

**PROTECTING OUR FUTURE: ADDRESSING SCHOOL
SECURITY CHALLENGES IN AMERICA**

FIELD HEARING
BEFORE THE
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,
RESPONSE, AND COMMUNICATIONS**
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
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PROTECTING OUR FUTURE: ADDRESSING SCHOOL SECURITY CHALLENGES IN AMERICA

Monday, July 9, 2018

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,
RESPONSE, AND COMMUNICATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Newark, NJ.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:04 a.m., in the Agile Strategy Lab, Room L70, Central King Building, New Jersey Institute of Technology, 100 Summit Street, Newark, NJ, Hon. Daniel M. Donovan, Jr. [Chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Donovan [presiding] and Payne.

Mr. DONOVAN. The Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications will come to order.

The subcommittee is meeting today to examine efforts to enhance school security. I appreciate the effort taken on behalf of all those involved to have this important field hearing take place, and I want to thank the New Jersey Institute of Technology for hosting us today.

I also want to thank my colleague and my friend, Don Payne, whose home town we are conducting this hearing in, for his concern for our children, particularly since I am the father of a 3-year-old. Don's concern is my concern, as it is all the people here today. So thank you, my friend, for leading us here today for this important hearing.

This is an official Congressional hearing, so we must abide by certain rules of the Committee on Homeland Security and the House of Representatives. I kindly wish to remind our guests today that demonstrations from the audience, including applause and verbal outbursts, as well as any use of signs or placards, are a violation of the rules of the House of Representatives. It is important that we respect the decorum and the rules of this committee. I have also been requested to state that photography and cameras are limited to accredited press only.

I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

School may be out for the summer, but for parents, the security of their children while at school is never far from their minds. No parent should drop off a child at school and fear for his or her safety. But, unfortunately, we have seen too many incidents of violence at our schools this year alone.

Securing our educational institutions and ensuring a safe, healthy, and productive learning environment for our children is a

priority for me and for all of our witnesses here today, along with Mr. Payne.

Whether it be a grant funding, guidance, technical assistance, threat and vulnerability assessments, training, or exercises, the Federal Government has a number of resources available to support States and localities as they work to secure our schools.

Working together in the aftermath of the tragedy at Sandy Hook, Federal agencies developed the Guide for Developing High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans. Protective Security Advisors from the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Infrastructure Protection have completed more than 1,000 visits with K-12 schools to discuss security.

In light of the recent tragedies in Florida and Texas, Federal agencies have taken an "all hands on deck" approach to this issue and have made a concerted effort to better coordinate the resources available for schools, including through the Federal Commission on School Safety.

The Fiscal Year 2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act provided more than \$2 billion in funding for grants that can be used to enhance the security of our schools through the Title IV grants at the Department of Education, STOP School Violence Act grants at the Department of Justice, or Homeland Security Grant Program at the Department of Homeland Security. However, I am concerned that the States and localities may not be aware that these funds exist or that they may be used to enhance school security.

This subcommittee has a history of working together, including on this very important issue. Along with one of my predecessors, the Ranking Member requested a review of Federal efforts to assist K-12 schools in conducting emergency planning and addressing security needs. Last Congress, he and I requested a follow-up review of efforts to assist institutions of higher education to address security needs. Both reports acknowledged the work that the Departments of Education, Justice, and Homeland Security are doing to support schools. However, they found that, in many cases, there was a lack of awareness of availability of resources and a need to better coordinate Federal efforts.

I am eager to learn more about how the three Federal agencies represented here today are working to coordinate the various forms of assistance so that they will be most beneficial to our State and local partners. I am also interested in how these agencies are conducting outreach to educate our State and local partners on these resources.

Efforts to secure schools must begin at the local level, and I know that States and localities across the country have taken steps to address this important issue, including through security enhancements in school buildings, the assignment of school resource officers, increased information sharing with law enforcement, training and exercises. It will be beneficial to hear about the innovative practices our second panel of witnesses are undertaking to provide security in their areas.

I am looking forward to our dialog today and the opportunity to work together to ensure the safety and security of all of our children.

[The statement of Chairman Donovan follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

JULY 9, 2018

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I am looking forward to our dialog today and the opportunity to work together to ensure the safety and security of our children.

Mr. DONOVAN. The Chair now recognizes Ranking Member, my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Payne, for any statement that he may have.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for agreeing first to hold this hearing today in northern New Jersey in my Congressional district, in my home town. As a parent of triplets, the concerns regarding school security have kept me up many nights. Tragically, school violence has taken the lives of far too many American children. It has been 19 years since the Columbine High School massacre which left 13 victims dead, and sadly, our children are still incredibly vulnerable while attending school. Unfortunately, there

has been a significant uptick in violence in our Nation's schools in the last 2 decades.

The 2012 Sandy Hook shooting left a staggering 20 children and 6 adults dead, yet Congress fell short of passing legislation to combat gun violence in schools.

This year there was about one school shooting a week in this country, including the shooting in Marjory Stoneham Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida that left 14 children and 3 teachers dead. Still, the response from Congress and the Trump administration has been lacking.

Beyond making more grant funding available, Congress has done little to address the issue of keeping guns out of the hands of bad actors targeting schools. Even funding is not guaranteed. As we speak, the House Appropriations Committee is planning to consider an education spending bill that would cut school safety spending by \$110 million. The idea of cutting financial support around school security amid the uptick in violence in and around schools is unconscionable. It is also worth noting that these proposed cuts come at a time when Congress is increasing spending for its own security. I hope my Homeland Security Committee colleagues will join me in opposing the cuts to school security funding.

I hope to hear today from our witnesses about what Congress needs to respond to the threat of school violence with the urgency needed. Additionally, in looking at the issue of school safety, we need to be mindful that many children in urban settings experience safety threats daily which impacts their school performance. We need to incorporate threat of violence to children in urban areas into the conversation of school safety.

I have introduced legislation, H.R. 3613, the Safer Neighborhoods Gun Buy-Back Act of 2017, to address neighborhood violence and to keep weapons off the streets. I would welcome the support of all the Members on this important bill.

While many challenges remain at the Federal level, I am pleased to say that New Jersey is one of the leading States in school safety. New Jersey has implemented all the major security measures identified by the Secure Schools Alliance. Further, New Jersey has recently passed a series of gun safety measures, making it a leader in gun reform. It is my hope that New Jersey will continue to set the example in this area.

In my time on the committee, this is the first hearing that we have had on this issue of school safety. Mr. Chairman, I hope we can continue to work together to ensure that our committee will see this issue as a homeland security priority.

I want to thank all the witnesses for attending today's hearing. I look forward to hearing what each of you are doing to address and further protect children in all communities around the country facing challenges around school violence. We must do more to protect the next generation. This country and communities like the ones I serve are counting on us.

With that, I yield back.

[The statement of Ranking Member Payne follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

JULY 9, 2018

As a parent of triplets, the concerns regarding school security has kept me up many nights. Tragically, school violence has taken the lives of far too many American children. It has been 19 years since the Columbine High School massacre, which left 13 victims dead, and sadly our children are still incredibly vulnerable while attending school.

Unfortunately, there has been a significant uptick in violence in our Nation's schools in the last 2 decades. The 2012 Sandy Hook shooting left a staggering 20 children and 6 adults dead, yet Congress fell short of passing legislation to combat gun violence in schools. This year, there was about 1 school shooting a week in this country, including the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida that left 14 children and 3 teachers dead. Still, the response from Congress and the Trump administration has been lacking.

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Additionally, in looking at the issue of school safety, we need to be mindful that many children in urban settings experience safety threats daily, which impacts their school performance. We need to incorporate violence and the threat of violence children experience in urban areas into the conversation of school safety.

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I thank all the witnesses for attending today's hearing. I look forward to hearing what each of you are doing to address and further protect children in all communities around the country facing challenges around school violence. We must do more to protect the next generation. This country and communities, like the ones I serve, are counting on us.

Mr. DONOVAN. The gentleman yields.

Although we are the only two Members of Congress here, Members of the committee may be submitting opening statements and questions, and they may be submitted for the record.

[The statement of Ranking Member Thompson follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER BENNIE G. THOMPSON

JULY 9, 2018

Good morning. I would like to thank the Subcommittee Chairman and Ranking Member for holding today's hearing on school security.

School violence continues to take the lives of so many young people, leaving behind devastated families and communities. Unfortunately, Congress has refused to address this issue head-on, despite the devastating increase in school shootings over the last 20 years, including at least 1 shooting about every week of the 2018 school year.

In the aftermath of the massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglass High School in Parkland, Florida, where 17 people were killed, President Trump made several pro-

posals geared toward improving school preparedness. One of those proposals called for the establishment of a Federal Commission on School Safety, a group comprised of Cabinet Secretaries tasked with developing school safety strategies.

Predictably, the Trump administration's school safety commission has stated that it will not study how access to guns affects school violence, which is completely senseless. Why are we wasting time discussing school violence when the Federal Commission on School Safety will not engage on the common factor in every catastrophic school shooting? The Commission's willful ignorance has caused students and parents alike to criticize the Commission's efforts. I hope that the administration will wake up and reconsider its stance on research guns and school violence.

In the mean time, Congress needs to do its part to protect children in schools, which includes making sure there are adequate resources for communities to combat school violence and enacting common-sense gun safety legislation. I hope today's hearing will serve a launching point for meaningful action in school safety and security by the Committee on Homeland Security.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today and learning how Congress can be a better partner in solving the tragic problem of school violence.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DONOVAN. We are pleased to have two distinguished panels of witnesses before us today on this important topic.

The first panel includes Mr. Jason Botel, principal deputy assistant secretary of the Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. Welcome, sir.

Mr. Alan Hanson, principal deputy assistant attorney general in the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs. Welcome, sir.

Mr. Robert Kolasky, deputy assistant secretary for the Office of Infrastructure Protection in the Department of Homeland Security's National Protection and Programs Directorate. Welcome, sir.

Thank you all for being here today. The witnesses' full written testimony will appear in the record.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Botel to testify in his opening statement.

STATEMENT OF JASON BOTEL, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mr. BOTEL. Thank you, Chairman Donovan and Ranking Member Payne. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to share what we at the U.S. Department of Education are doing to help States, school districts, and schools keep our children safe.

The violent incidents occurring in our Nation's schools in recent months and years, as Secretary DeVos has observed, are "devastating reminders that our Nation must come together to address the underlying issues that create a culture of violence." Today, I am here to share what the Department has been doing to promote school safety and security and what we have learned about what works.

First, over the past 5 years, following the terrible tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, the Department has maintained a portfolio of competitive grant programs designed to help States and school districts improve school climate and safety. Thanks to Congress, which provided increased funding for school safety in fiscal year 2018, later this summer we will make new awards under two of these programs.

First, we expect to make grants to States for school emergency management to an estimated 16 States. These grants will build State and local capacity to develop and implement high-quality school emergency operations plans.

Second, the Department will make new State-level school climate transformation grants to provide technical assistance and other support for local implementation of evidence-based behavioral practices to improve school climate and behavioral outcomes for all students.

You also will be pleased to know that on July 1, we awarded \$1.1 billion in State formula grants under the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants authorized by Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, ESEA. This was a \$700 million increase over the \$400 million provided for Title IV, Part A in fiscal year 2017, and will provide nearly every school district in the country the significant new resources that can be used for locally-determined school safety activities.

To support these efforts, the Department is developing additional guidance on how States, districts, and schools can use Title IV, Part A funds to promote school safety and security. In addition, the Department's senior leadership has been personally involved in reaching out to schools and communities affected by violence. For example, after the tragic school shooting at Marjory Stoneham Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, Secretary DeVos met with the superintendent and principal to offer support from the Department. Following the shootings at Santa Fe High School in Texas, Deputy Secretary Mick Zais and I made a similar visit to meet with the superintendent and principal in Santa Fe. In each case, the Department followed up with material support, making \$1 million awards to both districts under our Project SERV program, which helps districts and schools restore the learning environment following a traumatic natural disaster or violent incident.

Most importantly, at least for our long-term efforts to reduce the incidence of school violence and keep students safe, the President established the Federal Commission on School Safety, which is responsible for providing evidence-based actionable recommendations to keep students safe and secure at school. Under Secretary DeVos' leadership, the Commission held its initial meeting on March 28 and immediately arranged a series of meetings, field visits, and listening sessions that over the past 3 months have generated input from students, parents, teachers, school safety personnel, administrators, law enforcement officials, mental health professionals, school counselors, security professionals, and researchers. These sessions have explored evidence-based and promising approaches to safety and security that include building the social-emotional competencies of students and staff, developing student character, preventing bullying via social media, engaging school safety personnel in schools, studying the effects of violent entertainment and media coverage of mass shootings, and improving school climate.

At the Commission's request, the Department also is considering conducting a survey of all State educational agencies on how they are complying with the Unsafe School Choice option requirement in Section 8532 of the ESEA. This long-standing provision of law requires each State to have a State-wide policy that any student who

attends a persistently dangerous school or who is the victim of a violent crime while on school grounds be allowed to transfer to a safe public school in the same school district. Such a survey could help highlight both weaknesses and best practices related to implementation of this important provision of the ESEA while also helping to identify ways that the Department can and should provide technical assistance in this area.

The Commission will continue to collect information and data over the next few months on evidence-based interventions and best practices in a wide range of areas related to school climate and student safety. Commission members then will review this information, identify the most promising and actionable recommendations for State and local leaders responsible for school safety, and deliver its final report to the President.

The Department of Education will always stand ready to do everything possible to help districts and schools recover from violent incidents. However, as the President has recognized in creating the Commission, our goal must be to prevent further violence in our schools. This hearing is yet another demonstration that Congress shares this goal, and I am confident that by working together with State and local leaders across the Nation, we will be successful in achieving it.

Thank you again for this opportunity to discuss this important issue. I look forward to answering any questions you might have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Botel follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JASON BOTEL

Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, and other Members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to share what we at the U.S. Department of Education are doing to help States, school districts, and schools keep our children safe.

Mass violent incidents occurring in our Nation's schools in recent months and years, as Secretary DeVos noted, are "devastating reminders that our Nation must come together to address the underlying issues that create a culture of violence." Today, I am here to share what the Department has been doing to promote school safety and security and what we have learned about what works.

First, with the support of Congress, for several years the Department of Education has been actively supporting States and school districts in promoting school safety and security, including:

- Since 2014, funding States with the Grants to States for School Emergency Management Program to increase their capacity to assist districts in developing and implementing high-quality school emergency operations plans. Funding has been provided to 26 States thus far. States that have not previously received a grant under this program will receive a priority for a grant in fiscal year 2018. We expect to make 16 new awards.
- Since 2014, funding 12 States and 71 districts with School Climate Transformation Grants that support evidence-based behavioral practices to improve school climate and behavioral outcomes for all students, a key aspect to violence prevention.
- Since 2014, funding 22 school districts with Project Prevent Grants to increase their capacity to identify, assess, and serve students who have been exposed to pervasive violence; help to ensure that affected students are offered mental health services for trauma or anxiety; support conflict resolution programs; and implement other school-based violence prevention strategies that will reduce the likelihood that students will commit violent acts in the future.
- Over the past 3 years, funding more than 30 awards to States, school districts, and institutions of higher education with Project School Emergency Response to Violence (SERV) grants to help restore the learning environment after it has been disrupted by a violent or traumatic crisis, including to support the provision of mental health services after a learning environment has been disrupted by violence or an otherwise traumatic crisis.

- Over the past 8 years, funding to the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments to provide technical assistance and support to States, school districts, and schools across this country in helping to provide safe and healthy school environments that prevent substance abuse, support student academic success, and prevent violence. Specifically, the Center supports States, school districts, and schools in using the U.S. Department of Education School Climate Surveys, a suite of free, high-quality and adaptable school climate surveys and an associated web-based platform. The School Climate Surveys measure 5 areas of school safety that can be used to assess school safety needs.
- Since 2004, funding the Readiness Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center, which supports school districts, schools, and institutions of higher education across the country in preventing, protecting, mitigating, responding, recovering from emergencies, and school shootings. The REMS Technical Assistance Center has guided emergency planning and helped schools consider what technologies are available and the role of security personnel.

Second, since the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law, the Department has been planning for and actively implementing the Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment program. This program is intended to improve students' academic achievement by increasing the capacity of State educational agencies, local educational agencies, and local communities to provide all students with access to a well-rounded education; improve school conditions, including school safety and security, for student learning; and improve the use of technology to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students. The Department issued non-regulatory guidance on Title IV, Part A, in 2016 that addressed issues relating to improving school conditions for learning, and we are currently developing additional guidance on how States, districts, and schools can use Title IV, Part A funds to promote school safety and security.

Third, after the tragic school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, Secretary DeVos met with the school superintendent and principal to offer support from the Department. Deputy Secretary Mick Zais and I visited Santa Fe High School in Texas to meet with the superintendent and principal to do the same. After visits to Parkland and Santa Fe, the Department provided SERV Grants, in the amount of \$1 million each, to both school districts.

Soon after the Parkland shooting, the President established the Federal Commission on School Safety and appointed Secretary Betsy DeVos as chair of the Commission. The Commission is responsible for providing meaningful and actionable recommendations to keep students safe and secure at school. By way of a series of formal meetings, listening sessions, and field visits, the members of the Commission are gathering information from a long list of stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, school safety personnel, administrators, law enforcement officials, mental health professionals, school counselors, security professionals, and researchers.

The Commission held an organizational meeting on March 28, 2018 and arranged a series of meetings, site visits, and listening sessions which have occurred over the last several months. Formal Commission meetings provide a forum for presentations from subject-matter experts, individuals affected by school violence, and other key stakeholders. Listening sessions provide opportunities for the public to be heard and provide recommendations to the Commission. Field visits involve travel to schools and other sites to observe and learn first-hand about current best practices in school safety.

On May 17, 2018, the Commission hosted a discussion to learn from survivors and family members affected by the mass shootings at Columbine High School, Virginia Tech University, Sandy Hook Elementary School, and Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, in addition to authors of official reports following incidents of school violence.

The first field visit occurred on May 31, 2018, at Frank Hebron-Harman Elementary School in Hanover, MD. Commission members and their representatives heard from administrators, principals, teachers, students, and a National expert about Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a framework designed to improve social, emotional, and academic outcomes for all students.

On June 6, 2018, the Commission hosted a public listening session at the Department's headquarters. In total, 62 individuals shared their views on school safety. The forum was broadcasted on-line, and information was publicized on how members of the public can share additional comments with the Commission.

On June 21, 2018, the Commission held a formal meeting at the White House. The meeting titled, "The Ecology of Schools: Fostering a Culture of Human Flourishing and Developing Charter," featured three different panels of experts focusing

on effects of entertainment, media, cyber bullying and social media on violence and student safety.

On June 26, 2018, in Lexington, Kentucky, the Commission conducted roundtable discussions with State and local officials as well as gathered information from the public on how schools, districts, institutions of higher education, and other local and State government agencies can improve school safety.

These sessions have explored evidence-based and promising approaches to school safety and security that include:

- Building the social emotional competencies of students and staff
- Developing student character
- Preventing bullying via social media
- Engaging school safety personnel in schools
- Studying the effects of violent entertainment and media coverage of mass shootings, and
- Improving school climate.

At the Commission's request, the Department is also considering a survey to all State educational agencies on how they are complying with the Unsafe School Choice Option requirement in section 8532 of ESSA, which requires that each State that receives funds under ESSA (and all States choose to do so) have a State-wide policy that any student who attends a "persistently dangerous" school, or who is the victim of a violent crime while on school grounds, be allowed to attend a safe public school in the same school district. A review of States' Unsafe School Choice Option policies is necessary to ensure that State policies are consistent with the law's requirements and to identify ways that the Department can and should provide technical assistance in this area.

The information and data collected will inform the Commission's recommendations and best practices, which will be included in the final report.

Based on the best available research and experience from implementing these activities, the Department has learned that prevention is key: Schools need to be prepared and provide needed student supports. For example, we have received reports from school district leaders that while schools may have experienced a traumatic incident, the emergency planning training they received from the REMS TA Center helped prevent or lessen the trauma the school experienced had they not been prepared to respond to these incidents.

Working to improve school climate, build social emotional skills and provide access to mental health services; knowing the signs of youth violence; and being prepared with emergency protocols can help to identify and reduce safety and security risks in schools. Through the activities I have described today, we will continue to work tirelessly with our State and local school partners to ensure that children are safe and secure when they are at school.

Thank you again for providing an opportunity for us to discuss this important issue. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Hanson for his opening statement.

STATEMENT OF ALAN R. HANSON, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Mr. HANSON. Thank you, Chairman Donovan, and thank you, Ranking Member Payne. It is a privilege to be here in Newark to tell you about the research and grant programs we are supporting at the Department of Justice to prevent and reduce school violence.

My name is Alan Hanson, and I am the principal deputy assistant attorney general for the Office of Justice Programs. OJP is the funding, policy, research, and statistical arm of the Justice Department. We work closely with our partners at the COPS Office to support State, local, and Tribal public safety efforts. As you will hear, OJP and the COPS Office are devoting substantial resources to addressing the crisis of school violence in America.

First of all, I commend the Members of this committee for appreciating the urgency of this issue and for taking steps to meet the challenges our schools and communities are facing. Congress has

already taken a very important step by including the Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing School Violence Act, also known as the STOP School Violence Act, in this spring's omnibus spending bill.

