made to improve the center's current Investigation Procedures for District Non-Compliance of Bullying Prohibition Policy. Under current procedures the center investigates every formal complaint made. With the update, if the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act, Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.031, does not apply to the complaint, the director will notify the complainant in writing and the case will be closed. The updated procedures will also provide the complainant an opportunity to send a rebuttal to the district or charter school response. Council members asked questions about wording in the procedures and also about the center's role in both providing technical assistance and support to school districts as well as investigating districts. Darren Kermes made a motion to table approving the updated procedures until the next meeting. Tom DeGree seconded. The motion was approved and the issue was tabled.
6. Public Comments. None.
7. Other Business/Updates. None.
8. Assistant Commissioner Korte adjourned the meeting at 4:28 p.m.

2018 Council Meeting Dates

- January 23
- April 24
- September 18
- November 13