

Governor's School and Campus Safety Taskforce
January 14th, 2013
West Reading Room, Patrick Henry Building
Minutes

Co-Chairs

The Honorable Marla Decker, Secretary of Public Safety
The Honorable Laura Fornash, Secretary of Education
The Honorable Bill Hazel, M.D., Secretary of Health and Human Resources

Members

The Honorable Ken Cuccinelli, Attorney General of Virginia
The Honorable Joseph Yost, Virginia House of Delegates
The Honorable Margaret B. Ransone, Virginia House of Delegates
The Honorable Patrick Hope, Virginia House of Delegates
The Honorable Tom Garrett, Senate of Virginia
The Honorable Richard Stuart, Senate of Virginia
The Honorable George Barker, Senate of Virginia
Patricia Wright, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
Donna Michaelis, Director of the Virginia Center for School Safety
Robert Northern, for Colonel W. Steven Flaherty, Superintendent of the Virginia Department of State Police
Garth Wheeler, Director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services
Mark Gooch, Director of the Department of Juvenile Justice
Jack King, for Michael Cline, State Coordinator of the Department of Emergency Management
James W. Stewart, III, Commissioner of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
Maureen Dempsey, MD, FAAP, Acting State Health Commissioner
Peter Blake, Director of the State Council on Higher Education
Sarah Gross, PTA Legislative Liaison
Michelle Prescott, Nurse, Rena B. Wright Primary School; PTA Health and Safety Chair
Vincent Darby, Principal, G. H. Reid Elementary School, Richmond
Keith Perrigan, Ed.D., Principal, Patrick Henry High School, Washington; President, Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals
Dr. Deborah Pettit, Superintendent, Louisa County Schools
Dianne Smith, Member of Chesterfield School Board; Retired Principal
Leonard Stewart, Lexington City School Board
Regina Blackwell Brown, Educational Specialist for School Counseling, Henrico County Public Schools
Meg Gruber, Teacher, Forest Park High School, Prince William; VEA President
Judi M. Lynch, Ph.D., Principal, Saint Gertrude High School

Dr. Sandy Ward, Director of the School Psychology program, College of William & Mary
Dewey Cornell, Ph.D., Professor of Education, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia; Director, Virginia Youth Violence Project
Charles J Klink, Assistant Vice Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs, Virginia Commonwealth University
Sheriff Brian Heatt, Tazewell County
Sheriff Mike Chapman, Loudoun County
Chief Jim Williams, Chief of Police, City of Staunton
Chief Don Challis, Chief of Police, College of William and Mary
Joel Branscom, Commonwealth's Attorney, Botetourt County
Chief Steve Cover, Fire Chief, City of Virginia Beach
Edward "Bubby" Bish, Virginia Association of Volunteer Rescue Squads
Captain Steve Carey, Stafford County Sheriff's Department (former School Resource Officer)
Charles Werner, Charlottesville Fire Chief (Member of Secure Commonwealth Panel)
Allen Hill, Father of Rachel Hill, Victim of Virginia Tech Shooting
Alexa Rennie, Student, James River High School
Jillian McGarrity, Student, Lynchburg College
Scott Brabrand, Superintendent Lynchburg City

Meeting Convened by Secretaries Laura Fornash, Marla Decker and Dr. Bill Hazel

Secretary Decker opened the meeting, introduced her co-chairs, and welcomed members of the Taskforce. The Taskforce then introduced themselves.

Jennifer Aulgur, from Secretary of the Commonwealth's office, issued the oath of office to the Taskforce members.

James Schliessmann, Assistant Attorney General, FOIA officer, briefed the Taskforce on issues related to FOIA and provided them with information related to public bodies.

No questions regarding FOIA.

Secretary Decker began her discussion of the organization of the Taskforce. She thanked the public for being here, and thanked each Taskforce member for the work that they are agreeing to do. The Taskforce has an aggressive schedule.

The Taskforce is divided into three workgroups: education, mental health and public safety. Public input is welcome and encouraged. The Taskforce is providing opportunities for that to be done. This opportunity is provided through an on-line medium – there is a place on our various websites that references the School and Campus Safety Taskforce, and it provides a "click here" where you can provide your input. There will also be a public comment period at the end of the business portion of these meetings.

The Taskforce and Workgroups are not the place for larger policy discussions. This Taskforce will not address specific bills that have been introduced unless the General Assembly asks the Taskforce to do so.

Finally, the group must be realistic. The Taskforce will need to prioritize items requiring legislation first and stay within its means. It is important to keep in mind current budgetary constraints.

Finally, the purpose of the workgroup is to not be reactionary, but rather keep a reasonable and calculated approach, basing recommendations on analysis and evidence.

Secretary Decker welcomed the Governor and the Attorney General.

Opening and Charge of the Taskforce – Governor Robert F. McDonnell

The Governor thanked the team for its willingness to serve to get done the work of the Taskforce. He apologized for convening them on such short notice but due to the General Assembly session, he felt that time was of the essence. When the Governor introduced the budget amendments, he reserved some money until the interim report is made at the end of January, after the Taskforce preliminary recommendations come out. Governor Kaine and he worked closely together when he was AG and worked together to come up with some initial recommendation shortly after Virginia Tech. He asked the Taskforce to see if it can do some changes administratively or see if DCJS can administer in the area of changes in law enforcement standards. He knows the Taskforce members all share the common goal of making sure that every young child can graduate and can get there in a safe and secure environment.

Secretary Fornash thanked Secretary Decker for laying the groundwork for the public and the Taskforce. Regarding the Education Workgroup, meetings are scheduled for January 17 at 1:00 p.m., and January 24 at 10:00 a.m. The Education workgroup will be focused on looking at existing resources as they relate to crisis management and emergency response. It will look for gaps and opportunities for things for the Taskforce to work on.

Resources for School Safety; Briefing for the Governor's Taskforce

Dr. Cynthia Cave, Department of Education, gave a presentation on behalf of the Department.

Questions for Dr. Cave:

There was a question regarding the current safety audits for schools.

Virginia Schools and Campus Safety: Snapshot of Current Data in Preparation for Future Changes

Donna Michaelis, Director of the Center for School Safety with the Department of Criminal Justice Services, gave a presentation on behalf of DCJS.

Secretary Decker asked if there were any questions from the Taskforce for Ms. Michaelis.

There were some questions regarding the interpretation of the data presented, and evaluation of trainings presented.

The Mental Health Perspective

James Stewart, Commissioner of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, presented on behalf of the Agency.

Secretary Hazel then introduced the individuals staffing the mental health workgroup.

He and Attorney General Cuccinelli will co-chair the Workgroup. Allison Tysinger, John Pezzoli and Megan McGuire will staff the Workgroup. The meetings are scheduled on Thursday, January 17 and Thursday, January 24 from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Secretary Hazel invited questions of the Commissioner from the Taskforce members.

There was a discussion about use of effective programs, and innovative ways to reach out and provide innovative access to mental health services, like telemedicine.

For the next Taskforce meeting, the primary responsibility is to review the recommendations from the workgroups.

The Attorney General will make available counsel at each of the workgroups. Steve Witmer will be providing legal support to public safety workgroup; Noelle Shaw-Belle will be working with Education workgroup; Allison Tysinger will be working with mental health workgroup.

Public Comment

Mary Ann Bergeron with Virginia Association of CSBs offered that if there is anything needed on behalf of local CSBs, they'll be glad to facilitate.

The meeting was adjourned.