As you well know, the Act authorizes funds to address school violence and improve school security. Of the \$75 million appropriated under the law, \$50 million will be administered by OJP's Bureau of Justice Assistance in the form of grants through States, local units of government, and Tribal governments. The balance of the funding is being administered by the COPS Office.

BJA recently released two grant solicitations: No. 1, the BJA STOP Prevention Training and Response to Mental Health Crisis Program, which will train teachers to prevent student violence against others and self and provide specialized training for school officials and responding to mental health crises; it will also provide education to students with the intent to prevent violence against others and self.

The second program, the BJA STOP Threat Assessment and Technology Reporting Program, will help States, communities, and Tribes develop threat assessments and create crisis intervention teams. Additionally under this program, projects will be funded to develop and implement anonymous reporting methods such as mobile applications, hotlines, or websites.

We are requiring that these programs be evidence-based and involve cooperation with law enforcement, and we plan to distribute grants evenly across geographic regions. Grantees will be required to put up a 25 percent cash or in-kind match. Federal resources will fund the other 75 percent of each project.

The \$25 million being administered by the COPS Office will go toward helping States, Tribes, and units of local government purchase equipment and technology, provide training, and take other measures to improve school security. These new investments will build on previous COPS efforts which have included funding for almost 7,400 school resource officers across the country.

It is important to mention that OJP has already been working to understand the causes of school violence and to find research-based solutions to school violence problems. Our National Institute of Justice has funded more than 90 research projects totaling nearly \$250 million under the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative. These projects cover a wide range of topics, from threat assessments and school discipline to bullying, mental health, and effective use of school resource officers. More than half of these projects examine the impact of interventions on shootings and other forms of school violence.

The first of these research grants were made in 2015, with most being carried out over a period of 3 to 5 years. We expect the first of the final reports to become available in 2019, with further releases in the 3 to 4 years that follow. Once they are available, we expect those findings to be an invaluable source of information for school administrators, law enforcement officials, and other practitioners.

In the mean time, information on existing evidence-based school safety efforts is available at our research clearinghouse, *CrimeSolutions.gov*.

We are also carrying out research through NIJ's Firearm Violence Portfolio. Several research programs are under way that we hope will give us a better understanding of mass violence and illegal firearm use by youth. Our goal is to develop evidence-based strategies that can be used by communities throughout the Nation.

School violence has claimed too many lives and robbed our Nation of far too much potential. I am grateful to the committee's efforts to secure the resources we need to tackle this challenge. DOJ is committed to protecting students, faculty, and staff, to making our schools the safe havens of learning that they were intended to be.

I thank you for your time and look forward to answering any questions you might have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hanson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALAN R. HANSON

JULY 9, 2018

Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, Members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to discuss research-based approaches to preventing school violence and school safety grant programs administered by the Department of Justice (Department). My name is Alan Hanson, and I am the principal deputy assistant attorney general for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP).

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, enacted on March 23 of this year, included the Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence Act of 2018, which authorizes funds to address school violence and improve school security by providing students, school personnel, and community members with the tools they need to recognize, respond quickly to, and prevent acts of violence.

OJP's grant programs and initiatives that address school safety are administered by several components: The National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), and the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). These offices collaborate with other Department components, like the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office, and Federal agencies to identify and develop school safety approaches, with the goal of reducing crime and ensuring public safety.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 also provides \$75 million to the STOP School Violence Act program to address school violence. BJA received \$50 million to provide grants to States, units of local government, and Indian tribes. These grants are used for the training of teachers and the education of students to prevent student violence, and to support threat assessments, crisis intervention teams, and the use of technology for anonymous reporting. The balance (\$25 million) was provided to the COPS Office to provide grants for law enforcement training and coordination to prevent school violence and for a variety of school safety equipment (e.g., metal detectors, locks, lighting) and alerting technologies.

To address the legislative goals of the STOP School Violence Act, OJP developed two solicitations. The first is the BJA STOP Prevention Training and Response to Mental Health Crisis Program and the second is the BJA STOP Threat Assessment and Technology Reporting Program. Both solicitations opened on June 7, 2018, with a closing date of July 23, 2018.

The BJA STOP Prevention Training and Response to Mental Health Crisis Program will fund States, units of local government, and Federally-recognized Indian Tribes to provide training to teachers and administrators. The training will help teachers and administrators identify and react to potential acts of violence and situations that may involve mental health issues. The program will also help educate students on violence prevention measures. This could include reporting potential threats and situations that students believe could lead to acts of violence.

The BJA STOP Threat Assessment and Technology Reporting Program will provide funding to States, units of local government, and Federally-recognized Indian Tribes to develop and conduct threat assessments and implement crisis intervention teams. These efforts will encourage cooperation and partnership with local/Tribal law enforcement and the community to assist with the proposed programs. Under this solicitation, grantees can apply for funds to develop and implement a reporting program that can include mobile applications, web-based programs, or hotlines intended to ensure that any individual reporting can remain anonymous. This tech-

nology may be useful in sharing vital data with law enforcement to prevent incidents.

Funding under the COPS Office may be used for coordination with local and Tribal law enforcement; training for local and Tribal law enforcement officers to prevent school violence against others and self; the placement and use of metal detectors, locks, lighting and other deterrent measures, or target hardening; the acquisition and installation of technology for expedited notification of local and Tribal law enforcement during an emergency; and any other measures that may provide a significant improvement in security.

The Act requires that grants be evidence-based and have, to the extent practicable, an equitable geographic distribution among the regions of the United States and among urban, suburban, and rural areas. To ensure that there is an equitable distribution, the BJA solicitations are organized by categories based on population. This allows applicants to be evaluated with others whose jurisdictions are similar in size and face similar challenges. The Act also states that the Federal Government can provide only 75 percent of the funding for each project, thus requiring a 25 percent cash or in-kind match.

The Act stresses coordination and partnership with local and Tribal law enforcement and emphasizes evaluation as a program element. All programs must reflect an evidence-based approach. Performance measures will help the Department identify successful programs and practices that can be shared Nation-wide.

Prior to the STOP School Violence programs created this year, NIJ was actively involved in school safety research. Since 2014, NIJ's primary investments in school safety have been through the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI). CSSI is a research-focused initiative designed to produce knowledge and identify evidence-based programs that can potentially benefit K–12 schools and school districts across the Nation for years to come.

Congress first funded CSSI in 2014 in the wake of the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut. Altogether, CSSI was funded from fiscal year 2014 to fiscal year 2017, and that funding resulted in more than 90 CSSI grant-funded projects totaling nearly \$250 million.

CSSI projects build on other research, supported by NIJ and others, to inform school safety efforts. CSSI projects cover a wide range of topics, including school shootings, threat assessment, school resource officers and police, mental and behavioral health, emergency operations planning, school discipline, bullying, technology, and school climate. Fifty-five percent of CSSI projects examine the impact of interventions on shootings and other forms of school violence. Rigorous research designs are a hallmark of these projects; almost half use randomized experimental designs.¹

CSSI funding supports evaluations and research on the causes and consequences of school violence. CSSI projects, like any research-focused program, typically take 3 to 5 years to complete, and to ensure that they produce scientifically valid results that can be translated into effective policy. The earliest projects started in 2015, and only a small number have reached completion; therefore, no final reports have yet been published. The first final reports will be available within the next year or so with others to follow in the next few years.

NIJ maintains CrimeSolutions.gov to help practitioners and policy makers understand what works in justice-related programs and practices. CrimeSolutions.gov is a valuable tool for school administrators and others to have for a more comprehensive understanding about evidence-based school safety efforts. Because this information is not static, CrimeSolutions.gov will be continuously updated as results from CSSI projects and other research efforts become available.

In addition to CSSI, two other NIJ research portfolios will contribute to our understanding about keeping students safe: (1) The NIJ firearm violence portfolio will contribute to our understanding of mass shooting incidents and perpetrators as well as the illegal use of firearms by youths; and (2) the NIJ victims of crime portfolio includes a study examining the short- and long-term impacts of school shootings.

OVC has the capacity to support schools that wish to plan for, and need to respond to, mass violence and terrorism. Following any incident of mass violence, including school shootings, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Victim Services Division collaborates with OVC on emergency response as well as immediate and long-term community needs. OVC's "Helping Victims of Mass Violence & Terrorism Toolkit" is a comprehensive resource to aid communities in the aftermath of incidents of mass violence. In addition, through OVC's Training and Technical Assistance Center, consultants can provide free technical assistance for schools and communities to better prepare them for these incidents.

¹Information on all CSSI-funded projects is available here: <https://nij.gov/funding/awards/pages/awards-list.aspx?tags=Comprehensive%20School%20Safety%20Initiative>.

Through the Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP), OVC supports victims and jurisdictions that have experienced incidents of domestic terrorism or mass violence. In fact, OVC has made AEAP awards following incidents of mass shootings violence at Virginia Tech, and Sandy Hook Elementary School. OVC is also in consultation regarding recent incidents that occurred in Parkland, Florida; Santa Fe, Texas; and Marshal County, Kentucky.

OJJPD also funds Gang Resistance Education and Training, an evidence-based and effective gang and violence prevention program built around school-based, law enforcement officer-instructed classroom curricula. The Department's National Gang Center, jointly funded by OJJDP and BJA, disseminates information, knowledge, and outcome-driven practices that engage and empower those in local communities with chronic and emerging gang problems.

This information helps create comprehensive solutions to prevent gang violence, reduce gang involvement, and suppress gang-related crime. Additionally, OJJDP supported the International Association of Chiefs of Police in the development of a tool kit on Enhancing Police Responses to Children Exposed to Violence, which may be helpful to law enforcement officials addressing school shootings.

The Department is also collaborating with other Federal agencies and continues to consult with key school safety stakeholders across the country to learn about what challenges they face when it comes to keeping their schools and students safe. Findings from NIJ-funded studies will inform our decisions on how to best design future programs and equip schools and communities with the necessary tools to address and avoid future tragedies. Our goal is to develop evidence-based programs and comprehensive strategies that can be replicated throughout the Nation.

The Department's commitment to ensuring safety in our schools remains a top priority. We are committed to addressing these issues and will continue to work with Congress, States, and communities to maintain supportive and safe environments for our children.

Thank you again for this opportunity to discuss these programs, and I look forward to addressing your questions.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Mr. Hanson.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Kolasky for his opening statement.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT KOLASKY, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, OFFICE OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION, NATIONAL PROTECTION AND PROGRAMS DIRECTORATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. KOLASKY. Thank you. Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, thank you for today's opportunity to testify before you regarding the Department of Homeland Security's on-going efforts to improve school security and preparedness in the face of the horrific massacres that we have seen in Florida and Texas earlier this year. Protecting against such horrors must be part of homeland security.

In America, children should not have to worry about their safety when in school, and yet our Nation has witnessed and mourned the deaths and injuries of dozens of students and teachers. This year alone, there have been two mass shootings—in Parkland, Florida and Santa Fe, Texas—that remind us that we must do more to protect our students.

DHS's primary mission is to safeguard the American people. As the acting assistant secretary for the Office of Infrastructure Protection and the National Protection Programs Directorate, I help lead National efforts to reduce the risk to the Nation's critical infrastructure to include efforts to enhance security at commercial facilities and public gatherings around the country. These efforts have provided DHS with deep expertise and extensive capabilities around security that can be leveraged by schools to improve the safety of students and teachers.

While DHS does not and should not provide direct security to schools, we do support those organizations with direct missions to keep schools safe and secure. I have worked with critical infrastructure owners and operators, which has endowed us with the know-how to elevate the overall level of security around the country. We are using this experience to support a unified response to incidents and to better equip the community-level response when prevention efforts falter.

We share our tools and knowledge with State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners, the law enforcement community, first responders, school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders who are directly connected to the Nation's more than 130,000 kindergartens through high schools, K-12. This is accomplished through numerous DHS resources and programs.

These critical initiatives include the Hometown Security Initiative through which the Department works with schools and community leaders to proactively think about security and implement security measures. The Department's protective security advisors, as you mentioned at the beginning, Chairman Donovan, perform security-focused community-level outreach at educators' conferences, school board meetings, and within the scope of existing resources help schools conduct security vulnerability assessments.

Based on that work, DHS recently issued a K-12 security practice guide that can be used by communities to deter threats, address hazards and risks, and minimize gun violence incidents in our Nation's schools. We will be providing these guides to schools and support organizations, and it will also be publicly available through the Hometown Security Initiative outreach website.

We are doing all of this work as part of the Federal Commission on School Safety, which is charged with quickly providing meaningful and actionable recommendations and best practices to keep students safe at school. The Commission, which is chaired by Secretary DeVos at the U.S. Department of Education, also includes my Secretary, Kirstjen Nielsen, Attorney General Jeff Sessions, and HHS Secretary Alex Azar.

To facilitate the Department's participation in the Commission and enable coordination of future efforts to enhance school security across DHS, the Department established a School Security Working Group, jointly led by NPPD, my organization, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Office of Partnership and Engagement.

Since the attack at Marjory Stoneham Douglas High School in February 2018, the Department has also conducted over 200 engagements with State and local representatives, including schools, State committees, State school security forums, and school districts. DHS supported the Dallas Independent School District and the International Association of Venue Managers with a community outreach program, See Say Do, to provide Dallas schools with the tools, training, and resources to prevent an active-shooter incident through increased situational awareness.

DHS has also been a leader in the Arizona Fusion Center, which has partnered with the Phoenix Police Department's Threat Mitigation Unit and other Federal agencies, on the development of a community liaison program which is responsible for maintaining strong

working relationships with private-sector partners. The community liaison program is now working with school districts to provide active-shooter training and to foster open lines of communication between schools and the public safety community.

DHS has also participated in the Marjory Stoneham Douglas High School Public Safety Commission meeting, which is part of an effort to analyze information from the school shooting and other mass violence incidents in the State of Florida and address recommendations and system improvements.

I use these examples not to try to provide a comprehensive picture of all that the Department is doing but instead to bring tangible examples of how our work is supporting local communities. There are dozens of others like this.

So in summary, recognizing that most of the Nation's school administrators and educators are not experts in security, DHS is committed to utilizing our expertise to facilitate solutions. This means leveraging the capabilities of industry, school administrators, State and local officials, and our field personnel to ensure that the K-12 community has the tools and resources they need to make the best informed security decisions.

In closing, I want to underscore the importance of the role that every one of us plays in the Nation's schools. A multifaceted program like this requires the skills, expertise, knowledge, and action of a wide and diverse community of interests. School security must remain a continuing high priority for the Nation, and I look forward to working with this committee to chair a path that will move schools toward enhancing approaches for managing risk and violence in the education environment.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.
[The prepared statement of Mr. Kolasky follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT KOLASKY

JULY 9, 2018

Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, and Members of the subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) efforts to improve school security and preparedness, in coordination with interagency partners.

SCHOOL SECURITY

The Department of Homeland Security's mission states "with honor and integrity, we will safeguard the American people, our homeland, and our values." The most important part of our mission is safeguarding the American people, which we do through a variety of means. The DHS National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD) is the Nation's risk manager for securing cyber space and physical infrastructure. Through the implementation of our mission, we have developed deep expertise and extensive capabilities around security that can be leveraged by schools across the country.

NPPD has been working with our partners in the public and private sectors for many years to defend against threats to crowded public venues. We have seen attacks on civilians, in the United States and abroad, as they go about their lives and participate in the offerings of a free and democratic civil society. Attacks arrive while attending services at houses of worship, enjoying a concert, or even going out for a stroll on a public path. In America, we expect—and deserve—to continue these normal activities free from harm.

Similarly, our youth deserve an education in a facility where they are free from harm. Yet, in recent years, our Nation has witnessed and mourned the deaths of, and injuries to, dozens of students and teachers in our schools. Unfortunately, in this calendar year, two mass shootings in Parkland, Florida and Santa Fe, Texas

once again reminded us that we must do more to protect our students. DHS is using our experience working with critical infrastructure owners and operators to secure facilities around the country to better secure our schools. Our work with industry partners to secure the Nation's critical infrastructure—through activities such as the development of security standards for Federal buildings, the regulation of security at high-risk chemical facilities, and the conduct of literally thousands of risk assessments at critical infrastructure—has endowed us with the know-how to elevate the overall level of security in the Nation. We are also leveraging our experience in supporting a unified Federal response to incidents to better support community-level response when our prevention efforts falter. While DHS does not, and should not, provide direct security to schools, we do support those organizations whose direct mission it is to work with schools.

We readily share our tools and knowledge with State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners, the law enforcement community and others who are directly connected to the Nation's more than 130,000 kindergarten through high schools (K–12).¹ This sharing is accomplished through our growing regional presence that supports a Nation-wide network of our Protective Security Advisors, as well as other DHS resources and programs.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR MORE SECURE SCHOOLS

The Department is proud to be part of the Federal Commission on School Safety, which is charged with providing meaningful and actionable recommendations and best practices to keep students safe at school. The Commission, which is chaired by U.S. Department of Education Secretary DeVos, also includes Department of Homeland Security Secretary Nielsen, Attorney General Sessions, and Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Azar.

To help further the goals of this commission, DHS is focusing on seven lines of effort:

- Promoting a public awareness campaign modeled on the “See Something, Say Something®” program to encourage awareness and reporting of suspicious activity;
- Creating and sharing a guide on best practices for school-based threat assessments and violence prevention;
- Updating and disseminating guidance on best practices for school building security;
- Integrating and coordinating Federal resources focused on prevention and mitigation of active-shooter incidents at schools;
- Providing active-shooter training for law enforcement officers;
- Assisting in the development and implementation of tabletop exercises and workshops focused on security protocols, notifications and alerts, response, and recovery capabilities with schools and first responders; and
- Establishing and sharing guidelines and training on tactical emergency casualty care.

UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES

The issue of mass shootings at schools is complex and multi-layered, to include understanding behavioral issues as well as security of facilities. The Commission is gathering information from a range of experts. These include students, parents, teachers, school safety personnel, administrators, law enforcement officials, mental health professionals, school counselors, security professionals, and others. Each member of the Commission has or will organize at least one meeting focused on some of their respective lines of effort.

At past Commission meetings, we have discussed several of the factors that may contribute to violence, including: Cyber bullying and social media; youth consumption of violent entertainment; and effects of press coverage on mass shootings. We have also reviewed past reports and recommendations from experts following previous school shootings, including Columbine, Virginia Tech, and Sandy Hook. DHS is planning a Commission meeting for mid-August where experts in school security best practices, threat assessment, and active-shooter mitigation will share their insights and experiences with the Commission.

¹U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics, *2015 Digest of Education Statistics*, Table 105.50 (2016).

RECOGNIZING AND LEARNING FROM EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS

While the overall issue of school security remains complex, our efforts to learn from past experiences are yielding results.

The Commission conducted a field visit to Hebron-Harman Elementary School in Hanover, Maryland, to learn more about Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a framework for assisting school personnel in organizing evidence-based interventions to help improve academic performance and social behavior outcomes for students.

Three more field visits will take place over the next couple of months, including one led by the Department currently being scheduled in late August, which will focus on physical security for school buildings.

The Commission has also hosted two Listening Sessions, the first taking place at the U.S. Department of Education in the District of Columbia, and the second in Lexington, KY. Members of Congress, State and local officials, law enforcement, parents, teachers, and students have taken this opportunity to provide input toward the Commission's work. Individuals may also provide input directly to the Department of Education, as outlined in the *Federal Register*.

RAISING THE BASELINE OF SCHOOL SECURITY

As the Department contributes to the work of the Commission, we are leveraging current programs that cut across the spectrum to boost school security. This work falls within three lines of effort: Education and Community Awareness; Building Capacity through Training and Exercises; and Increasing Early Warning to Identify and Report Potential Threats.

The work performed in support of these lines of effort take into account five planning assumptions:

- Enhanced school security can deter future attacks and disrupt them prior to mass damage being done;
- School security should be designed to minimize disruption to the learning environment;
- Investments in school security will be constrained by limited budgets;
- School security is a shared responsibility and benefits from community involvement, empowering individuals, and leveraging law enforcement, non-governmental, and private-sector capability; and
- The Department's mission is to support enhanced school security in the face of potential threats and vulnerabilities, but DHS does not directly secure schools.

Since the attack at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in February 2018, the Department has also conducted over 200 engagements with State and local representatives including schools, State committees, State school security forums, and school districts. DHS supported the Dallas Independent School District and the International Association of Venue Managers with a community outreach program—"SEE, SAY, DO"—to provide Dallas schools with the tools, training, and resources to prevent an active-shooter incident through increased situational awareness.

Another example of DHS work in this area includes the Department's support of the State of Arizona's fusion center, which has partnered with the Phoenix Police Department's Threat Mitigation Unit and other Federal agencies on the development of a Community Liaison Program, which is responsible for maintaining strong working relationships with private-sector partners. The Community Liaison Program is now working with school districts to provide active-shooter training and to foster open lines of communication between schools and the public safety community. DHS has also participated in the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission meeting, which is part of an effort to analyze information from the school shooting and other mass violence incidents in the State and address recommendations and system improvements.

Recognizing that most of the Nation's school administrators and educators are not experts in security, DHS is committed to utilizing our expertise to facilitate solutions. This means leveraging the capabilities of industry, school administrators, State and local officials, and our field personnel to ensure that the K-12 community has the tools and resources they need to make the best-informed security decisions.

In closing, I want to underscore the importance of the role that every one of us plays in securing the Nation's schools. A multi-faceted problem like this requires the skills, expertise, knowledge—and action—of a wide and diverse community of interest. School safety must remain a continuing high priority for the Nation.

I believe the Department is well-positioned to assist in raising the base-line of security for K-12 schools, together with our partners at all levels of government, in academia, and in communities and law enforcement around the Nation. I look forward to working with this committee to chart a path that will move schools toward

enhancing approaches for managing risks from violence in the education environment. I thank you in advance for your continuing leadership in this regard and I look forward to your questions.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you for your testimony.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes of questioning.

I would like to ask the entire panel to help us understand this and ask each of you to respond.

At the subcommittee's request, the Government Accountability Office conducted reviews of the Federal efforts to support emergency preparedness and security efforts at K-12 schools and institutions of higher education. While both reports acknowledge the good work of the Departments of Education, Justice, and Homeland Security on this important issue, they noted that Federal efforts could be better coordinated and that education institutes were often unaware of the available assistance.

How are agencies now working to coordinate these various guidance programs, assistance related to school security, and how are we working to allow localities to know of the availability of the services the three of you just described in great detail that are well-formed, well-thought-out, and would be successful, but only if localities know of their existence?

So I would ask each of you to comment on what we are doing to coordinate our three major agencies, and second, how are we getting the word out to localities that your services are available to them?

Mr. BOTEL. Sure. I will start. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

So, first of all, in response to the report coming out of that GAO study, we did form a group called the Federal Partners and School Emergency Management and Preparedness, and there are a couple of components to that. There is a steering committee and a task force, and that group has met periodically since that report came out. Coming out of that, the agencies that have been working together, one of my colleagues mentioned the school guide for developing high-quality emergency operations. We are now about to release a district guide, and that is something we have worked together on.

In addition, in September as we roll that out, we plan to have a portal that includes information about the resources that all of the agencies have that helps support and provide assistance to districts and schools in developing plans and keeping their students safe.

Mr. HANSON. Similarly at the Department of Justice, we are also engaged in that Federal partnership my colleague described. That was created after the 2016 GAO report in response to that, and I believe GAO reviewed our efforts and closed that recommendation. So we have continued to work in regular contact through that partnership. Of course, the President created the Federal Commission on School Safety. So all of our departments, plus HHS, are now working together investigating best practices with the intention of disseminating those in a study and report coming out in the coming months.

What we do at the Office of Justice Programs in the Department particularly is we regularly work with State and local governments, particularly with regard to law enforcement, less so with schools.

So we will leverage those relationships that we have long established for decades and work with our colleagues at the Department of Education to make sure their schools know about them as well.

The way the Stop School Violence Act grants work are only State, local governments, and Tribal entities can apply for them. So we are accustomed to working with those partners. Like I said, we will also work with our partners at the Department of Education to make sure the schools know about those as well. Just last week we had a webinar about our grant programs between COPS and OJP, and we had over 210 participants. We have archived that on our website, and we will continue to reach out via the internet, in local or trade publications as appropriate, working with Congress and certainly making sure your constituents know about them, and also then via social media and other means that come up as we see as appropriate.

Mr. KOLASKY. Then let me sort-of answer on top of that, sort-of the last mile, the committee end of that. We talked a couple of times, and you mentioned the protective security advisors. What we have done, we have protective security advisors in every high-risk urban area and State around the country. We prioritized their security advice toward being around school security, and really the folks who can help influence decisions being made around school security. As you know, Congressman, we were in Queens with school officials and local homeland security, local police, emergency managers in Staten Island. We appreciated you having us there.

We really have been able to take the guides that have been coming out from across the Federal Government and then have an individual who can really help school boards navigate that. So that is something that we will continue to do because I think a lot of what we need to get done is to demystify what all these resources are and put them in the hands of people who want to make security decisions but don't know how to do that, don't know how to do so cost-effectively.

Mr. DONOVAN. We talk about education being really grounded in the local level, and I am not too sure that when we think about schools being overseen by cities, counties, or States, that people look at the Federal Government as a resource for schools. We look toward the Federal Government to protect our Nation, to protect our interests overseas. But here in Newark, New Jersey, or on Staten Island or South Brooklyn, what I represent, do those communities who want to assess the vulnerabilities of their schools, those folks who need finances for whatever protective mechanisms are needed there, do they look at the Federal Government? I always think it is our job to allow them to know that these are available.

My time has expired with one question, so I am going to yield what time I don't have left to my colleague, Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

But before I go into my questions, I would ask to have a letter from the National Education Association and testimony for the record from the New Jersey School Boards Association entered into the record.

Mr. DONOVAN. Without objection.

[The information referred to follows:]

LETTER FROM THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

July 6, 2018.

U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, Washington, DC 20515.

Dear Representative: On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they service, we would like to submit the following comments for the record in connection with the July 9 field hearing in New Jersey, “Protecting Our Future: Addressing School Security Challenges in America.”

We thank you for holding this hearing. It is essential for all stakeholders, especially educators, to have a seat at the table during discussions of the vitally important issue of school security, including gun violence prevention. At the same time, we need to ensure that safeguards are in place to preserve the right to due process and prevent the resurrection of failed “zero tolerance” policies that can lead to the unnecessary and unjust expulsion of students of color.

For too long, Congress has failed to take common-sense steps to end the uniquely American epidemic of gun violence and mass shootings. According to Everytown for Gun Safety, there have been nearly 300 school shootings since 2013, including at least 50 incidents of gunfire on school grounds in 2018. NEA and its members, like the public at large, overwhelmingly support stronger gun violence prevention laws, including comprehensive, enforceable background checks to prevent dangerous people from buying guns.

In addition, we believe a comprehensive approach to providing a safe and secure learning environment must include increased funding for—and access to—school-based health centers and their staffs. Proper diagnosis can and often does start in our schools, yet there is a shortage of counselors, nurses, social workers, and psychologists in public education.

We also support expanding—and increasing funding for—professional development for educators in the areas of bullying, mental and behavioral health, cultural competencies, and classroom management.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Sincerely,

MARC EGAN,
Director of Government Relations.

STATEMENT OF THE NEW JERSEY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

JULY 9, 2018

NJSBA SCHOOL SECURITY INITIATIVES

Since the 2012 Newtown, Connecticut tragedy, the New Jersey School Boards Association, a federation of the State’s local boards of education, has engaged in school security initiatives encompassing research, policy (both NJSBA and local district), training/professional development, and advocacy.

For the subcommittee’s July 9 field hearing on school security, NJSBA will focus on its activities in the area of research and information. We request that the following information be read into the record.

SAFE AND SECURE SCHOOLS INITIATIVE: STATE-WIDE FORUM

Immediately after the Newtown tragedy, NJSBA planned a series of actions to assist public schools in addressing school security issues.

Among the first strategies identified was education—that is, informing local school board members and their staffs of the requirements now in place and strategies they may consider.

Our initial effort was “Safe and Secure Schools: Perspectives after Newtown,” a State-wide forum that drew over 650 people to The College of New Jersey in January 2013. The meeting featured experts from law enforcement, security, school climate, insurance, and crisis management.

To reach a vital element of the school community—that is, parents—NJSBA also hosted two regional forums, with the participation of county prosecutors, local law enforcement agencies, and school district officials. Additionally, “school security” became a frequent topic of county school boards association meetings throughout the year.

SAFE AND SECURE SCHOOLS: YEAR-LONG STUDY

Based on observations from these forums and other sources, then-NJSBA President John Bulina identified a need to provide the Association's membership with additional guidance and direction.

In March 2013, he appointed a School Security Task Force and asked the group to take on the following tasks:

- Survey school districts on their security practices and consult with experts in law enforcement, security, school climate, and other fields.
- Review current developments affecting the implementation and funding of school security measures.
- Identify best practices and changes in statute and regulation that would promote student safety and enable school boards to fund and implement security measures.
- Review relevant NJSBA policy.

More than 130 local school board members volunteered to serve on the task force. Eleven were selected. Their employment experience spanned several fields, including law enforcement, education, law, and homeland security.

The task force study extended for over a year. The final report, *What Makes Schools Safe?*, includes 45 recommendations for action by the State and Federal Governments, local school districts and NJSBA. (The full report, along with other resources, is available at www.njsba.org/schoolsecurity.)

Areas addressed include security personnel, school climate, policy and planning, communications, training, architecture and physical security, and financing.

Four years after its release, the report remains relevant. It provides recommendations on subjects, ranging from school security plans and emergency response procedures to prevention strategies that involve facility upgrades, school climate, and education programs.

The Final Report of the NJSBA School Security Task Force includes 45 recommendations addressing local school district practices and State and Federal requirements in six key areas: Security personnel; school climate; policy and planning; communications/community relations; physical security; and finances.

Findings

Each of the report's recommendations is based on findings that were developed following consultation with experts and additional research. Key findings of the task force include the following:

- New Jersey has strong and effective State-wide school security measures in place. For example, our State is one of only 10 that require periodic security drills throughout the school year. It requires crisis plans in each district, as well as agreements between school districts and local law enforcement agencies. The procedures result from State law and regulation, aggressive State initiative, local school board policy, and the interest of caring adults, including teachers, parents, school board members, and law enforcement personnel.
- Effective security planning must involve every element of the school community and the broader community.
- A safe and secure environment for our students requires not only protection from outside threats, but also the maintenance of a supportive and caring day-to-day internal school climate.
- A strong, positive relationship between school officials and law enforcement/emergency responders—built on mutual respect for, and adherence to their specific roles—is a cornerstone of an effective school security program.
- An information gap persists concerning the various types of security personnel employed in schools (e.g., School Resource Officers, private security, retired law enforcement, etc.) and their training, qualifications and functions, a situation that has led to public misperception and misunderstanding.
- “Deter, Slow, and Detain” intruders, a foundation of effective physical security, requires a different set of building blocks for each school and school district. However, certain low-cost options are available to address the common concern of controlling entry into schools and classrooms.
- Funding for security upgrades and strategies has become extremely limited due to competing demands of the academic program and capital expenses, State regulation over non-instructional expenditures, the 2 percent tax levy cap, and the lapse of Federal funding for the School Resource Officer program.

A list of the report's 45 recommendations is attached to this statement.

NEXT STEPS

- NJSBA President Daniel Sinclair and Executive Director Dr. Lawrence S. Feinsod have appointed a new security committee that is reviewing the 2014 report and, as necessary, will update information and recommendations. The update is expected to be completed this summer.
- Each year, NJSBA establishes priority goals related to its Strategic Plan. For 2018–2019, the Association will study the impact of the effective delivery of mental health services and early intervention strategies on student health and wellness, school climate, and school security.

This effort will include appointment of task force that will explore the relationship of mental health services to school security. The task force, which will consult with mental health practitioners and other experts, will begin meeting in the fall and will issue a final report, including recommendations for further action and information on best practices, by June 2019.

Founded in 2014, the New Jersey School Boards Association is a federation of the State's local boards of education and includes a majority of New Jersey's charter schools. NJSBA provides training, advocacy, and support to advance public education and promote the achievement of all students through effective governance.

FINAL REPORT: SCHOOL SECURITY TASK FORCE

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on its research, the New Jersey School Boards Association School Security Task Force makes a total of 45 recommendations in the following areas: Security Personnel; School Climate; Policy and Planning; Communications; Training in School Security; Physical Security; and Financing.

I. SECURITY PERSONNEL

Local School District/Community

1. Because of significant variations in the size of school districts and local law enforcement agencies, building lay-outs, student populations and community attitudes, the decision on whether or not to employ security personnel—armed or un-armed, police or non-police—must rest exclusively with the local school district and should not be dictated by the State.

2. A school resource officer (SRO) can provide a critical safety factor and valuable counseling and support services for students. The employment of SROs is the “preferred” model for a law enforcement presence in a school building.

3. In assigning SROs or other law enforcement officers to schools, local law enforcement agencies must consider fully the qualifications and aptitude of the individual, including his or her capability as a first responder and ability to relate to students. Additionally, the training of SROs must stress conflict resolution, restorative justice and stationhouse adjustment practices, as well as awareness of gang and drug abuse activities.

4. School districts should ensure that all security personnel: (a) Receive training appropriate for employment in the school environment and (b) have in-depth understanding of local emergency protocols.

5. In developing the Memorandum of Agreement, school districts/charter schools and local law enforcement should clearly address the intersection of school policy/disciplinary code, Criminal Code and the Juvenile Justice Code. They must ensure that student behavior that is in violation of school codes of conduct be addressed by school officials and not be imposed on police. Based on Federal and State law and school policy, such guidance should ensure the following: Immediate response to crises; protection of the safety and interests of students affected by violent acts; the appropriate avenues of discipline and referral for student offenders; and the recognition of State requirements in areas such as student possession of firearms and weapons on school grounds, and harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

State and Federal

6. The State and Federal Governments, respectively, should provide and increase grant funding to support the assignment of law enforcement officers as School Resource Officers.

7. The Legislature and the Governor should enact legislation to establish a new category of law enforcement officers, such as Special Law Enforcement Officer Level III, who are specially trained in working with students and assigned to protect our schools. Such law enforcement personnel can provide an additional school security option to school districts. The legislation should also relieve current limits on work-

ing hours for special officers when they are assigned to schools and should ease the restrictions on the number of such officers employed by a municipality.

8. The New Jersey Department of Education and the Office of the Attorney General should revise *The New Jersey Guide to Establishing a Safe Schools Resource Officer Program in Your Community*, which was published in 1998, so that the document reflects recent developments in the areas of security, funding, and programming.

II. SCHOOL CLIMATE

Local School District/Community

9. Local school districts should engage in school climate assessments and develop and implement plans to ensure that students have safe, secure, and supportive learning environments that provide meaningful communication and involvement with caring adults on the school staff. (A list of climate assessment resources is found on page 30 of this report.)

10. Not all student groups experience school safety and the school climate in the same manner. To enable students to learn in supportive environments at each grade level, local school boards should adopt policies that recognize the importance of social-emotional learning, character development, restorative practices and community building. In addition, the Task Force recommends that school boards review the information on social-emotional learning, supportive practices, and authoritative disciplinary structures in Section II of this report, School Climate.

11. To build a respectful school climate that enables the advancement of student achievement, local boards of education and school administrators should ensure that the principles of social-emotional learning and character development skill-building are infused into academic instruction in a coordinated manner and that there is a consistent application of discipline.

12. Local boards of education should ensure that the School Safety Teams, required by the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights, are not only reviewing reports of harassment, intimidation, and bullying, but are also focusing on practices and processes related to school climate, so as to inform the school boards in their periodic review of HIB and related policies.

13. To ensure their School Safety Teams have a positive impact on school climate, local boards of education should consider requiring the teams to meet more than the twice-yearly minimum.

State

14. As recommended by the NJ SAFE task force, the State should form an “inter-agency working group” comprised of various departments, including education, law and public safety, and health and human services, to address policy and programs on early intervention and mental health services at the community level. A similar State-level approach (the Education-Law Enforcement Working Group) has had a positive impact on local policy and procedures through the State’s Uniform Memorandum of Agreement.

15. To clarify the role of the School Safety Teams in improving school climate, the New Jersey State Board of Education should amend administrative code (N.J.A.C. 6A:16) to rename these bodies “School Safety/Climate Teams,” as recommended by the State’s Anti-Bullying Task Force.

III. POLICY AND PLANNING

Local School District/Community

16. The local board of education should ensure that the school district has completed assessments of physical security, threats, capacity, and school climate. The assessments, or audits, should be conducted in concert with local law enforcement and emergency responders, should follow guidelines published in the *New Jersey School Safety & Security Manual: Best Practices Guidelines* (2006) and should draw on the work of experts in the areas of school climate, security, and building design.

17. Local board of education members should familiarize themselves with the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement between the local school district and the local law enforcement agency.

18. Local school districts should form committees representing all stakeholders (staff, parents, administrators, emergency responders, law enforcement, community members, etc.) as part of their efforts to develop school security plans, to assess the plans on an on-going basis, and to identify necessary enhancement of school security protocols, equipment, and staffing.

19. Local school districts should ensure on-going, periodic review of the school security plan, the Memorandum of Agreement, administrative response procedures, and protocols governing security drills.

20. School district security policies and regulations should address administrators' responsibilities, building and site access (including after-hours use of facilities), and distribution of keys and access cards.

21. School districts should stage State-required security drills at varying times and days of the week and under different weather conditions. Drills should involve numerous crisis scenarios, so that school officials and law enforcement can evaluate their effectiveness, make necessary adjustments in procedures, identify safety weaknesses and make recommendations for additional training.

22. School districts should make tabletop exercises a regular part of the security protocol, especially when full-scale exercises and testing of crisis response is not feasible. Tabletop exercises should involve law enforcement, fire departments, and emergency response agencies.

23. Local boards of education should review their policies related to school security, including those that address violence and vandalism, student conduct, emergencies/disaster preparedness, and weapons/firearms, to ensure that they are compliant with current statute and regulation and reflect district-specific factors and concerns.

24. School boards should ensure that practices and procedures are in place to address building access, emergency evacuation, security personnel and emergency medical services for events and functions that take place after the instructional day.

State

25. The New Jersey Department of Education should ensure that the manual, *School Safety and Security Manual: Best Practice Guidelines*, last published in 2006 is updated as needed to incorporate the most recent developments in school security strategies and procedures, emergency equipment, and technology.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

Local School District/Community

26. As part of their school security plans, local boards of education should: (a) Ensure that staff, students, parents, and members of the community are informed of changes in school security procedures in a timely manner and (b) convey the importance of reporting to school or law enforcement authorities unusual incidents or behavior in or around school facilities.

27. To ensure communication with all members of the school community, law enforcement and emergency responders, school districts should implement multi-platform emergency notification systems that use telephone, email, text messaging, website, and other methods of communication.

28. Because of the proven effectiveness of anonymous tip lines in preventing incidents of violence and promoting the health and safety of students, school districts should explore the use of such networks and take advantage of the systems that are currently available.

State

29. The NJ SAFE Task Force recommendation to establish a State-wide anonymous tip line should be pursued by the State Departments of Education, Community Affairs, and Law and Public Safety, as well as the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness and other agencies.

V. SECURITY TRAINING

Local School District/Community

30. To ensure that all school staff members have the appropriate knowledge to improve security and help prevent and respond to emergencies, local school districts should: (a) Provide on-going training, and (b) utilize the varying no-cost training resources available to them at the local, county, State, and Federal levels.

31. Training provided to district staff should vary in scope and should address specific threats that a district might face, along with general school security and safety principles.

32. Training on security plans and response procedures should involve any individual in charge of students at a given time, including full-time staff, part-time staff, substitute teachers, and volunteers. Districts should ensure that all individuals in charge of students receive information on their role in emergencies.

33. When conducting training, school districts should involve appropriate outside response entities, including personnel who would respond to the schools in an emer-

gency. Districts should also encourage representatives of outside entities to visit schools and familiarize themselves with the facilities and their layouts as part of training exercises, such as active-shooter drills for law enforcement personnel.

VI. PHYSICAL SECURITY

Local School District/Community

34. Local boards of education and school administrators should use the State-required updates to their district's Long-Range Facility Plan as an opportunity to ensure that security needs are met in an effective, consistent, and financially prudent manner.

35. Local school boards should ensure that school security planning includes consultation with professionals in the areas of architecture, engineering, and information technology, as well as construction and fire code officials.

36. For schools with extensive windows and glass doors, particularly at ground level, districts should implement the most effective and economical method to prevent penetration through the use of firearms.

37. Through the use of security planning teams, school districts should: (a) Regularly review the effectiveness of protocols governing visitor entry, key distribution, and student, staff, vendor, and visitor access to school buildings and (b) identify improvements to these processes.

38. To the extent possible, school districts should incorporate the Homeland Security Standards for new construction and the NJDOE "Security Standards for Schools under Construction" into renovations and alterations of existing facilities.

39. School districts should routinely evaluate and review the condition of their buildings and identify maintenance issues (e.g., repair of door locks, doors and windows, alarm systems, public address systems, utility room access, etc.) in need of attention.

40. School districts should ensure the effectiveness of revised school security procedures, new equipment, or building improvements/alterations through a careful review of threat/risk assessment and consideration of community desires and norms, and local budget constraints.

VII. FINANCING SCHOOL SECURITY

Local School District/Community

41. Local school districts and municipalities are encouraged to share costs to enable the assignment of School Resource Officers.

42. The Commissioner of Education should amend State regulation (N.J.A.C. 6A:23A) to eliminate "Operation and Maintenance of Plant cost per pupil equal to or less than the State median" as a standard for receipt of State aid when reviewing proposed school district budgets or requests to seek voter approval to exceed the tax levy cap.

43. The State should designate additional construction grant funding for the express purpose of enhancing school security.

44. The legislature should provide additional options to enable school districts to hire and retain appropriately trained security personnel.

45. The Federal Government should restore grant funding to support the assignment of School Resource Officers.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Botel, during the school year, school shootings have averaged about 1 per week, and in response to the increase in school violence President Trump released his proposal for improving school preparedness on March 11, 2018 as part of the proposal. The President formed the Federal Commission on School Safety. Last month, Secretary DeVos stated that the Federal Commission on School Safety would not research the role of guns in school violence.

So, is the Commission still determined not to research gun violence in schools? Just a yes or no answer.

Mr. BOTEL. There is in the charge that the President gave—

Mr. PAYNE. Is that a yes or a no?

Mr. BOTEL. The Commission is looking at firearms with regard to age restrictions.

Mr. PAYNE. In terms of what?

Mr. BOTEL. Of age restrictions, of whether changes in policy in terms of at what age someone could acquire firearms, whether that could help make school safer.

Mr. PAYNE. So the Commission is going to study, or is not going to study?

Mr. BOTEL. Is going to study.

Mr. PAYNE. That is a revelation. We were under the impression—what was Secretary DeVos intimating in her statement?

Mr. BOTEL. I just know that in the document that you referenced that the President put out to form the Commission, there were a number of things that the Commission was charged to look at, and this issue of restrictions surrounding age and gun ownership, that was one of the things that he charged the Commission to look at, and they are looking at it.

Mr. PAYNE. So Ms. DeVos is wrong?

Mr. BOTEL. For that particular question, she may have seen it as a more comprehensive question on the issue. Again, the charge that the President gave the Commission is narrowed to the age restriction issue.

Mr. PAYNE. It is interesting that as this administration moves forward, one hand doesn't know what the other one is doing. But, *c'est la vie*.

On June 6, the Federal Commission on School Safety held its first public meeting, and at that meeting many people stood before the Commission with concerns about the Commission's work. Many asked that the Commission not ignore guns in its research. How is the Commission utilizing that feedback? I guess you are saying that they are looking at it. But based on the feedback from the public, how is that being utilized in formulating—

Mr. BOTEL. We have received a lot of feedback from the public. There have been listening sessions, the meeting that you are talking about. We also have an email address, *safetyated.gov*, where we have received hundreds and hundreds of pieces of input, and I can assure you that we have staff that look at every single piece of input we receive and share that with the Commission members, and they will determine ultimately what their report includes. They are planning on releasing their final report by the end of the calendar year. So all of that input is being looked at closely.

Mr. PAYNE. But we agree that in all these instances, the one common factor was a gun being used in these acts of violence; correct?

Mr. BOTEL. Yes. In the acts of violence you are talking about, there has been a lot of gun violence. That is right.

Mr. PAYNE. So we just want to make sure that Secretary DeVos knows what the President is saying, and the President knows what Secretary DeVos is saying, and we get one common message coming out of the administration, because it just appears that everybody is all over the place with this stuff. No one knows what the other one is saying on a day-to-day basis. So how can the American public be secure in the fact that something is happening? If you are getting several different scenarios from different people in the administration, then who do you believe? Who do you follow? The Secretary says there won't be any looking into gun usage, and then the President says that that is part of the Commission's job.

Mr. BOTEL. Well, I think in the report that gets issued, as I said, I believe the plan is by the end of the calendar year it is going to address all the things that the President charged the Commission to look at. We are getting input on other things as well. Some of that will be in the purview of the Commission. Of course, I think we are getting a lot of information that will be helpful to the Congress and to others at the State level—you mentioned New Jersey—as obviously States and localities make their own policies.

Mr. PAYNE. OK. Well, my time is up.

Boy, that is a quick 5 minutes.

Mr. DONOVAN. It is a quick 5 minutes.

We are going to thank all the witnesses for their testimony. As you can tell, the Ranking Member and myself didn't get to ask all the questions we would like to ask, so we may have some additional questions to ask of you that we would ask you to respond to in writing.

We are going to take a brief break so that the staff can change over the panel for our second panel. I thank all of you for your testimony, for what you are doing for our great Nation. Thank you, sirs.

[Recess.]

Mr. DONOVAN. We are pleased to welcome our second panel of witnesses. Our second panel includes Mr. Jared Maples, director of New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness; Mr. Ben Castillo, director of the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning; Major Jeanne Hengemuhle of the New Jersey State Police Department; Mr. Timothy Gerity, president of the New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers; and Mr. Michael Reilly, president of the Community Education Council 31 in Staten Island, New York.

I thank you for being here today. The witnesses' full written statements will appear in the record.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Maples for his testimony.

It is good to see you again, sir.

Mr. MAPLES. You, as well.

**STATEMENT OF JARED M. MAPLES, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF
HOMELAND SECURITY AND PREPAREDNESS, STATE OF NEW
JERSEY**

Mr. MAPLES. Chairman Donovan and Ranking Member Payne, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am honored to speak on behalf of the dedicated professionals of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, NJOHSP, who are working tirelessly to ensure the safety and security of the State of New Jersey.

Today my remarks will focus on the work we are doing in New Jersey under Governor Murphy's leadership to reflect National priorities while building local capabilities to address risk and protect our communities using partnerships, continuous improvement, and a whole-of-Government approach.

New Jersey faces a complex, diverse, and fluid security environment, with persistent and evolving threats. We average over 1,200 people per square mile, substantially higher than the National av-

erage of 92. New Jersey has an undoubtedly unique risk environment.

However, there is no threat more jarring or more important to address than the one to our schools. As we have seen in the appalling attacks like those in Florida and Texas, the tragic lesson we have learned is that schools are often targets of choice for those who wish to commit horrifying and attention-grabbing acts of violence. New Jersey has more than 600 school districts, with the number of schools exceeding 2,500. This number alone, not to mention the number of colleges and universities in the State, presents a vulnerability profile of critical importance.

On March 26 of this year, Attorney General Grewal updated Directive 2016-7 to explicitly mandate that threats of school violence be sent to the New Jersey Suspicious Activity Reporting System, maintained by my agency. Accordingly, all school-related threats are reported to our Counterterrorism Watch located at the Regional Operations and Intelligence Center, our State Fusion Center, as well as the County Counterterrorism Coordinators. In partnership with the New Jersey State Police and the FBI, we work with law enforcement to track and disseminate information regarding possible threats to schools State-wide, which mitigates the possibility of violence.

Regardless of the scope of our individual mission, all of us leading the State have and will continue to marshal a full contingent of resources for protecting our children and educators.

As we continue our work, we recognize that continual improvement is the only way to succeed. Resting on our laurels will not strengthen security. We recognize that across the country and here in New Jersey, we must strengthen prevention efforts. Preventing an incident and avoiding the use of response tactics is our goal. As communities, we must embrace a culture of preparedness that invests equally in both prevention and response.

We will continue to prioritize the identification of suspicious activity, mental health indicators, and ensure that there is a clear path for reporting and addressing issues before an incident occurs. We will expand innovative efforts such as suspicious activity reporting training for school bus drivers, custodians, teachers, and administrators. We will innovate our support for first responders by expanding capabilities to create waves of first preventers.

Our strategic approach to security also includes supporting and building response capabilities such as comprehensive after-shooter training, including pre-incident indicators and pathways to report those indicators. Our first responder community here in New Jersey is one of the world's best. Additionally, the New Jersey State Police, Departments of Education, Human Services, Health, Children and Families, and many other partners have built response capabilities that are second to none. New Jersey Department of Education has staff embedded with NJOHSP and conducts unannounced school security drills across the State to test both plans and the actions of faculty and staff in a controlled, realistic environment. We continue to offer large-scale active-shooter exercises for K-12 and partner with Federal DHS for hometown security initiative planning.

We recognize the consistent need to expand security capabilities, focusing on where mass gatherings of people occur, what those common vulnerabilities are, and ensuring that individuals, especially school children, know what to do when circumstances deviate from those they have practiced. To that end, our colleges and universities are participating in a new Mass Gathering Working Group to address these common vulnerabilities and build missing capabilities at locations where students gather throughout the State.

We will continue to ensure that our plans do not just account for the security of the building, but build capabilities that empower the safety of their precious content, our children. We are currently working with the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, and the New Jersey Department of Health to review every institution of higher education's emergency operations plan.

We will expand training models and traditional planning assumptions to address changing tactics and enable capabilities to deviate from the plans as situations dictate. We have already begun to transform our thinking and focus on these essential areas. Over the past 2 years, the State has continually implemented recommendations from the 2015 New Jersey School Security Task Force Report, including the creation of the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy and Certification Program; annual security training for public and non-public school employees; additional training and qualifications of Class III Special Law Enforcement Officers; and new school construction to incorporate security measures into architectural design.

Subsequently, we have created a School Security subcommittee on the State's Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force, which I chair, to coordinate horizontally across State agencies, and integrate vertically with National priorities and local needs. Part of that effort includes conducting security assessments at schools, as well as providing assessment training for local enforcement partners who can serve as force multipliers to enhance security capabilities in schools throughout the State.

Work remains, but there are people dedicated to getting it right using a whole-of-Government approach. We will focus on prevention, we will innovate, and we will continue to build those capabilities that are vital to our overall security.

Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee, I thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions and yield back to the Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Maples follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JARED M. MAPLES

JULY 9, 2018

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, and Members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am honored to speak on behalf of the dedicated professionals of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, who are working tirelessly to ensure the safety and security of the State of New Jersey.

New Jersey faces a complex, diverse, and fluid security environment, with persistent and evolving threats. As you know, New Jersey has the highest population density of any State in the Nation—3 times the population density of New York and Pennsylvania—with almost 9 million residents in the fourth-smallest State by land mass. We average over 1,200 people per square mile, substantially higher than the National average of 92. We have some of the most critical infrastructure in the United States, and we are flanked by two of the largest cities in the country. New Jersey has an undoubtedly unique risk environment.

However, there is no threat more jarring or more important to address than the one to our schools. As we have seen in the appalling attacks in Florida and Texas, the tragic lessons we have learned is that schools are often targets of choice for those who wish to commit horrifying and attention-grabbing acts of violence. New Jersey has more than 600 school districts with the number of schools exceeding 2,500. This number alone, not to mention the number of colleges and universities in the State, presents a vulnerability profile of paramount importance.

On March 26 of this year, Attorney General Grewal updated Directive 2016–7 to explicitly mandate that threats of school violence be sent to the New Jersey Suspicious Activity Reporting System. Accordingly, all school-related threats are reported to our Counterterrorism (CT) Watch located at the Regional Operations and Intelligence Center (ROIC), as well as the County Counterterrorism Coordinators. In partnership with the New Jersey State Police, we work with law enforcement to track and disseminate information regarding possible threats to schools State-wide. This collaboration and information sharing strengthens the State's ability to mitigate the possibility of violence against schools.

While some incidents call for an academic discussion to categorize whether they are crime and terror, this is not one of them. The distinction does not matter. The safety of our children is paramount. Regardless of the scope of our individual mission, all of us leading this State have, and will continue, to marshal a full contingent of resources toward protecting our children.

NJOHSP ACTIONS

As we continue our work, we recognize that continual improvement is the only way to succeed. Resting on our laurels will not strengthen security. While we provide details of on-going efforts, be mindful that we are constantly seeking to improve. The most effective improvement we can take is to, quite simply, work to prevent these incidents from occurring. We recognize that across the country, and here in New Jersey, we must strengthen prevention efforts. Preventing an incident and avoiding the use of response tactics is our goal. As communities, we must embrace a culture of preparedness that invests equally in both prevention and response.

We will continue to prioritize the identification of suspicious activity, mental health indicators, and ensure that there is a clear path for reporting and addressing issues before an incident occurs. We will expand innovative efforts such as suspicious activity reporting training for school bus drivers, custodians, teachers, and administrators.

We will innovate our support for first responders by expanding capabilities to create waves of first preventers. We will continue to take a whole-of-Government approach under existing task forces to provide comprehensive active-shooter training, including pre-incident indicators and pathways to report those indicators.

Our strategic approach to security also includes supporting and building response capabilities. Our first responder community here in New Jersey is one of the world's best. The New Jersey State Police, Departments of Education, Human Services, Health, Children and Families, and many other partners have built response capabilities that are second to none. New Jersey Department of Education has staff embedded with NJOHSP and conducts unannounced school security drills across the State to test both plans and the actions of faculty and staff in a controlled, realistic environment. NJOHSP continues to offer large-scale active-shooter exercises for K–12 schools, including facilitating 2 last year in Bergen and Warren Counties.

We recognize the consistent need to expand security capabilities, focusing on where mass gatherings of people occur, what those common vulnerabilities are, and ensuring that individuals, especially school children, know what to do when circumstances deviate from those they have practiced. To that end, our colleges and universities are participating in a new Mass Gathering Working Group to address these common vulnerabilities and build missing capabilities at locations where students gather throughout the State.

We will continue to ensure that our plans do not just account for the security of the building, but build capabilities that empower the safety of their precious content—our children. We are currently working with the Office of the Secretary of

Higher Education, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, and the New Jersey Department of Health to review every institution of higher education's emergency operations plan, an effort required by New Jersey statute.

We will expand training models and traditional planning assumptions to address changing tactics and enable capabilities to deviate from the plans as situations dictate. We have already begun to transform our thinking and focus on these essential areas. Over the past 2 years, the State has continually implemented recommendations from the 2015 New Jersey School Security Task Force Report, including:

- The creation of the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy and Certification Program;
- Annual security training for public and non-public school employees;
- Additional training and qualifications of Class III Special Law Enforcement Officers at schools and county colleges; and,
- New school construction to incorporate security measures into architectural design.

Subsequently, we have created a School Security Subcommittee on the State's Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force to coordinate horizontally across State agencies, and integrate vertically with National priorities and local needs. Part of that effort includes conducting security assessments at schools, as well as providing assessment training for local enforcement partners who can serve as force multipliers to enhance security capabilities in schools throughout the State.

CONCLUSION

Unfortunately, attacks on schools are just one facet of a larger security threat to open access public facilities with limited security and free movement. At the moment there remains a need to address concerns and lack of information sharing among mass gathering facilities such as amusement parks, arenas, casinos, colleges and universities, convention centers, stadiums, and any other venues that could be a potential target.

Through efforts such as the aforementioned Mass Gathering Working Group, the Hometown Security Initiative, and our new Secure the Shore Initiative, we are working to protect all of New Jersey from terroristic threats to our public spaces. Work remains, but there are people dedicated to getting it right. We will focus on prevention. We will innovate. We will continue to build those capabilities that are vital to our overall security.

Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee. I thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. Under Governor Murphy's leadership, we will continue to adapt to meet the current threat environment and better secure our schools through a whole-of-Government approach. I look forward to your questions, and yield back to the Chairman.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Mr. Maples.
The Chair now recognizes Mr. Castillo.

STATEMENT OF BEN CASTILLO, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY PLANNING, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Mr. CASTILLO. Thank you, sir. Good morning, Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne. Thank you for this opportunity to testify today on behalf of the New Jersey Department of Education to highlight our efforts in school security.

I first wish to convey my regrets for Commissioner Lamont Repollet for not being here today, but I thank him for entrusting me with this important task. I know I speak for the commissioner when I say that he is personally and professionally committed to school security. It is why he is committed to the work of the School Security Subcommittee for the New Jersey Domestic Security and Preparedness Task Force, which Director Maples had referenced. It is also why he was honored to provide an opportunity to attend this hearing to our summer interns, seated behind us, students who will be our next generation of teachers, principals, and parents who

deserve a seat to hear this important conversation. We are thrilled that many of them are here with us this morning.

As Director Maples had mentioned, New Jersey has over 600 public schools and charter schools. In addition to that, there are over 1,400 non-public schools serving almost 225,000 students. This equates to approximately 1.6 million students in New Jersey's schools daily. During the academic year, most of our children spend fully a third of their formative years in schools. It is not only where they do their work of learning, but it is also where they socialize with their friends, they eat, they play, from kindergarten through high school. Recent tragic acts of school violence around the country remind all of us of our central moral and professional responsibility of keeping our children in a safe and nurturing environment so they can develop and mature to their fullest potentials.

To that end, the New Jersey Department of Education, along with its partners and stakeholders, have been seeking to improve student safety through a multifaceted and student-centered approach that builds positive school cultures and socio-emotional learning in addition to the security postures of school buildings within the K-12 realm. Together with our sister agencies, including the New Jersey Departments of Community Affairs, Health, Children and Families, Law and Public Safety, Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, State Police, and many other Federal and local government and non-government partners, we have established the Intergovernmental School Safety Group, and we have made student safety a core part of our departments' value structure. This model captures the commissioner's improvement model of ACE: Assess, Create, and Execute. As a group we are assessing the school security needs of the State and creating and executing solutions.

For example, current administrative code requires districts to have written, comprehensive all-hazards school safety and security plans. Legislative mandates also require all schools to conduct a school security drill each month, in addition to the regular fire drill. This may very well represent the most robust school security drill schedule in the Nation.

Furthermore, a number of recent directives were passed which further enhance school security efforts, many of which were mentioned by Director Maples, and they continue to be in force.

In addition to the adoption of the latest school security task force recommendations, the Department of Education provides guidance to further enhance school safety and security. In our view, of the 14 issues studied by the task force, and of the 42 recommendations offered in its final report, the establishment of the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy and the associated School Safety Specialist Certification Program are the most impactful. The enabling legislation requires each school district to designate a school administrator to be certified as a school safety specialist. These school safety specialists will be our most valuable points of contact in each school district with whom we can share information and make direct contact should situations warrant. They will be required to train annually on topics including bullying, hazing, emergency planning, emergency drills, drugs, weapons, gangs, and school policing. Additionally, as a result of concerns voiced by dis-

strict personnel, we also included blocks of instruction on physical security, bomb threat awareness and response, security considerations for front office staff, school bus transportation, and others.

Through the Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning, the Department has been diligently providing training, guidance, and assistance at the grassroots levels of our K–12 educational communities. Through our outreach efforts, we share preventive strategies and promising practices, and identify many security challenges faced by our schools.

Our unannounced drill observation initiative has provided opportunities for members of our office to collaborate directly with schools. Since the 2014–2015 school year, we have conducted over 850 such observations. This outreach has led to an increasing number of requests for technical assistance, which have resulted in members of our office providing professional development sessions for school staff and presentations to parents and board members.

Our office has provided site-specific security observations, school safety and security plan reviews, and drill guidance. We have responded to 205 requests for technical assistance, provided 121 presentations to educational organizations, and conducted 91 training assemblies.

I see I am very close to my time. May I continue, sir? Thank you.

We, along with our partner agencies, understand that no single entity bears the responsibility nor possesses the capability to keep our students safe. There must be a concerted, comprehensive, continual effort to make and keep our schools as secure as possible.

We have partnered with U.S. Department of Education and the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center, FEMA, our own Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, the New Jersey State Police, our respective county prosecutors' offices, local police, and others, in a collaborative effort to improve school security. In partnership with the Disaster and Terrorism Branch of the New Jersey Department of Human Services, we provided training in Comprehensive Active-Shooter Incident Management for Schools, which speaks to the importance of emotional components before, during, and after such horrific events.

To enhance information sharing, the Office of the Regional Operations and Intelligence Center, in concert with our department and the Office of Homeland Security and New Jersey State Police, developed Intelligence Dissemination Reports for the school sector. These were most recently distributed following the aftermath of the shootings in Parkland, Florida; in anticipation of the school walkouts which occurred across the Nation; and prior to high school graduations to provide situational awareness to schools throughout the State. We will continue to seek additional collaboration in efforts to more broadly face the challenges of school security.

Despite what seems to be a mounting tide of senseless violence occurring within our schools, schools overall remain relatively safe places for our children. However, we cannot remain idly by and allow injury, both emotional and physical, and deaths to occur among our students. We must reject that this is the new normal. We must not only stem the tide of school violence but turn it back. We must pledge to do more.

So in closing, if I may paraphrase Commissioner Repollet, “While we cannot control individual student behavior, we must continue to provide guidance and support through training and resources to the school districts in order to identify promising practices and effective preventive strategies.”

This has been our mission, and we, along with our partners and stakeholders in school security, will continue to do so to the best of our abilities.

I thank you again for the opportunity to address the committee. [The prepared statement of Mr. Castillo follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BEN CASTILLO

JULY 9, 2018

INTRODUCTION

Good morning Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee. I am Ben Castillo, director of the New Jersey Department of Education’s Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning. Thank you for this opportunity to testify today on behalf of the New Jersey Department of Education to highlight our efforts in school security.

I wish to convey to the subcommittee, the regrets of our Commissioner, Dr. Lamont Repollet for not being here today, but I thank him for entrusting me with this important task. I know I speak for the Commissioner when I say that he is personally and professionally committed to school security. It’s why he was named co-chair of the school security subcommittee for the NJ Department of Homeland Security and Preparedness. It’s also why he was honored to provide an opportunity to attend this hearing to our summer interns, students who will be our next generation of teachers, principals, and parents who deserve a seat at the table to participate in this conversation. We are thrilled that many of them are here with us this afternoon.

As you may know, New Jersey has over 600 public school districts and charter schools encompassing over 2,500 schools. Additionally, there are over 1,400 non-public schools serving almost 225,000 students. This equates to approximately 1.6 million students in New Jersey’s school daily. During the academic year, most of our children spend fully a third of their formative years in schools. It’s not only where students learn, but it’s also where they socialize with their friends, eat, and play—from kindergarten through high school. Recent tragic acts of school violence around the country remind all of us of our central moral and professional responsibility of keeping our children in a safe and nurturing environment so they can develop and mature to their fullest potentials.

ADMINISTRATIVE CODE AND LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

To that end, the NJDOE, along with its partners and stakeholders have been seeking to improve student safety through a multi-faceted and student-centered approach that builds positive school cultures and socio-emotional learning in addition to the security postures of school buildings within the K–12 realm. Together with our sister State agencies, including the Departments of Community Affairs, Health, Children and Families, Law and Public Safety, Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, State Police and many other Federal and local government and non-government partners, we have established the Intergovernmental School Safety Group and we’ve made student safety a core part of our departments’ value structure. This model captures the Commissioner’s improvement model of ACE: Assess, Create, and Execute. As a group we are assessing the school security needs of the State and creating and executing solutions.

For example, current administrative code requires districts to have written, comprehensive all-hazards school safety and security plans. These emergency operating plans are the cornerstones which are relied upon in emergencies; and from which planning, training, and drills are based. Legislative mandate also requires all schools to conduct a school security drill each month, in addition to the mandatory monthly fire drill. This may well represent the most robust school security drill schedule in the Nation. Furthermore, a number of recent directives were passed which further enhance school security efforts. Many of these resulted directly from the work of the New Jersey School Security Task Force, an interagency group created by State law in 2014 charged with studying and developing recommendations

to improve school safety and security. In addition to the adoption of the latest school security task force recommendations, the DOE provides guidance to further enhance school safety and security.

In our view, of the 14 issues studied by the task force; and of the 41 recommendations offered in their final report, the establishment of the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy and the associated School Safety Specialist Certification Program, are the most impactful. The enabling legislation requires each school district to designate a school administrator to be certified as a school safety specialist. These school safety specialists will be our most valuable points of contact in each school district with whom we can share information and make direct contact should situations warrant. They will be required to train annually on topics including bullying, hazing, emergency planning, emergency drills, drugs, weapons, gangs, and school policing. Additionally, as a result of concerns voiced by district personnel, we also included blocks of instruction on physical security, bomb threat awareness and response, security considerations for front office staff, school bus transportation, and others.

NJDOE SCHOOL SECURITY EFFORTS

Through the Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning, the DOE has been diligently providing training, guidance, and assistance at the grassroots levels of our K–12 educational communities. Through our outreach efforts, we share preventative strategies and promising practices, and identified many security challenges faced by our schools.

Our unannounced drill observation initiative has provided opportunities for members of our office to collaborate directly with schools. Since the 2014–2015 school year, we have conducted over 850 such observations. This outreach has led to an increasing number of requests for technical assistance, which have resulted in members of our office providing professional development sessions for school staff and presentations to parent and board members, and other audiences. Our office has provided site-specific security observations, school safety and security plan reviews, and drill guidance. We've responded to 205 technical assistance requests, provided 121 presentations to educational organizations, and conducted 91 training assemblies. Just last week, the Governor underlined the State's on-going commitment to school safety by signing a State budget that significantly increased the State's investment in Security Aid, allowing districts the flexibility to support school safety initiatives that fit the needs of their students.

While I can speak primarily to the Department's on-going work regarding school security, a holistic approach to ensuring the safety, including preventive efforts, is vital. The DOE understands the importance of building strong, healthy, and positive school cultures through social-emotional learning. The NJDOE's prevention and intervention efforts to create an environment where students feel safe to learn, align with New Jersey's anti-bullying law. Districts are required to adopt and implement anti-bullying policies which include prevention, responding to allegations, and reporting. Each school is required to have a school safety/school climate team to focus on developing, fostering, and maintaining positive school climates. A School Climate Survey has been developed as part of a data-driven school climate improvement process to inform development and implementation of a School Climate Improvement Plan.

PARTNERSHIPS

We, along with our partner agencies understand that no single entity bears the responsibility, nor the possesses the capability to keep our students safe. There must be a concerted, comprehensive, continual effort to make and keep our schools as secure as possible. We have partnered with U.S. Department of Education and the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center, FEMA, our own Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, the New Jersey State Police, Department of Human Services, our respective County Prosecutors' Offices, local police, and others, in a collaborative effort to improve school security. In partnership with the Disaster and Terrorism Branch of the New Jersey Department of Human Services, we provided training in Comprehensive Active-Shooter Incident Management for Schools which speaks to the importance of emotional components before, during, and after such horrific events. To enhance information sharing, the Office of the Regional Operations and Intelligence Center, in concert with our department and the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, developed Intelligence Dissemination Reports for the school sector. These were most recently provided following the aftermath of the school shootings in Parkland, Florida; in anticipation of the school walkouts which occurred across the Nation; and prior to high

school graduation ceremonies to provide situational awareness to schools throughout the State. We will continue to seek additional collaboration in efforts to more broadly face the challenges of school safety.

Finally, in an effort to learn from our colleagues around the Nation who are all seeking to improve school safety and security in the wake of the track act of school violence at Parkland Florida, in May of this year the Commissioner and I attended a school safety training hosted by the Indiana Department of Education. It was an honor to be a guest of the Indiana Department of Education to learn how their school and district leaders engage State and National best practices in school safety. We look forward to attending additional professional learning opportunities in the future.

CONCLUSION

Despite what seems to be a mounting tide of senseless violence occurring within our schools; schools overall, remain relatively safe places for our children. However, we cannot remain idly by and allow injury, both emotional and physical, and deaths to occur among our students. We must reject that this is the new normal, stem, and turn back the tide of school violence. We must pledge to do more.

Paraphrasing Commissioner Repollet: “. . . while we cannot control individual student behavior we [must continue] to provide guidance and support through training and resources to the school districts in order to identify promising practices and effective preventative strategies.” This has been our mission, and we, along with our partners and stakeholders in school security will continue to do so to the best of our abilities.

I again thank you for the opportunity to address this esteemed subcommittee.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, sir.

The Chair now recognizes Major Hengemuhle.

STATEMENT OF JEANNE HENGEMUHLE, COMMANDING OFFICER, DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES SECTION, NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE

Ms. HENGEMUHLE. Good morning, Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am Major Jeanne Hengemuhle, commanding officer of the Division Human Resources Section.

The Division of State Police consists of four primary branches. Through these branches, the division preserves the ability to augment assets to address all hazards and threats from a holistic approach. Each branch works both independently and in concert as they pool resources to address the State’s most pressing concerns. The members within these branches actively seek out and maintain crucial relationships with outside entities, community leaders, school administrators, and other stakeholders to promote our abilities to counter school violence and to implement initiatives on school safety and security.

School safety and security plans as mandated by the Department of Education effectively outline the State’s approach in preparing for threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk to the security and safety of New Jersey schools. Through the direction of the Department of Education, all school districts in New Jersey are required to have a school safety and security plan. These plans include procedures to respond to critical incidents. All plans for those schools located in State Police-patrolled areas are housed in both hard copy and electronic copy so they are immediately available to Troopers if an emergent situation occurs.

One constant message across all branches within the Division is to develop innovative strategies and partnerships with public and private entities to prevent, protect, and respond to threats that spe-

cifically target our schools. Evidence of this resides within the School Safety and Outreach Unit, which was recreated under the Division's Recruiting and Employee Development Bureau and is principally responsible for school safety and community outreach programs. They have established a partnership with the Department of Education, Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning. Members of the School Safety and Outreach Unit have participated in and supported school safety and security planning efforts, which include unannounced visits/drills and security planning efforts, instructing anti-bullying and anti-violence programs, and delivering drug prevention programs such as Law Enforcement Against Drugs, LEAD.

The New Jersey State Police participates in the majority of the unannounced drills conducted State-wide. Led by the Department of Education, the unannounced drills provide technical assistance and support to schools with their preparedness efforts, while sharing best practices observed in these other districts. The evaluation of the drill is informational and provides an opportunity for cooperative collaboration.

Presenting and instructing various programs through our School Safety and Outreach Unit demonstrates the State Police's commitment to protecting our youth and communities from the proliferation of drugs, drug-related crimes, peer-to-peer cyber bullying, and violence.

The Division has also partnered with the New Jersey Department of Homeland Security and Preparedness in a coordinated effort in planning and active participation in active-shooter exercises. These exercises are intended to test our abilities to respond effectively and efficiently to any hazards and threats to our communities and schools. The New Jersey State Police has looked at best practices in responding to an active-shooter incident and has just begun rolling out a restructure of our current protocols.

Field Operations Troopers normally assigned to general policing stations throughout the State have received additional training and certifications, and are positioned as School Resource Troopers for 9 regional high schools. They have the ability to immediately respond to all hazards and threats while providing instruction to students on a variety of topics and lessons at the school administration's request. The Troopers' presence also provides a sense of comfort and deterrence while further building public and community trust in law enforcement.

Finally, in an attempt to further bolster school safety and public trust in law enforcement, the superintendent, Colonel Patrick Callahan, with the support of the Governor and the attorney general, has encouraged all enlisted members to visit schools where the State police is the sole provider of law enforcement services. These unannounced visits take place while members are traversing the State during the course of their day or in route to and from their primary work assignments. The randomness of this program also affords the State Police another layer of security via visible deterrence while building community relations and trust with school entities.

Collaboration and community trust are essential components that need to be developed and fostered in order to sustain strong

relations with our community leaders and school administrators. The reality is that the State police, or any single law enforcement entity, lacks the personnel to appropriately address all hazards and threats independently.

The collaborative working relationship between the State police, the Governor's office, the Office of Attorney General, Office of Homeland Security, and all of the departments critical to school safety will allow New Jersey to strengthen our plans and responses with regard to school safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Hengemuhle follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEANNE HENGEMUHLE

JULY 9, 2018

Good Morning Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, and Members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am honored to speak on behalf of the dedicated professionals of the New Jersey State Police. I am Major Jeanne Hengemuhle, commanding officer of the Division Human Resources Section of the New Jersey State Police.

The division of State Police consists of four primary branches: Administration, Investigations, Homeland Security, and Operations. Through these branches, the division preserves the ability to augment assets to address all-hazards and threats from a holistic approach. Each branch works both independently and in concert, as they pool resources to address the State's most pressing concerns. The members within these branches actively seek out and maintain crucial relationships with outside agencies, community leaders, school administrators and other stakeholders to promote our abilities to counter school violence and to implement initiatives on school safety and security.

Under the direction of Attorney General Grewal, school safety and security has been enhanced. On March 26 of this year, General Grewal updated Directive 2016-7, to add school to the list of soft targets on Suspicious Activities Reports. By doing this, all threats of violence against schools (in any form, through any medium and from any source) are reported to the Regional Operations and Intelligence Center (ROIC) and the county terrorism coordinator. Now, the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (O.H.S.P.) and the ROIC can analyze, track and disseminate threats against schools on a joint Intelligence Dissemination Report which reaches law enforcement and school superintendents State-wide, to name just a few entities. This flow of information allows New Jersey law enforcement to strengthen their ability to deter and/or stop school violence.

School safety and security plans as mandated by the Department of Education (6A:16-5.1), effectively outline the State's approach in preparing for threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk to the security and safety of New Jersey schools. Through the direction of the Department of Education, all school districts in New Jersey are required to have a school safety and security plan. Each plan must be designed locally with the help of law enforcement, emergency management officials, public health officials, and other key stakeholders. All plans must be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. These plans include procedures to respond to critical incidents ranging from bomb threats, fires and gas leaks, to an active-shooter situation. All plans for those schools located in State Police patrolled area are housed in both hard copy and electronic copy so they are immediately available to troopers if an emergent situation occurs.

The threat and reality of an active-shooter situation in our schools has become all too familiar in the United States. While, here in New Jersey, we have been generally spared from the truly horrific events that have plagued other communities, we still need to plan accordingly, collaborate, and to trust in our partner agencies in order to prevent these criminal acts. In the past, the New Jersey State Police has assumed a signature role in defending the State and its communities against these crimes. However, a justly comprehensive preparedness plan is a communal responsibility that requires a public effort in promoting safety and resilience through shared common goals and trust. It is vital that all partners build, organize, and enhance security and safety capabilities in a unified approach to be better prepared to counter all-hazards and threats in our communities and schools.

One constant message across all branches within the division is to develop innovative strategies and partnerships with public and private entities to prevent, protect, and respond to threats that specifically target our schools. Evidence of this resides within the School Safety & Outreach Unit, which was recreated under the Division's Recruiting & Employee Development Bureau, and is principally responsible for school safety and community outreach programs. They have established a partnership with the Department of Education, Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning. Members of the School Safety & Outreach Unit have participated in and supported school safety and security planning efforts, which include "Unannounced Visits/Drills (UAD)," instructing anti-bullying and anti-violence programs, and delivering drug prevention programs (such as, Law Enforcement Against Drugs—L.E.A.D.).

The New Jersey State Police participates in the majority of the UAD's conducted State-wide. Led by the Department of Education, the unannounced drills provide technical assistance and support to schools with their preparedness efforts, while sharing best practices observed in other districts. The evaluation of the drill is informational and provides an opportunity for cooperative collaboration. Only one scenario is drilled: Active Shooter. As of 6/12/18, 66 unannounced drills were conducted State-wide.

By presenting and instructing anti-bullying, anti-violence, and drug prevention programs, the division is afforded the opportunity to address several concerns simultaneously. The most obvious benefit is establishing trust between communities and their schools and law enforcement officials. Further, these programs provide the State Police with an avenue to stage a steady and visible deterrence for those who may pose a threat or intend to inflict harm on our communities and in our schools. Last, having troopers instruct in the L.E.A.D. program, demonstrates the State Police's commitment to protecting our youth and communities from the proliferation of drugs, drug-related crimes, peer-to-peer/cyber bullying, and violence.

The division has also partnered with the O.H.S.P., in a coordinated effort in the planning, and active participation in "Active-Shooter Exercises." These exercises are intended to test our abilities in responding effectively and efficiently to any hazards and threats to our communities and schools. Specialized units and personnel are dedicated from both the Division's Homeland Security and Operations Branches as they coordinate their responses in these drills. The New Jersey State Police has looked at best practices on responding to an active-shooter incident and has just begun rolling out a restructuring of our current protocols.

Field Operations Troopers normally assigned to general police stations throughout the State, have received additional training, certifications, and are positioned as school resource troopers for 9 regional high schools. They have the ability to immediately respond to all hazards and threats, while providing instruction to students on a variety of topics and lessons at the school administration's request. The trooper's presence also provides a sense of comfort and deterrence, while further building public and community trust in law enforcement.

Finally, in an attempt to further bolster school safety and public trust in law enforcement, the superintendent, Colonel Patrick Callahan, with support from the Governor and attorney general, has encouraged all enlisted members to visit schools where the State Police is the sole provider of law enforcement services. These unannounced visits take place while members are traversing the State during the course of their day or en route to and from their primary work assignment. The randomness of this program also affords the State Police another layer of security via visible deterrence, while building community relations and trust with school officials. In order to promote an open line of communication, all 21 county prosecutors received a letter from Colonel Callahan informing them of this initiative.

The State Police must establish community relationships and maintain public trust in order to continue to educate, detect, deter, prevent, and respond effectively to all hazards and threats. Collaboration and community trust are essential components that need to be developed and fostered in order to sustain strong relations with our community leaders and school administrators. The reality is, the State Police, or any single law enforcement entity, lacks the personnel to appropriately address all-hazards and threats independently. The State Police must approach our training, response, deterrence, and initiatives from a global perspective, while partnering with community leaders, school officials, outside law enforcement agencies, and State Departments and Offices to better serve and protect the citizens of this State.

The collaborative working relationship between the State Police and the Governor's office, Office of Attorney General, Office of Homeland Security, and all of the Departments critical to school safety will allow New Jersey to strengthen our plans and responses with regard to school safety.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Major.
Mr. Gerity.

**STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY P. GERITY, PRESIDENT, NEW
JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS**

Mr. GERITY. Thank you, sir. Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, my name is Timothy Gerity. I am president of the New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers. I am also a full-time sworn law enforcement officer in Saddle River in Bergen County. My current assignment is that of Detective Sergeant, municipal counter-terrorism coordinator and liaison to the schools. I am also a member of the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office Cyber Crimes Task Force and School Safety Task Force.

In January 2002 I was assigned as a school resource officer to a K-5 elementary, K-12 private, and 9-12 regional high school. Over the course of my career I have had the opportunity to serve on numerous committees and task forces at the local, county, and State-wide level.

One of those working groups which is of particular importance to my testimony today was the group that authored the Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement between law enforcement and education, or the MOA for short. This document, jointly issued by the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety and Department of Education, serves as a basis or guide for the interaction between law enforcement and education. That document has been updated in 1999, 2007, 2011, and 2015.

The purpose of my testimony as president is to speak about the New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers. In 2001, a new organization was incorporated in New Jersey, NJASRO for short. It is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization for school-based law enforcement, school administrators, and school security safety professionals working as partners to protect students, school faculty and staff, and the schools they attend.

Through planning and strategic lobbying, the organization was successful in having the Safe Schools Resource Officer School Liaison Training Law passed in 2006. Recognizing the significant importance of properly training law enforcement officers, the Police Training Act required the Police Training Commission, in consultation with the attorney general, to develop a 40-hour training course for safe schools resource officer school liaisons.

Similarly, in Title 18 Part A Education, 18A:17-43.1, the same training course is required for service as a safe schools liaison to law enforcement.

NJASRO has trained approximately 1,200 class attendees over the last 10 years. On average, we would hold 4 classes in police training commission-approved facilities around the State, with approximately 25 attendees. In 2018, we have scheduled 8 classes and have capped attendance for logistical purposes to 40 attendees. Earlier this year we held classes in Monmouth in Bergen County. For the remainder of the year we have classes scheduled in Monmouth, Union, Ocean, Essex, Atlantic, and Morris Counties. We have begun scheduling for 2019 and have already booked Camden County for a January class.

The 5-day class consists of instruction blocks that include but are not limited to school resource officer roles and responsibilities, school safety, behavior and risk assessment, counterterrorism, juvenile law, school searches and seizures, the Memorandum of Understanding, Title 18 Part A, mentoring, special needs, and working with the administration. Attendees must verify their employment with a law enforcement agency or provide documentation of their employment by a board of education. Our cadre of instructors includes active-duty law enforcement, retired law enforcement, and education representatives.

I turn it back to the dais. Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gerity follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY P. GERITY

JULY 9, 2018

My name is Timothy P. Gerity, president of the New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers (NJASRO). Thank you for taking time to hear from members of the public regarding the important issue of school safety.

I am a resident of West Milford, New Jersey in Passaic County. I am the father of 3 children and a full-time sworn law enforcement officer with the Saddle River Police Department in Bergen County, New Jersey. I hold a Master of Administrative Science Degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University with graduate certificates in Administrative Science and School Safety and Administration. My current assignment is that of Detective Sergeant, Municipal Counter Terrorism Coordinator and liaison to the schools. I am also a member of the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office Cyber Crimes Task Force and School Safety Task Force.

For the purposes of establishing my background in school safety I'd like to give a brief history. In 1994 I was assigned as a D.A.R.E officer to a public and private school. I went on to become a D.A.R.E mentor. A mentor is an individual who trains fellow officers on how to deliver certain curriculum in schools. In January 2002 I was assigned as a school resource officer to a K-5 elementary, K-12 private, and 9-12 regional high school. Over the course of my career I have had the opportunity to serve on numerous school safety task forces and committees. These task forces and committees have been at the local, county, and State-wide level. I was a Schools Sector Facilities Subcommittee member of the New Jersey Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force responsible, in part, for making recommendations that were reduced to writing for the 2004 "School Safety Manual Best Practices Guidelines." In 2005, as a representative of NJASRO, I participated in an initiative that would see every school in New Jersey visited by a school safety expert. This initiative facilitated the completion, as part of Best Practices, two separate documents; a Vulnerability Assessment and a Field Checklist. The field checklist was designed to audit compliance with selected aspects of school security best practices. The local use vulnerability assessment was designed to identify vulnerabilities within the school and generate recommendations to reduce the risks.

I still remain active and involved with committees and task forces that continue to evolve as administrations change and the nature of threats and incidents also change. In the interest of brevity, I will not go in depth on all of my involvement on all of these initiatives however the work product of a particular working group of which I was a participant of bears significant relevance to this testimony. In 1988 the Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Law Enforcement and Education (MOA) was jointly issued by the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety and the Department of Education. This document continues to serve as a basis or guide for the interaction between law enforcement and education. The MOA addresses emerging issues in schools whether they are related to weapons, school safety, harassment, intimidation, and bullying or technology. It also addresses the sharing of information between education and law enforcement as well as law enforcement conducting operations on school grounds. Undergoing consistent updates, the document serves as a relevant and important piece of reference material for not only those who function within the school environment but also for those who create and execute school safety and security plans. The MOA was updated in 1992, 1999, 2007, 2011, and 2015 by a committee of various representatives from sectors who have interest in both public and private educational institutions. I was a member

of this working group up until 2011 but professional demands limited my availability. It is my goal to return as a seated member of this working group.

The purpose of my testimony, as president, is to speak about the New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers. In November 2001, a new organization was incorporated in New Jersey. The New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers (NJASRO) is a not-for profit 501(c)(3) organization. NJASRO is for school-based law enforcement officers, school administrators, and school security/safety professionals working as partners to protect students, school faculty and staff and the schools they attend. The true and tested strength in the School Resource Officer program is that it is much more than a curriculum. The SRO Concept can easily be adapted to the needs of ANY community, desiring safe schools, and effective community partnerships. The Mission Statement of the organization was and still is to:

“Provide a network of communications and training for New Jersey’s School Resource Officers, Youth services personnel, School administrators, and Educators; Distribute and share advice, and coordinate information on the value of teaching elementary, middle, junior high, and high school students on the principles of good citizenship and community responsibility; Reduce school violence and drug abuse by enforcing violations of the law occurring on school property; Introduce programs that promote and enhance acceptable social behavior.”

Through planning and strategic lobbying the organization was successful in having the Safe Schools Resource Officer/School Liaison Training Law passed in 2006. (Pub. L. 2005, c.276 (C.52:17B–71.8 et al.)) Recognizing the significant importance of properly training law enforcement officers; the Police Training Act required the Police Training Commission in consultation with the Attorney General, to develop a 40-hour training course for safe schools resource officers/school liaisons. Similarly in Title 18A Education—18A:17–43.1 the same training course is required for service as safe schools resource officer or liaison to law enforcement.

“ . . . board of education shall not assign a safe schools resource officer to a public school unless that individual first completes the safe schools resource officer training course.”

“ . . . board of education shall not assign an employee to serve as a school liaison to law enforcement unless that individual first completes the safe schools resource officer training course.”

A Safe Schools Resource Officer/School Liaison Training Program provided by NJASRO was found to meet all statutory training requirements and was implemented in police academies throughout the State. This training supports Section 1.8 of the State-wide Memorandum of Understanding.

“It is recognized and agreed that without on-going active communication and cooperation among school and law enforcement officials the goals of this Agreement cannot be achieved. For this reason, Article 2 of this Agreement requires that law enforcement agencies and school districts designate one or more liaisons.”

It is important to note that a safe and secure school environment requires the fostering of a supportive and nurturing learning environment, as well as protection from outside/inside threats. School Resource Officers, Class III Specials, school administrators, educators, and school safety professionals, properly trained, pursuant to C. 52:17 B–71.8, help to ensure that our children will learn in the most positive and constructive school environment possible.

It is also important to note that while everyone involved in the process wanted to make schools safer for students and employees, there was also a concern that “over policing” in schools would have an impact on the learning environment of schools and negatively affect school culture. In 2009, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) issued a White Paper: “Policing in Schools, Developing a Governance Document for School Resource Officers in K–12 Schools.” In it, the ACLU highlighted the importance of written guidelines for an SRO program and the need for support and training for the SRO to understand their role within the school and the rights and needs of the children they would serve. Without that understanding, the SRO might create an “adversarial environment that pushes students, particularly at-risk students, out of school rather than engaging them in a positive educational environment.” The ACLU recommended that the SRO receive at least 40 hours of training at a minimum, to include topics such as adolescent development and psychology, working with special needs children, and cultural competency. NJASRO’s Safe Schools Resource Officers/School Liaison Training pre-dates and meets the criteria.

School resource officers (“SRO”) are “police officers” who have extensive training, experience with the juvenile justice system, and community policing in schools. They

are role models, mentors, and act as a liaison between the police department, school administrators, and the local community. In many cases, SROs also teach classes such as the DARE curriculum to elementary students and play a vital role, on all levels, in identifying at-risk students, cases of abuse, intervene in drug and alcohol use and provide support for students who feel they have no one to turn to. SROs also provide law-related education to high school students in driver's education and business-related classes, among other courses.

While most would agree that a full-time police officer who is also a school resource officer is the ideal solution, this option is out of reach to many New Jersey districts because of budgetary restrictions. A full-time officer who is an SRO can cost in excess of \$100,000, per year, per officer, including salary and benefits. Also, a full-time officer can be ordered to respond to police matters outside of schools causing them to leave school grounds during the school day. As a compromise to the desire to have full-time SROs in schools, balanced against the significant cost and the 2 percent budget cap for New Jersey public schools, the legislature offered a solution in 2016. NJASRO played a substantial role in providing pertinent information and proposing legislative language to find a solution to provide high-quality and cost-effective safety measures for schools. With the signing of Senate Bill 86, the creation of Special Law Enforcement Officer—Class III (“SLEO Class III”) a 2015 legislative Task Force recommendation was signed into law.

The creation of the SLEO Class III now allows school districts to have a more affordable option to enhance school security and increase the number of highly-trained SROs in New Jersey Schools. SLEO Class III officers are typically paid hourly and do not receive health and retirement benefits for this position. The Class III officer is generally hired by the chief of police of the local police department and is in his/her chain of command. Payment for these positions can be paid by the board of education, the municipality or on a fee-sharing basis. It is important for all sides involved from the superintendent of schools, mayor, and police chief to have an open and productive line of communication on this topic.

However, even with the current proliferation of Class III officers, who are required to attend the Safe Schools Resource Officer/School Liaison training, the financial struggle remains the same for some districts. In the late 1990's the COPS Office, Community Oriented Policing Services, under the United States Department of Justice, offered a 4-year SRO grant program. The grant paid the costs of assigning an officer to the schools for the first 3 years. The 4th year was split between the community and the education entity. This is truly where assigning police officers to schools gained traction in New Jersey and became an accepted Community Policing Model. Unfortunately, after its seminal introduction, the grant was not renewed. In the past few years there has been some very limited, competitive grant opportunities available to offset the costs of assigning an SRO to schools. However, they have been few and far in between. Current Federal grant opportunities, in the school safety arena, support training programs, development of initiatives or lean toward installing technology. There are very few, if any, that financially support districts in putting “boots on the ground.” I’m hopeful that, through my testimony, there comes a renewed opportunity through State or Federal grants to help local districts pay for full-time SRO’s, which by definition includes Class III Officers.

NJASRO has trained approximately 1,200 class attendees over the last 10 years. On average we would hold 4 classes at Police Training Commission-approved facilities around the State with approximately 25 attendees. In 2018 we’ve scheduled 8 classes and have capped attendance, for logistical purposes, to 40 attendees. Earlier this year we held classes in Monmouth County and Bergen County. For the remainder of the year we have classes scheduled in Monmouth, Union, Ocean, Essex, Atlantic, and Morris Counties. We’ve begun scheduling for 2019 and have already booked Camden County for a January class. The 5-day class consists of instruction blocks that include, but are not limited to, SRO roles and responsibilities, school safety, behavior and risk assessment, counterterrorism, juvenile law, school searches and seizures, Memorandum of Understanding, Title 18 A, mentoring, special needs and working with the administration. Attendees must verify their employment with a law enforcement agency or provide documentation of their employment by a Board of Education. Our cadre of instructors include active-duty law enforcement, retired law enforcement and education representatives.

Security and vigilance has become standard practice in our Government buildings, airports, and other high-profile locations as part of our Nation’s homeland security efforts. This has resulted in the dismantling of numerous terror plots and created an environment where terror attacks are more difficult to execute at these locations. In light of increased security measures at other locations, terror attacks on soft targets involving innocent civilians and often children are becoming an increasingly more desirable target for attacks. If schools are to be considered soft targets then

planning teams must remain diligent and open-minded as they consider emerging threats. This is a complicated narrative as current trends dictate that emergency and crisis plans must be expanded to include the threats from Home-Grown Violent Extremists (HGVE's) and the use of encrypted social media by terrorist networks. This places a tremendous burden on school safety planners as the luxury of planning and preparing for an attack orchestrated by radical extremist groups outside the United States, has shifted to where the planning and preparation must include threats originating from those individuals who are currently members of our student population. While successful threat assessments are vital to preventing the next school shooting the assessments must now address those individuals who face potential radicalization as a result of perceived injustices, anger, and isolation. The shift in planning must overcome the belief that terror attacks will only come from outside sources.

Given these challenges facing school safety planners an assessment must be made in how plans are drafted and executed. School administrators must be made aware of common radicalization techniques affecting student populations and be given effective programs to challenge on-line radicalization messaging. They must be aware of and be able to identify behavioral indicators and provide assistance to youth who are struggling to adjust within their community. This in turn may help children cope with their feelings of isolation, anger, and depression and reduce the opportunity for extremists to exploit these feelings for recruitment.

There are ample opportunities to assist youth and many techniques are already in use as schools look to prevent bias incidents and bullying from occurring. Schools could convene students from varying cultural backgrounds to promote cultural understanding and provide educational opportunities on aspects of different cultures. They could promote open discussions with the assistance of the community and religious centers about conflicts and ways that violent extremists may use religion to justify their actions. These few improvements in training, educating, and providing resources may greatly reduce the likelihood of a terror attack from within on a U.S. school.

New Jersey has long recognized the importance and value of a safe and secure school environment. It has also recognized that safety and security must be in balance with a school's main function which is to educate our children. School violence is a complex issue that can result in a never-ending debate amongst scholars in all fields of study. The common agreeable element amongst those who debate the topic is the fact we, as a society, need to do more to protect the school population. If we look at the history of initiatives in New Jersey, from 1988 to 2018 we see guides, task force creations, documents, manuals, electronic databases, plans, codes, directives, recommendations, laws, minimum requirements, and reports. NJASRO is proud to have participated in the latest State-wide school safety initiative. Just last week the New Jersey Department of Education held its School Safety Specialist Certification Training. I was proud to write the curriculum for and present on the topic of Law Enforcement and Education Partnerships. All of the initiatives, recognized or unrecognized, are the result of the due diligence in the areas of school safety and security by the countless members of various State agencies, task forces, working groups, and committees.

While continued public meetings and community discussion are valuable platforms, true change will only come through action. Adequate resources also need to be allocated to enable schools to pursue these measures, and mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure compliance.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Mr. Gerity.
The Chair now recognizes Mr. Reilly.

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL REILLY, PRESIDENT, COMMUNITY
EDUCATION COUNCIL 31, STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK**

Mr. REILLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman Donovan and Ranking Member Payne, for inviting me to testify today.

One of the most frightening things a parent can hear is that there is an emergency incident at their child's school. We feel vulnerable, and our first thought is to immediately go to the school. Parents and guardians should not respond to the school unless they receive official notification to do so. If a school has activated a shelter-in—the incident is in close proximity but outside the school building—or a hard lockdown—incident is in the actual school

building—parents and all non-emergency personnel will not be allowed into the building, and all staff and students will not be allowed to leave the building without authorization from emergency responders.

An increase in vehicles and people at the school can interfere with emergency personnel responding to the incident. The first priority is to have a clear pathway for emergency responders to ensure everyone's safety.

Communication. There are certain circumstances when the NYPD and the DOE will limit what details are released. Although that may seem inappropriate, there is a legal reason. If preliminary details are included in a community notification and later determined to be inaccurate, that may jeopardize a criminal case. All paperwork and communications generated by the NYPD and the DOE are evidence and, as such, required to be handed over to a defendant's attorney. For instance, if a community notification lists a specific license plate, color, make, and model of a vehicle used in a crime, and then it is determined that the initial information provided was incorrect, the suspect's defense attorney could use the incorrect information to possibly raise a reasonable doubt, limiting the chances of a conviction in a case.

When an incident happens, word can travel like the telephone game. With today's technology it spreads faster, with even greater twists and embellishments. It is understandable that, in many cases, schools can't release specific details about an incident. That can change when the incident is deemed under control. Schools can and should communicate with families to address any safety concerns they may have. An email, letter, or robo-call acknowledging an incident occurred and reassuring that safety protocols were implemented can help alleviate community concerns.

Providing notification to the school community should be a crucial part of a school's emergency response system. Communication builds trust and collaboration. Lack of communication leads to mistrust and gives the illusion that nothing is being done. That can be extremely damaging to a school community.

It is also important to note that New York Education Law and the New York State Education Department mandate each public school to conduct at least 8 evacuation/fire drills and 4 shelter-in/lockdown drills each year.

New York City DOE school safety, emergency readiness. A vital component of emergency readiness within the DOE is the School Safety Plan. As part of the Safety Plan, schools/campuses must identify individual staff members to become Building Response Team members. In campus settings, each school must have one representative on the BRT. The BRT members are hand-selected by the principal to manage all school-related emergencies until the first responders arrive. In addition, all schools implement General Response Protocols, GRP, which outline the initial actions to be taken if an incident requires evacuation, shelter-in, or a lockdown. These actions are based on the use of common language to initiate the measures all school communities will take in a variety of incidents.

All staff and students receive training in the GRP, and drills are conducted at various times throughout the school year. Lessons

have been designed for different grade levels so that the information is delivered to students without causing unnecessary alarm.

Information about New York City DOE General Response Protocols is provided to parents on the *schools.nyc.gov* website to help guide conversations with their children about emergency readiness in schools.

Community Education Council 31 has been advocating for greater security protocols for several years. In 2012, CEC 31 introduced a proposal titled “Comprehensive School Safety and Security,” which included locking all doors, installing security cameras at main entrances to school buildings, improving School Building Response Team training, overhauling school public address systems, and incorporating retired police officers as special patrolmen to supplement school security.

After discussing the proposal with our local, State, and Federal representatives, the plan was introduced in State legislation and signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo in 2014. The laws authorized the New York State Education Department to provide grant opportunities to schools to improve infrastructure security—replacing doors, installing cameras and other technology for school buildings—mandating increased training for school emergency response teams and more frequent security drills. The law also allows school districts to hire retired police officers as school resource officers. In addition, in the same time period, DOJ authorized the use of civilian clothes school resource officers, which aligned with the CEC 31 plan. Until then, the Federal grant opportunity only applied to uniformed school resource officers.

After the Sandy Hook tragedy, a principal on Staten Island was proactive and locked the front door. Unfortunately, the school safety agent assigned to the school filed a grievance, claiming it wasn’t in their job description to get up each time someone knocked to open the door. These types of shortfalls in security can and must be adjusted to ensure the safety and security of our schools.

Some have raised concerns that locking the front door may hinder emergency responders because they may not be able to access the building as quickly as possible. I believe the use of a key fob, pass key, or another similar technological access device could be utilized, allowing immediate entry for emergency responders. The FDNY has a similar system where they utilize a master key for elevator access across the city.

It is important to remember that it is impossible to prevent all incidents, but we must continually try our best to limit the impact if an emergency occurs.

CEC 31 believes there are several other protocols and supplemental supports that can help school communities. Improving communication between agencies would be beneficial. The NYPD and DOE do a tremendous job protecting our schools, but like everything else, there is always room for improvement. Having a regional Fusion Center model to monitor and track incidents and threats to schools could streamline information sharing to mitigate the possibility of missing an important trend or piece of information.

Additionally, providing training and potential requirements at the Federal level for school districts to report incidents of bullying

or threats, as well as the disposition of all incident investigations, could help identify students who may need additional support and/or counseling. Adding additional counselors to our schools would be a proactive step, but as I am sure you are aware, that requires funding.

Last, after a recent incident at a high school in Staten Island involving a potential threat with a firearm, we held a safety meeting with our elected officials as well as the DOE and NYPD. We spoke about the impact to the response caused by parents and caregivers rushing to the school at the onset of the emergency situation.

During that meeting we discussed incorporating a family staging area in school safety plans. This staging area would be a safe distance away from each school building. The school would send an email, family/community notification, that would include the staging location, which would be positioned a safe distance from the school building. Having a staging area could reduce potential obstacles emergency responders may encounter, increasing response times and saving lives. A staging area would allow emergency responders to focus resources on the initial incident and not redirect personnel for crowd control at the immediate incident scene.

If possible, would DHS consider incorporating a parent/community video and training piece in the Emergency Management Institute Independent Study Program, suggesting schools incorporate a staging area and the importance for parents and other community members to wait for a notification and only respond to officially designated staging areas?

I thank you for your time and allowing me to testify, and I yield back to the Chair. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Reilly follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL REILLY

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member and Honorable Members. Thank you for inviting me to testify today.

One of the most frightening things a parent can hear is that there is an emergency incident at their child's school. We feel vulnerable and our first thought is to immediately go to the school.

Parents and guardians should NOT respond to the school unless they receive official notification to do so.

If a school has activated a Shelter-In (the incident is in close proximity but outside the school building) or a Hard Lockdown (incident is in the actual school building) parents and all non-emergency personnel will NOT be allowed into the building and all staff and students will NOT be allowed to leave the building without authorization from emergency responders.

An increase in vehicles and people at the school can interfere with emergency personnel responding to the incident. The first priority is to have a clear pathway for emergency responders to ensure everyone's safety.

COMMUNICATION

There are certain circumstances when the NYPD and DOE will limit what details are released. Although that may seem inappropriate, there is a legal reason. If preliminary details are included in a community notification and later determined to be inaccurate, that may jeopardize a criminal case. All paperwork and communications generated by the NYPD and DOE are evidence, and as such, required to be handed over to a defendant's attorney.

For instance; if a community notification lists a specific license plate, color, make, and model of a vehicle used in a crime and then it is determined that the initial information provided was incorrect, the suspect's defense attorney could use the incorrect information to possibly raise a reasonable doubt, limiting the chances of a conviction in a case.

When an incident happens, word can travel like the telephone game. With today's technology, it spreads faster with even greater twists and embellishments. It is understandable that, in many cases, schools can't release specific details about an incident. That can change when the incident is deemed under control. Schools can and should communicate with families to address any safety concerns they may have. An email, letter, or robo-call acknowledging an incident occurred and reassuring that safety protocols were implemented can help alleviate community concerns.

Providing notification to the school community should be a crucial part of a school's emergency response system. Communication builds trust and collaboration. Lack of communication leads to mistrust, and gives the illusion that nothing is being done. That can be extremely damaging to a school community.

It is also important to note that New York Education Law and the New York State Education Department mandate each public school to conduct at least 8 evacuation/fire drills and 4 shelter-in/lockdown drills each year.

NYC DOE SCHOOL SAFETY: EMERGENCY READINESS

"A vital component of emergency readiness within the DOE is the School Safety Plan (SSP). As part of the Safety Plan, schools/campuses must identify individual staff members to become Building Response Team members (BRT). In campus settings, each school must have one representative on the BRT. The BRT members are hand selected by the Principal to manage all school-related emergencies until the first responders arrive. In addition, all schools implement General Response Protocols (GRP), which outline the initial actions to be taken if an incident requires Evacuation, Shelter-In, or a Lockdown. These actions are based on the use of common language to initiate the measures all school communities will take in a variety of incidents.

"All staff and students receive training in the GRP and drills are conducted at various times throughout the school year. Lessons have been designed for different grade levels so that the information is delivered to students without causing unnecessary alarm."

Information about NYC DOE General Response Protocols is provided to parents on the *schools.nyc.gov* website to help guide conversations with their children about emergency readiness in schools.

Community Education Council 31 has been advocating for greater security protocols for several years. In 2012 CEC 31 introduced a proposal—titled Comprehensive School Safety and Security—which included: Locking all doors; installing security cameras at main entrances to school buildings; improving School Building Response Team training; overhauling School Public Address systems, and incorporating retired police officers as special patrolmen to supplement school security.

After discussing the proposal with our local, State, and Federal representatives the plan was introduced in State legislation and signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo in 2014. The laws authorized the NYS Education Department to provide grant opportunities to schools to improve infrastructure security (i.e. replacing doors, installing cameras, and other technology) for school buildings, mandating increased training for school emergency response teams, and more frequent security drills. The law also allows school districts to hire retired police officers as School Resource Officers. In addition, in the same time period, DOJ authorized the use of civilian clothes school resource officers, which aligned with the CEC 31 plan. Until then, the Federal grant opportunity only applied to uniformed school resource officers.

After the Sandy Hook tragedy, a principal on Staten Island was proactive and locked the front door. Unfortunately, the school safety agent assigned to the school filed a grievance, claiming it wasn't in their job description to get up each time someone knocked to open the door. These types of shortfalls in security can and must be adjusted to ensure the safety and security of our schools.

Some have raised concerns that locking the front door may hinder emergency responders because they may not be able to access the building as quickly as possible. I believe the use of a "Key Fob" pass key or another similar technological access device could be utilized, allowing immediate entry for emergency responders. The FDNY has a similar system where they utilize a "Master Key" for elevator access across the city.

It is important to remember that it is impossible to prevent all incidents, but we must continually try our best to limit the impact if an emergency occurs.

CEC 31 believes there are several other protocols and supplemental supports that can help school communities. Improving communication between agencies would be beneficial. The NYPD and DOE do a tremendous job protecting our schools, but like everything else there is always room for improvement. Having a regional "Fusion

Center” model to monitor and track incidents and threats to schools could streamline information sharing to mitigate the possibility of missing an important trend or piece of information.

Additionally, providing training and potential requirements at the Federal level for school districts to report incidents of bullying, threats, etc. as well as the disposition of all incident investigations could help identify students who may need additional support and/or counseling. Adding additional counselors to our schools would be a proactive step, but as I am sure you are aware that requires funding.

Last, after a recent incident at a high school involving a potential threat with a firearm, we held a safety meeting with our elected officials as well as the DOE and NYPD. We spoke about the impact to the response caused by parents and caregivers rushing to the school at the onset of the emergency situation.

During that meeting we discussed incorporating a family staging area in school safety plans. This staging area would be a safe distance away from each school building. The school would send an initial family/community notification that would include the staging location, which would be positioned a safe distance from the school building. Having a staging area would could reduce potential obstacles emergency responders may encounter, increasing response times and saving lives. A staging area would allow emergency responders to focus resources on the initial incident and not redirect personnel for crowd control at the immediate incident scene.

If possible, would DHS consider incorporating a parent/community video and training piece in the Emergency Management Institute Independent Study program, suggesting schools incorporate a staging area and the importance for parents and other community members to wait for a notification and only respond to officially designated staging areas?

I thank you for your time and consideration and the opportunity to discuss the challenges we face with school security.

ATTACHMENT 1.—COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 31

MARCH 9, 2011

The following resolution was presented to the public at the Community Education Council 31 (CEC 31) Calendar Meeting held on March 7, 2011 at the Petrides Educational Complex, Staten Island, New York. A vote was taken and the resolution approved unanimously by voice-vote of the CEC members present, as reflected in the Minutes.

RESOLUTION NO. 65—RECOMMENDATION TO IMPLEMENT A CITY-WIDE PUBLIC ADDRESS/FIRE ALARM SYSTEM REPLACEMENT PROGRAM IN NEW YORK CITY SCHOOL FACILITIES

WHEREAS, many of the New York City public schools’ Public Address/Fire Alarm systems are not adequate for today’s ever-increasing demands for school safety; and

WHEREAS, numerous school administrators have requested overhauls of Public Address/Fire Alarm systems through Capital Plan Amendment requests; and

WHEREAS, many school administrators have reported deficiencies of the Public Address/Fire Alarm systems during critical and non-critical situations; and

WHEREAS, enhancement and/or replacement of such emergency equipment will improve each school administrator’s ability to notify staff, deploy and coordinate resources and effectively alleviate emergencies that may occur at a New York City public school facility; and

WHEREAS, The Public Address/Fire Alarm Replacement Program can be funded by reducing each district’s yearly Capital Plan fiscal allocations by 5 percent to 10 percent. The resulting funds can be allotted for 3 or 4 schools in each district to have a Public Address/Fire Alarm system retrofit yearly; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Education Council 31 requests the NYC Department of Education, Division of School Facilities and the NYC School Construction Authority implement a city-wide Public Address/Fire Alarm System Replacement Program similar to the Boiler Replacement Program that currently exists in the Capital Plan.

Explanation: In this ever-changing environment for school safety, it is imperative to have an emergency notification system that consistently operates effectively. It is extremely important to provide quick communication for emergencies or other important information from both a central location and an individual classroom. The Public Address/Fire Alarm Enhancement/Replacement Program will provide for an improved fire and life safety program for each New York City public school.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY by roll call vote of all members present: 9 YES; 0 NO (Absent for vote: Chadwick).

PASSED and ADOPTED this 7th Day of March, 2011.

KATHY BALDASSANO,
Administrative Assistant, CEC 31.

ATTACHMENT 2.—COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 31

JANUARY 8, 2013

The following resolution was presented to the public at the Community Education Council 31 (CEC 31) Calendar Meeting held on January 7, 2013 at the Petrides Complex, Staten Island, New York. A vote was taken and the resolution approved by the CEC members present, as reflected in the Minutes.

RESOLUTION NO. 76—CEC 31 RECOMMENDS THAT DOE INSTALLS “BUZZER” ENTRY SYSTEMS WITH VIDEO AND “PANIC BUTTONS” AT MAIN ENTRANCES TO NYC PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND CONSIDERS IMPLEMENTING RETIRED NYPD POLICE OFFICERS TO SUPPLEMENT SCHOOL SECURITY PERSONNEL

WHEREAS, recent concerns have been raised by Council members, parents, teachers, students, law enforcement personnel, education officials and advocates regarding security in NYC public schools; and

WHEREAS, current public school security consists of unarmed, uniformed New York Police Department (NYPD) school safety agents, with most NYC elementary schools having only one (1) school safety agent assigned; and

WHEREAS, current public school entry procedures allow individuals to enter school buildings through an unlocked door at the main entrance, with the first point of visitor verification at the security desk—located beyond the entrance, inside the school building—where visitors are required to show identification; and

WHEREAS, Community Education Council 31 (CEC 31) believes that school safety agents should have the opportunity to view a person requesting entry before the visitor gains access to any part of the building; and

WHEREAS, CEC 31 believes a “buzzer” entry system with video camera, video capture for future recognition and “panic buttons” directly linked to NYPD dispatchers would offer an additional layer of security for our schools and provide valuable lead-time to alert emergency personnel of a potential critical incident; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that CEC 31 requests that the Department of Education (DOE) installs “buzzer” entry systems with video camera, video capture and “panic buttons” in NYC public school buildings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CEC 31 requests that the NYPD and the DOE consider implementation of the following proposal designating retired NYPD police officers as “special patrolmen” to supplement current security personnel in NYC public schools.

A Proposal for the NYPD and DOE to Enhance Security in NYC Public School Buildings:

Recent events have raised concerns about security in schools throughout the Nation. Several school districts across the country have implemented the use of armed security guards to minimize the threat of potential shootings in schools.

CEC 31’s proposal would allow the NYC Department of Education the ability to hire retired NYC police officers as armed “special patrolmen”. These “special patrolmen” will specifically be assigned to enhance school security against potentially violent and armed threats and will NOT be involved in routine school disciplinary matters. These special patrolmen will have peace officer status.

The New York City Police Commissioner has the authority to designate qualified individuals as “Special Patrolmen” under the New York City Administrative Code, Section 14–106 (e) which states that “the NYC Police Commissioner under the application by any agency or public authority may appoint special patrolman for duty performed anywhere in the city for the agency or public authority.”

This initiative will require hiring approximately 300–500 retired NYC police officers, who are licensed to carry concealed firearms. The NYC Department of Education will grant, in writing, authorization for these special patrolmen to carry concealed firearms on school property. These retired officers will fall under the direct supervision of the NYPD School Safety Division. The retired police officers will be assigned on a rotating basis to schools throughout New York City. (The program could be expanded to assign a “special patrolman” to every NYC public school building—approximately 1,000 school buildings.)

Suggested Rules and Regulations for the Program:

- Administrative Code section 14–106 mandates that the special patrolmen MUST comply with the orders of the NYPD Commissioner and the rules of the New York City Police Department.
- The NYC Department of Education will pay the special patrolmen as an independent contract employee via a 1099. This payment system is similar to the Off-Duty Employment Program that currently exists for active NYPD members.
- Retired NYC police officers assigned as special patrolmen to the Department of Education will be required to file a 211 or 212 pension waiver, if necessary.

APPROVED by roll-call vote: 8–1 (8 Yes; 1 No; not present for vote: Whitfield)
PASSED and ADOPTED this 7th Day of January, 2013.

KATHY BALDASSANO,
Administrative Assistant, CEC 31.

(Addendum letter attached.)

ADDENDUM TO CEC 31 RESOLUTION NO. 76

In addition to Resolution No. 76 which CEC 31 approved on January 7, 2013, we respectfully request that the DOE implement a policy of practice, procedure and training that further enhances existing policies established by schools to respond to emergency events.

Specifically, CEC 31 requests:

- That the DOE implement a standardized plan that all schools follow, regardless of a school's location or CFN network, which will ensure a proper response to all types of emergency situations in any school.
- That the DOE ensure that each and every school is appropriately training their staff, faculty, and students and all responders within the school's established safety response plan.
- That the DOE regularly ensures, with the guidance of trained professionals, that each and every school has a consistent plan which is frequently updated and that the schools providing age-appropriate drills & training on the approved plans on a regular basis.

Further, and of utmost importance, that the DOE immediately ensure that each and every one of the schools is equipped with a working public address system and alarm/fire alarm system and that any other equipment that is a required part of a schools response to dangerous situations is updated and continuously checked to ensure that it is in proper working order.

While the DOE insists that all of its schools have emergency reaction plans, such as Building Response Teams (BRTs), it is imperative that there be uniformity in the training of those who run the response protocols throughout the city. All BRT members must be uniformly trained on what, where, and when to do their tasks, no matter in which borough or district they are located.

DOE's supervision of a standardized safety plan and consistent checks that these plans are in place, trained upon and followed, will ensure that everyone involved in reacting to an emergency does so and that all safeguards and tools to implement them are always in place.

Submitted on behalf of the Council Members of CEC 31,
PETER J. CALANDRELLA.

ATTACHMENT 3.—COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 31

APRIL 11, 2014

The following resolution was presented to the public at the Community Education Council 31 (CEC 31) Calendar Meeting held on April 7, 2014 at Paulo Intermediate School (IS 75), Staten Island, New York. A vote was taken and the resolution approved unanimously by the CEC members present, as reflected in the Minutes.

RESOLUTION NO. 83—CEC 31 REQUESTS THAT NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EXPAND THE MONITORING OF STUDENT INCIDENTS IN THE ON-LINE OCCURRENCE REPORTING SYSTEM TO IDENTIFY REPEATED INCIDENTS OF BEHAVIOR REQUIRING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT OR INTERVENTION

WHEREAS, The NYC Department of Education Office of Safety and Youth Development maintains the On-line Occurrence Reporting System (OORS) for incidents involving individual students such as bullying, harassment or fighting, etc.; and

WHEREAS, Chancellor's Regulation A–832 requires school principals to document and investigate incidents in the OORS within 24 hours of receiving the report; and

WHEREAS, The current data capability of the OORS monitors incidents involving individual students only within the current school year and school level; and

WHEREAS, Many incidents involving individual students continue with the same offender and victim when they advance to the next grade or new school; and

WHEREAS, Transitions from elementary to middle school reveal the greatest gap in monitoring incidents, which can defeat establishing a safe learning environment for all students; and

WHEREAS, Alerting and enabling principals with the OORS to potential patterns of behavior that stretch across grades and/or schools will help identify both student victims and offenders; and

WHEREAS, Since the On-line Occurrence Reporting System utilizes students' Office of Student Information System (OSIS) numbers to ensure privacy in identifying student victims or offenders, then if OORS identifies identical OSIS numbers involved in separate or multiple incidents, patterns of student behavior requiring additional intervention or support could be identified; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Community Education Council 31 requests that the NYC Department of Education expands the monitoring capabilities of the On-line Occurrence Reporting System at the school level to help promote a safer and more inclusive learning environment for all students and school communities.

APPROVED by roll-call vote: 8-0 (8 Yes; 0 No; absent for vote: L. Timoney)

PASSED and ADOPTED this 7th Day of April, 2014.

KATHY BALDASSANO.

Mr. DONOVAN. Thank you, Mr. Reilly.

Because there are five of you, and we only have 5 minutes each, we might do a second round if we don't get through all of our questions.

I thank you all for your testimony.

I would just like to ask all of you, if you were here in the room during the first panel, my question to the panelists was that I wasn't sure—the report, the General Accounting Report came out and said that there was some gap between the Federal resources that are available to all of you, and you utilizing them, that people might not have been aware of them.

Have you guys gotten to use the Federal resources? Is there a problem with communication between us, the Federal Government, and the localities? Have you seen any obstacles in using the Federal resources that are available to all of you? I would just open that up to the panel.

Mr. MAPLES. So, I will begin with the Federal Homeland Security Grant Program. We work directly with FEMA on all those initiatives, so we have pretty good communication and certainly blast that out to our constituency throughout the State of New Jersey. I think there definitely could be better communication from some of the Justice and Education programs. As I was hearing some of those opportunities, I would like the opportunity to be a megaphone for those throughout the State. It is something that we are certainly in a position to do with our partners in Education, State Police, Attorney General's Office, and that is something we are going to follow up on. I was actually talking with my chief of staff about that earlier based off of the commentary we heard.

There is opportunity, I think, from the State and local level that we have this unique capability to reach directly into the local governments and education departments, so we will plan on doing that. We are really going to double down on our efforts on that.

Mr. DONOVAN. I was watching you, Jared. When you heard there was \$2 billion available, I saw you writing that down.

Mr. MAPLES. Yes, you can't miss it.

[Laughter.]

Mr. DONOVAN. Have the rest of you had any experiences, whether good or bad, or were you unaware of some of the resources that were available to you until today?

Mr. CASTILLO. Yes, sir. If I may, this may be a good chance to give a shout-out to some of the work that is being done by our DHS partners. One of the representatives used to work for Jared before the Feds stole him, but they have been very, very good in reaching out to us, seeing what we are doing. That has been working well.

If there is some way to maybe streamline that whole Federal grant process, that might be helpful, although with the size of the bureaucracy, that might be kind-of difficult.

In addition to that, if there is any way perhaps to get a clearinghouse just for those things dealing with school violence where they could collect data and analyze it and provide that to all the States, anyone who might have a need for it, that would be very, very helpful.

Mr. DONOVAN. Because one of my other questions was going to be if you have good practices, best practices, how were you letting other school systems know of your practices that maybe they could implement, as well? So maybe that clearinghouse that you spoke of could be a good source.

Major, Mr. Gerity, and Mr. Reilly, do you have any comments about the Federal resources and how we can make it more accessible to you?

Ms. HENGEMUHLE. I think any time money is involved, we all should know about it, and I did write down that \$2 billion was it? Yes, with a "B". I think the State Police is always looking for Federal grants, State grants, anything to improve upon our processes right now. So I am going to go back and follow up on that, and follow up with OHSP as well, because money helps with a little bit of everything. If we can get it, we will do everything we can.

Mr. DONOVAN. It has always been our belief to let the people on the ground do the work. We should present you with and offer and support you with the resources to do that work.

Mr. GERITY. It may be to your point and a little beyond the point. I did hear the COPS Office mentioned earlier, Community Oriented Policing Services, and if you will bear with me for 1 second, I will be brief.

In the late 1990's, the COPS Office made a 4-year, School Resource Officer grant program available. Three years was paid by the grant for the cost of assigning a school resource officer, which by definition in today's language includes Class III officers, paid for the grant for the first 3 years, and the fourth year was split between the education entity and the community.

After the initial launch of the grant, after the 4 years expired, the grant was not renewed. So we found ourselves where we had come up with this terrific community-oriented policing program, embedded officers who became adjunct faculty members, very attached, role models, mentors to children, but a lot of districts loved the program and no one wanted to pay for it or could afford to pay for it.

So just to bring it full circle, I know there have been some very limited grant opportunities over the course of the years, but they are few and far between. Most of the grant monies that seem to

come out, or are development of initiatives, or lean toward installing technology or training programs, there are very few, if any, that financially support districts in putting boots on the ground.

Mr. DONOVAN. One of the difficulties we have in why people are discouraged from Federal grants, they usually have a time limit, and you never know if they are ever going to be renewed, and 3 or 4 years from now there might be a different issue that needs to be addressed with those same resources, and we take it away from one and put it to the other. It is always easier for the Federal Government to buy hardware for you or help you to buy the hardware you need rather than the personnel that you could always use.

Mr. Reilly.

Mr. REILLY. Thanks. Just real quick, Chairman, thank you. I think one of the issues that we have, especially with New York City, the largest school district in the country, we have schools, we have 1,800 schools in 1,400 buildings. So 400 of our buildings have campuses, so they have a shared school safety plan.

Part of the problem with grant funding is a lot of times there is a cap on how many people a district can have. Since our geographical districts are broken down, like Staten Island has its own school district but we are a part of the greater New York City district, we have in Staten Island what would encompass maybe several towns of school districts. We have 70 schools, and we serve 60,000 students, just K-8. When we incorporate high school, we are talking 75,000 students. So sometimes we don't qualify for a grant because it is capped at a certain amount of population, and that goes both at the Federal and the State level. The State level, we have seen that that has happened several times. So maybe if there is a way of targeting grants for specific areas in school districts, that may actually help.

Mr. DONOVAN. Before I yield to my colleague, I just wanted to let you know that this committee is known to hold fewer hearings than other committees because we actually take the information that you give us and do something with it. Don and I never wanted to have a hearing for the sake of having a hearing because we are in Congress and that is what you are supposed to do. So all this information that you are providing to us is incredibly valuable, and the difficulties or obstacles that you all are experiencing through this process, we will take back.

The folks behind us, the great, talented people behind us are memorializing everything you are saying. We will go back and work on these issues to try to make this system cleaner, better, and more efficient for all of you.

I now yield to my colleague, Don Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sitting here listening to the discussion and the surprise of the \$2 billion that we all were surprised to hear about, me included, goes to what I found since coming to Congress. There are resources out there, but if you don't know the correct question to ask the Federal Government, no one really volunteers the information. They will answer it if you come up with the right question, but if you don't ask the right question, nobody volunteers it. So we find out about a billion dollars today, something you probably all would have liked to have known a while ago.

But let me just start with Mr. Castillo and Mr. Maples. One of the things that we saw with the Parkland shooting was how students really came together and got involved with one voice to demand something be done to protect them in schools. If nothing else, we have learned that students want to be at the table when discussing school safety.

As each of your organizations works to improve school safety, how do you incorporate feedback from students?

Mr. MAPLES. I will start, if I could, and just address your first comment. One method we found in New Jersey that has helped is the non-profit Security Grant Program. I know New York, both States have done pretty well over the years. That has been a pretty good model through the Department of Homeland Security. FEMA runs that program. As far as getting the funding out in a coordinated way, if we could replicate that toward education, that does bring in multi-facets of the Federal Government involved in that one kind of initiative, and that includes hardware, sometimes personnel, but hardware, security assessments, et cetera. So those are toward non-profits, but if we could incorporate that into an education focus, that could be helpful as well.

As far as our engagement with the students, we absolutely put a premium on what the student population is saying. When we go out and do these active-shooter drills, that is part of the feedback loop, making sure we understand what they are doing, how they are doing it, the flow of students. One area we are also looking to expand into is the technology, whether it be updating apps on the phone and getting out to them through technology, incorporating the feedback through social media networking, making sure they are aware of what we are trying to do on the State level, but then also to your point of getting the feedback into what they feel would be more secure, being able to report the suspicious activity when there are issues.

So that is what we are doing.

Mr. CASTILLO. Yes, we do take the opportunities. Every time we go out on an unannounced drill observation, we would mention to the superintendent—they would often ask of their staff members and teachers who are along with us on a drill to see what they say. However, often they will leave out the students, and we will ask them to try to reach out to the students to find any type of feedback that they may be able to provide, because probably many of the students know many of the vulnerabilities that are in schools, and maybe we just don't hear about them.

I did have the opportunity to partner with Congressman Bonnie Watson Coleman in one of her town hall sessions in Trenton. So any chance that we do get, we will speak to anyone who will listen, especially with the students. I know OHSP has been very, very active in trying to find just the right type of app, because that is the way students are communicating. So that has our full support on that.

Mr. PAYNE. Also feedback from teachers and parents as well. OK. Thank you.

Mr. MAPLES. Can I add one additional thing, too? As far as cybersecurity initiatives, we partnered in that with the overall school security. So we have really tried to do a lot of outreach through

technology programs, STEM, to make sure we are reaching out to students, educators, and administrators as well.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Mr. CASTILLO. If I may also add, in addition to that, with the unannounced drill observations, it was usually just police officers, members of our office, perhaps a few people from the State police, as well as the Office of Homeland Preparedness that would observe what is going on with these drills. But what we would do is to invite teachers as well for these drills, and they would take the perspective of the bad guy or gal walking through those halls, and we could actually see the light go on: "Oh, this is the reason why we are doing these types of drills." So that has been very helpful, and we are constantly soliciting that.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Major Hengemuhle, I understand that New Jersey State Police have begun to conduct regular unannounced visits to schools. Please explain what has been learned from these exercises, or are these exercises found to be useful?

Ms. HENGEMUHLE. So this was something that Colonel Patrick Callahan put into place in the beginning of February. So the return on investment, we didn't really get a good feel because we have only had a few months to do it. What the Colonel wanted us to do, all members of the division, whether during the day during work or to and from work, was to go to schools within our districts, the ones we go to, in uniform, just to have a presence there to talk to the kids, to talk to the students.

We have gotten very positive feedback on that. But again, it was only for a small time frame. So I have been in communication with my Lieutenant Colonel and the Colonel to put together some formalized training for all of the division so we are on spot with Department of Education, as well as the Safety in Schools and Security outreach unit. So when Troopers do go to these schools, we are all saying the same things. We are saying what we are teaching to these kids.

So we did get positive feedback from the schools that we went to. It was unplanned, unannounced, just go in, be a presence. As of Friday, we had over 2,500 hours put toward this where Troopers—I don't know the hours per Trooper, but over 2,500 hours from February to the end of the school year.

Mr. PAYNE. It has been received well? I mean—

Ms. HENGEMUHLE. Yes, positive feedback from some of the schools. But again, we are looking into making a division-wide training so everybody knows what should exactly take place and that we are relaying the exact same information at each school within our areas.

Mr. PAYNE. It has to do with school safety.

Ms. HENGEMUHLE. Yes.

Mr. PAYNE. That is what you are going in there for, not any other—

Ms. HENGEMUHLE. Visibility and school safety, no other reasons with this initiative. We go into schools for a lot of other reasons, but for this initiative it is just to be a presence, visibility.

Mr. PAYNE. OK.

Should we do a second round?

Mr. DONOVAN. Yes.

Just two quick things I wanted to ask. As I said before, we learn a lot from these hearings. What have we learned from the tragedies that we have recently had in Texas and in Florida, and what changes maybe have you guys made in your jurisdictions learning from those tragedies that we have experienced?

The second question to Mr. Reilly, if you could explain to us. I read your testimony, and over the weekend I was asking parents if you heard something happen at your child's school, what would you do? They said we would go to the school. I knew that was the wrong answer from reading your testimony. I said what if there was a staging area somewhere near the school where you could get all the information, you wouldn't block emergency vehicles from going, and you will learn everything about your child's safety and what was happening at the school? They said we would still go to the school.

So after we answered the first question, I would like you to elaborate a little bit on how to encourage families to do what you have suggested, which I think is an amazing suggestion. But as the father of a 3-year-old, I am thinking I might go to my kid's school. So if you could elaborate.

But if you could first speak to me about some of the lessons that we have learned from the tragedies and how we have implemented maybe some other practices after those.

Mr. MAPLES. So I will be brief so we can go down the row. I think one of the biggest pieces that came out post-February after Texas is a change in mindset. The normal training scenarios don't always work the same exact way. So the answer is it may not work in every single situation. So something we have really tried to adapt with, again in partnership with the State police, education, the SRO Association, is to make sure the training is flexible enough to approach as many situations as could possibly come up to therefore save life. That has definitely been a big issue for us, and that prevention role took a real front seat there, getting out ahead of the problem before it becomes a problem. We have put a huge premium in the State of New Jersey on doing that.

Again, as the gentleman from New York mentioned, it is impossible to get out ahead of every one of them, but we are going to do everything we possibly can to do that, and that is through a collective approach, again with everybody at this table plus mental health, children and families, et cetera. That is something we have really focused on. So it is the mindset, and then that prevention thing I think that has really come out from our side and something we are trying to push out from the State side.

Mr. CASTILLO. Some of the challenges that we have seen, and they have been around for a while, probably one of the most glaring issues is the silos, once again with communication. We have heard time and time again that information was developed on this particular student at one time but, for whatever reason, it wasn't shared. So we think the intelligence dissemination reports will be a step in the right direction.

We do have very good communication with members of our partners. Again, if I can go back to that school safety specialist, pretty much the school resource officers have understood that we have got

to give police officers special training for when they go into the schools. That big piece that has been missing has been what are we giving the teachers and the school administrators in terms of the security perspective.

I think back to teachers and folks working in education are among the most caring, supportive people I know. They didn't sign up for the security piece. So I think if we can kind-of let them know those things that they should consider and give them that perspective, I think that would be very, very important as well.

Ms. HENGEMUHLE. I agree that the communication that we have with the Department of Education and Homeland Security, we have looked at best practices with active shooters and, like I said, we just started rolling out some new protocols in July with the State Police approach to the active shooter. We would like to prevent all casualties at schools. I don't know if 100 percent prevent will happen, but if we can lower them—and what you said in the beginning, New Jersey is the leading State in school security, that actually made me feel very good that that came up today and that that is brought up. It is because of the collaborative efforts of everybody at this table and everybody behind us, and with you especially, both of you, that we are able to do that by coming together and working together.

For me, from the State police, from a training standpoint, the better we can train, the more that we can train, training the students, training the teachers, getting everybody educated could help a little bit in this dilemma right now.

Mr. GERITY. I will echo everyone's comments at the table, and I think it is demonstrating the collaboration and cooperation we have here of the individuals sitting in the different entities represented. I know in our district, Parkland was a different response in our eyes, where it almost appears that it is the first time that the students themselves stepped up and said enough is enough, we are tired of being sitting ducks. Prior to that, it would be the adult community that would react, take action, form committees, task forces, response plans. But this was a little different that the students stepped up.

So our efforts, and I am sure it is occurring everywhere, I don't just speak individually, that we are including students in our safety teams, our committees. Every time we meet, we bring students in, and we actively engage with students, and there is a sharing of information between education and law enforcement, so protecting students' records. The school administrators will proactively reach out and look at that student's involvement in the school community. If it appears that they are not involved in the school in some way, shape, or form, it may be because they are involved in some outside interest, but it is a method of behavioral assessment, if you will, to see why that student is not engaged. That may be, as you read numerous documentation, an indicator or a flag that there are issues there. So we are involving students.

Mr. REILLY. Can I just touch on the first question first? Mr. Gerity just said about student records and safeguarding their information, of course, and making sure that we don't give out information. Back in 2014, the Community Education Council, I wrote a resolution to the New York City DOE. They have an on-line occur-

rence reporting system. That is how they keep track of all the incidents in their schools. Whether it is an injury, whether it is a bullying incident, whether it is someone just fell down the stairs, every incident gets reported like that.

Now, one of the things that I asked them to do is they expunge those basically at the completion of the school year, and one of the shortfalls that I see with that is it is not just identifying, for lack of a better word, the suspect student that is committing a harassment or a bullying, but it is also doing a disservice to our victims, because when we don't allow that information to be shared with the progressive grade when they move up and the other teachers and other counselors in that grade to support that victim, or even the person that we will call the bully, for lack of a better word, the actor, we miss the opportunity to provide support or guidance.

It doesn't necessarily mean that it is punitive. It is support that is actually going to make them more well-rounded. So if we get the opportunity to share that information going on, and if we don't do it, we may miss an incident where it happened in 3rd grade between two students and they meet up again in 6th grade, and now we had the opportunity to stop a future incident between them but we missed that because of the communication piece and fostering that information.

Touching on point No. 2, how I try to get the message out about parents not rushing up to the school and other community members until they are told, I try to tell everybody I run into, I try to speak about it everywhere I go. I volunteer. I have been doing this for the past several years, giving internet safety and cyber bullying assemblies and parent workshops and staff professional development.

I lead with talking about school safety, school security. I have been on NY1 talking about school security. The first thing I talk about is don't rush up to the school. In my prior life, before becoming a professional volunteer in the schools, I was a lieutenant in the New York City Police Department. So I understand how those seconds getting to an incident can be deadly, and the more time we save in the fastest direction to the incident will save lives, and that is how I do it.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have a question for the entire panel in terms of the gun reform that we have just seen passed in New Jersey. We just passed a series of gun reform laws, making New Jersey the leader on this issue. Do you believe that the impact of this legislation—what do you believe the impact of this legislation will be on school security?

Mr. MAPLES. One other important piece to this is the Crime Gun Information Sharing piece, as far as the State Police and Attorney General's Office security, making sure those are connected to other States. That is part of this legislation.

As far as the gun legislation that has happened, it is certainly something—anything that can help and remove threats is a plus from our perspective. I will tell you that there have been multiple arrests. I don't want to get into the specific number publicly, but the State of New Jersey has made arrests after some of the legislation that has been passed previously, and I think that it will only happen after some of the more recent legislation. We do know that

there have been incidents prevented based off of the ability to make arrests off of those.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Mr. CASTILLO. I echo what Director Maples mentioned. Our focus is basically at the door, keep those weapons and other things outside of the school. Any way that would happen, we see that as a plus. It has been very helpful in terms of what Jared's office has been doing in terms of trying to get these suspicious activity reports that will allow law enforcement to take action and identify these folks, whether or not they own them or have access to weapons. So that has been very, very helpful as well.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, just on that point, that is something I like to point out when we have been having this whole discussion around gun reform and safety in schools, that we are very positive about the move that these young people have taken their future into their own hands and are concerned about gun violence and safety in school. But I like to point out that in other communities, as you state, to keep the guns outside of the school, that is a problem for other students, is getting to and from school safely. So we have to make sure that we are looking at the entire issue because, yes, safety at school has become the paramount issue over the course of the last several years, but there is a question of children's safety between school and home. So we want to make sure that we encompass the whole issue.

Major.

Ms. HENGEMUHLE. In talking about the children getting to and from school, I think that the initiatives that are taught during school help the faculty and the students in their everyday lives. Some of the programs that we conduct for younger students, we do New Jersey Drive, we do Internet Safety, we do Stranger Danger, we have an Explorer program. So we have a lot of programs that are conducted while the students are at school but will be beneficial for them coming to and from school. That is the most important thing. There are dangers outside the school, we all know that. So any educational piece that we can bring to the students, to the faculty is going to benefit going to and from the school as well.

Mr. PAYNE. Right. Specifically speaking on the gun issue.

Ms. HENGEMUHLE. On the gun issue.

Mr. PAYNE. Yes.

Ms. HENGEMUHLE. What we can do—you talked about New Jersey being the State leader in gun reform. Again, whatever can take place to reduce gun violence in the State of New Jersey and the United States is in the right direction.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Sir.

Mr. GERITY. Sir, with all due respect, I don't have an answer to that question. I am obviously subservient to a board of directors, and for me to take a position without addressing the issue with them would be inappropriate.

Mr. PAYNE. OK.

Sir.

Mr. REILLY. I am actually not 100 percent familiar with the New Jersey law, but I can tell you New York State has some similar laws. I will say this: When they passed the New York State SAFE

Act, I had a little issue with it because I was a retired lieutenant from the New York City Police Department, and I tried advocating to the legislators, telling them that there is something in the law that you just made me a felon. You made me a felon because I had a 15-round magazine in my Glock, but I was a retired police officer. Thankfully, a few years later they corrected that. But unfortunately, when they rushed it through—so I am hoping New Jersey didn't rush it through, and if there are any concerns that would actually need to be addressed, I would hope they would do it quickly and not let us wait, because unfortunately sometimes in our haste to get things done, we don't look at the full picture, and that is even when I am talking about school security protocols as well. There are many times when people make suggestions at our school board meetings, at our CEC meetings, and we try and have a discussion about it and show where maybe one view doesn't support the actual protocol taking place.

Like one instance when talking about school security is when you hear a school is in lockdown, the first thing you think about is a school shooting. We actually had a school that was put on lockdown because a deer ran through a plate-glass window. So these all-hazard approaches, that is what the community needs to know about when it comes to the school security aspect.

But I am willing to research the New Jersey State law, and if we can take some tips from there and advocate in New York as well, I am open to that. So, thank you.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DONOVAN. Well, I thank all of our witnesses for their testimony today and for my colleague's questions. The Members of the committee, as I told the other panel, may have some questions, even Members who aren't here, additional questions for our witnesses, and I would ask that you respond to those in writing.

Pursuant to Committee Rule VII(D), the hearing record will remain open for 10 days.

Without objection, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:53 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS FROM RANKING MEMBER DONALD M. PAYNE, JR. FOR JASON BOTEL

Question 1a. In February, President Trump tweeted that arming “educators and other trusted people who work within a school” would help protect students.

Has the Department of Education examined potential impacts to school safety and students if teachers become armed?

Answer. On March 12, 2018, the President created the Federal Commission on School Safety (“FCSS”). <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-taking-immediate-actions-secure-schools>. The President specifically tasked the FCSS to “develop a process to evaluate and make recommendations on school safety” and noted that “[t]he commission will study and make recommendations on the following areas of focus: . . . A plan for integration and coordination of Federal resources focused on prevention and mitigation of active shooter incidents at schools.” The provision of school security and the training of school personnel in that regard is inherently a State and local matter. As noted in the President’s statement creating the FCSS, the role of the Federal Government and the FCSS in particular is to “make recommendations on school safety” within the framework of what State and local jurisdictions have crafted.

Accordingly, the FCSS has been studying, among many other things, the training of specially qualified school personnel such as school resource officers (SROs), school security officers (SSOs), administrators, and staff. Throughout the FCSS’ study of existing programs that arm school personnel, there has been a consistent emphasis on the efficacious deterrent posed by highly trained and voluntarily armed school personnel. The FCSS has learned that in almost every State SROs, who are sworn law enforcement officers, are armed. Many States also permit SSOs, non-sworn security officers, to be armed. Ten States currently allow school staff to possess or have access to firearms. No State mandates the arming of school staff. The 10 States referenced permit specially-trained school staff to carry weapons upon meeting the State training and licensing requirements. It is estimated that several hundred school districts provide school staff access to firearms. All programs exercising the option to allow staff to carry weapons require significant training, among other qualifications, in order to participate. Examples of such programs include the Texas School Marshal Program, the South Dakota School Sentinel Training Program, and the recently announced Alabama Sentry Program.

On August 1, 2018, the Department of Justice led a FCSS field visit to Arkansas’s Lake Hamilton School District where the FCSS heard about the challenges small rural school districts face when they have lengthy police response times. As Superintendent Steve Anderson said, “While we are blessed to have excellent law enforcement officers . . . because of where we’re located, the last two sheriffs here in Garland County told me we could expect 20 to 30 minutes wait time if an active shooter situation happened on campus before an officer could be here. We’re not willing to take that chance. We need someone to protect our kids.” The Commission has maintained a livestream of the field visit at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CAvkyAYMFSE&feature=youtu.be>. The Parkland school shooting, for example, lasted only about 7 minutes.

In the 1990’s, the Lake Hamilton School District was one of a small number of public school districts in Arkansas with Commissioned Security Officers (CSO) holding a license through the Arkansas Board of Private Investigators and Private Security Agencies. In 2015, the CSO license was changed by action of the Arkansas General Assembly. What used to be the CSO license was changed to the new Commissioned School Security Officer (CSSO) License, through Act 393 of 2015 (Ark. Code Ann. §1A17–40–330 et seq). The use of CSSOs in a school district must be approved by the superintendent. CSSOs can be administrators, faculty, or staff and must pass a standard background check and undergo extensive training. In its preliminary report dated July 1, 2018, the Arkansas School Safety Commission, after extensive

study, reaffirmed the deterrent effect that such practices have on school violence. http://www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/Communications/School_Safety/Safe_School_Commission_Preliminary_Report_July_1_2018.pdf.

Question 1b. Is the Department of Education making plans to arm teachers in the classroom?

Answer. The Department of Education is not making plans to arm teachers in the classroom because this is a function appropriately reserved for the States. The FCSS, however, is reviewing existing State-level initiatives that enable highly qualified school personnel to access firearms under certain circumstances. The administration firmly believes that arming highly qualified and rigorously trained school personnel may help prevent violence at our schools and in our classrooms.

Question 2. As I mentioned in my opening statement, I am concerned about safety for children beyond the traditional classroom setting. Many children experience safety threats on their way to school, which is cause for concern, as these threats to their safety impact their ability to learn and excel in school. What is the Department of Education doing to combat threats to our children that exist beyond school grounds?

Answer. Part of a comprehensive and effective emergency management/school safety plan is the consideration of safe zones of passage for students. One of the creative aspects of the Student Success and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) program, administered by the Department under Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, is that districts have the flexibility to use funds for activities that are coordinated with other school and community-based services and programs. Title IV, Part A funds can be used for programs that may be conducted in partnership with businesses, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, or other public or private entities with a demonstrated record of success in implementing these types of activities.

The Department continues to offer technical assistance to States, districts, and schools in how to best plan and implement activities for student safety in going to and returning from school through sharing of practices and trainings through the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center. This planning should be a part of a comprehensive school safety and emergency management plan.

QUESTIONS FROM RANKING MEMBER DONALD M. PAYNE, JR. FOR ALAN R. HANSON

Question 1a. In February, President Trump tweeted that arming “educators and other trusted people who work within a school” would help protect students.

Has the Department of Justice examined potential impacts to school safety and students if teachers become armed?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 1b. Is the Department of Justice making plans to arm teachers in classrooms?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2. As I mentioned in my opening statement, I am concerned about safety for children beyond the traditional classroom setting. Many children experience safety threats on their way to school, which is cause for concern, as these threats to their safety impact their ability to learn and excel in school. What is the Department of Justice doing to combat threats to our children that exist beyond school grounds?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTIONS FROM RANKING MEMBER DONALD M. PAYNE, JR. FOR ROBERT KOLASKY

Question 1a. In February, President Trump tweeted that arming “educators and other trusted people who work within a school” would help protect students.

Has the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) examined potential impacts to school safety and students if teachers become armed?

Question 1b. Is DHS making plans to arm teachers in classrooms?

Answer. The Department of Homeland Security has not examined the potential impacts to school safety and students if teachers become armed and is not making plans to arm teachers in classrooms.

Question 2a. Following the deadly school shooting in Parkland, Florida, DHS established a Department-wide Executive Steering Committee tasked with directing DHS’s school security efforts.

Which components are represented on this steering committee?

Answer. Following the October 1, 2017, mass shooting incident in Las Vegas, Nevada, the Department established a Soft Targets and Crowded Places (ST-CP) Security Executive Steering Committee (ST-CP ESC) to coordinate Department efforts

with respect to the security of soft targets and crowded places, identify opportunities to enhance these efforts, and ensure Departmental unity of effort in this area. The ST-CP ESC is comprised of senior executive-level representation from Departmental components and offices engaged in ST-CP security activities, including the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD), Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Office of Partnership Engagement (OPE), Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers, Science and Technology Directorate, Transportation Security Administration, Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Secret Service, Office of Policy, Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office, Office of Operations and Coordination, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Office of General Counsel, Office of Legislative Affairs (OLA), Office of Public Affairs (OPA), Privacy Office (PRIV), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and the Office of Intelligence and Analysis.

To coordinate work across the Department on specific topics that fall within the ST-CP security realm, the ST-CP ESC is authorized to establish working groups. Earlier this year, the ST-CP ESC established a working group focused on school security. The School Security Working Group is co-led by FEMA, OPE, and NPPD, and includes representatives from most of the organizations that are part of the ST-CP ESC.

Question 2b. Has the Steering Committee made any recommendations? If so, please describe. Please provide copies of any written recommendations of the steering committee.

Answer. At the direction of the Secretary, the ST-CP ESC School Security Working Group developed an action plan detailing on-going and future activities the Department will perform to help enhance school security. Departmental activities described in the plan fall within three lines of effort:

- *Education and Community Awareness.*—The Department engages school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders across the K-12 and higher education communities, as well as law enforcement and other first responders who serve those communities, to raise awareness, communicate best practices, and promote no-cost/low-cost security measures.
- *Capacity Building, Training, and Exercises.*—The Department directly helps schools enhance their security through capacity-building activities, such as the provision of training, exercises, workshops, and grant funding for schools to participate in those capacity-building activities.
- *Early Warning.*—The Department works with the academic and law enforcement communities to establish and implement processes that increase the likelihood of individuals identifying and reporting concerning behavior or other signs of pre-attack planning, as well as providing schools and local law enforcement with the means to address potential threats before they are realized.

Examples of specific school security activities the Department has taken since the establishment of the School Security Working Group include the issuance of *K-12 School Security: A Guide for Preventing and Protecting Against Gun Violence* (2nd ed., 2018), providing schools with a means to assess their current security posture and identify options for consideration from among potential preventive and protective measures that can help the school address the threat of gun violence. The Department also recently issued the *Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model—An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence*, which provides schools and communities with a framework to identify students of concern, assess their risk for engaging in violence, and identify intervention strategies to mitigate that risk.

As the Department is only one part of the larger Federal community working to enhance school security, we also are collaborating closely with Congress, the White House, and other Federal departments and agencies to coordinate efforts in this arena through the Commission. The activities set forth in the DHS School Security Action Plan will help enable the Federal Government to meet the goals established for the Commission and will contribute to the development of the Commission Report to the President in the fall of 2018.

Question 3. Though certain DHS preparedness grants can be used for school security activities, DHS does not make these funds available to public schools directly. Instead, State and local recipients have to identify school security as a priority. What percentage of DHS preparedness grant funds are used for school security activities?

Answer. FEMA notes that school security accounts for about 0.07 percent of preparedness grants (using 2007–2017 totals). Based on the Biannual Strategy Implementation Reports (BSIR) for fiscal years 2007–2017, FEMA has provided a total of \$141,608,502,068.85 in preparedness grant funding. Of that amount, \$98,396,943.16, or 0.07 percent, has been used for school security activities.

Question 4. As I mentioned in my opening statement, I am concerned about safety for children beyond the traditional classroom setting. Many children experience safety threats on their way to school, which is cause for concern, as these threats to their safety impact their ability to learn and excel in school. What is the National Protection and Programs Directorate doing to combat threats to our children that exist beyond school grounds?

Answer. The school security guidance developed by NPPD and recently issued by the Department recommends that each school have a security team that is formally organized and that includes representation from district/school administrators, teachers, facility operations personnel, administrators, counselors, students, parent organizations, mental health groups/agencies, police, fire departments, and emergency medical services. The school security team should work with local law enforcement to ensure that students are safe when they leave school grounds.

The Department also recommends the development of a “community of interest” of teachers, social workers, counselors, behavioral therapists, and law enforcement organizations in the local area, which can create a network for the common purpose of enhancing the safety of students and the security of schools. For example, in Cincinnati, four city school districts and one parochial school have partnered with the Greater Cincinnati Fusion Center to participate in their Intelligence Liaison Officer program. This program provides local agencies, first responders, and school administrators and teachers with an improved ability to recognize threat indicators and report suspicious activity to law enforcement organizations through the Greater Cincinnati Fusion Center and the Ohio Fusion Center Network. Additionally, these school districts and parochial school have collaborated with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to develop the Greater Cincinnati Safe and Secure Schools Initiative. This initiative facilitates information sharing and technical assistance—including Department-supported vulnerability assessments of schools—between schools, school districts, State and local government organizations, and the Federal departments that support school safety in and around Cincinnati. Relationships such as those created by the Intelligence Liaison Officer Program and the Safe and Secure Schools Initiative provide teachers and administrators with the resources and skills to identify potential issues and work to resolve them through counseling or other forms of available help to prevent delinquent behavior or violence that could result if an issue goes unresolved.

While NPPD supports a number of activities that combat threats to our children beyond school grounds, it is by no means the only entity within the Department performing such activities. For instance, the Department’s Transportation Security Administration engages school districts and transportation providers on a variety of school bus security activities.

While TSA’s mission space is counter-terrorism in the Transportation Sector, TSA does work collaboratively with providers of student transportation in order to mitigate the potential of terrorists or home-grown violent extremists seeking to threaten school buses for their malevolent purposes. TSA also works directly with the National School Transportation Association, the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services, and the National Association for Pupil Transportation, as well as the Illinois Association for Pupil Transportation, to name a few, to share information about threat recognition and awareness. These security efforts between both Federal and State level representatives as well as transportation operator stakeholders in the private sector have potential safety implications that are a benefit to students in these systems.

