NEW JERSEY SCHOOL SECURITY

TASK FORCE REPORT AND

RECOMMENDATIONS

JULY 2015

July 9, 2015

The Honorable Christopher Christie
Governor
State of New Jersey
State House
125 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0001

The Honorable Stephen Sweeney
President of the New Jersey Senate
State of New Jersey
State House
125 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0001

The Honorable Vincent Prieto
Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly
State of New Jersey
State House
125 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0001

The Honorable Mark W. Biedron
President, New Jersey State Board of Education
P.O. Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Sirs:

On behalf of our colleagues on the School Security Task Force (Task Force), we are pleased to present you with our final report.

Since the Task Force convened, we have worked hard to present you with a list of practical recommendations to improve the safety and security of New Jersey's schoolchildren, school staff, and school buildings. We have met nine times to discuss the important issues identified in your charge to us; we have reviewed the work that has been done by other committees and task forces both in New Jersey and in other states; we have visited schools and law enforcement agencies in New Jersey and Connecticut; and we have met with and listened to subject-matter experts in the field of school safety and security, as well as members of the public.

In the attached final report, we have compiled 42 recommendations that we believe are not only thoughtful, but also practical in terms of time and resources available at both the State and school district levels. We hope the recommendations will assist you in prioritizing the initiatives that you determine are most appropriate. Thank you for the opportunity to advise you on these significant matters.

Sincerely,

David C. Hespe, Commissioner
Department of Education
Chair

Christopher Rodriguez, Director
Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness-
Co-Chair

NEW JERSEY SCHOOL SECURITY TASK FORCE

New Jersey Department of Education
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New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness
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New Jersey Education Association Representative
Joseph P. Galego (Elizabeth, Union County)

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Joseph Coppola, Jr. (Rochelle Park, Bergen County)

NOTE: A list of staff to the Task Force is located in Appendix E.

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[1] Throughout this report, the terms *school* and *school building* are intended to include any school facility that includes instructional and/or administrative space that is owned, occupied, or used by a school district.

I. Introduction

This is the final report of the School Security Task Force as mandated by an act of the New Jersey Legislature approved on August 16, 2013 (P.L. 2013, c. 142)[2]. The stated purpose of the Task Force was to study and develop recommendations to improve school security and safety and to ensure a safe learning environment for students and school employees.

Specifically, the Task Force was charged with the responsibility of identifying physical and cyber vulnerabilities and potential breaches of security in New Jersey's public schools and to make recommendations to improve school safety and security. The Task Force's charge was to study a number of issues including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Placing screening systems at school entrances;
2. Stationing police officers in each school building;
3. Improving response times to emergency situations, including lockdowns, active shooter incidents, and bomb threats;
4. Requiring advanced student and visitor identification cards;
5. Using biometric, retina, and other advanced recognition systems for authorized entrance into school buildings;
6. Installing panic alarms in school buildings to alert local law enforcement authorities to emergency situations;
7. Securing computer networks to prevent cyber attacks;
8. Scheduling periodic patrols of school buildings and grounds by local law enforcement officers; and
9. Hardening the school perimeter and building entryways.

In addition, the Task Force was further charged with reviewing and making recommendations on building security and assessment standards for existing school facilities and new construction including, but not limited to, standards for:

1. Architectural design for new construction;
2. Assessing and abating security risks in existing school facilities;
3. Emergency communication plans;
4. Staff training; and
5. Addressing elevated risk factors, including proximity to a chemical facility or nuclear power plant.

In developing its recommendations, the Task Force was directed to (a) research effective strategies that have been employed in other states; (b) refer to and incorporate existing State research, data, recommendations, and standards, including the School Safety and Security Plans, minimum requirements set forth by the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) as well as the final report of the New Jersey K-12 School Security Task Force (2007); and (c) solicit public input.

This final report documents and summarizes the proceedings of the Task Force and its various

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[2] The full text of P.L. 2013, c. 142 has been included in this report as Appendix B.

committees and presents its recommendations. The report is organized in the following manner. Following this introduction, there is a brief summary of significant work that has been undertaken within New Jersey State Government and by other stakeholders on the issue of school security and safety, including that of the DOE, the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP), and the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA). Thereafter is a description of the scope of work and the methodological approaches employed by the Task Force and its committees as they conducted their research and deliberations. Finally, the Task Force's recommendations are discussed within the context of the issues identified in the law that created the Task Force. A list of resources that the Task Force employed during its work is also included in Appendix D of this report.

II. Brief Summary of Significant Legislation and Other Reports Related to School Security in New Jersey (1988-Present)

The Task Force recognizes the excellent work in matters of school security and safety that has been accomplished over the years by various State agencies, task forces, working groups, committees, and individuals and that has been documented in the reports of these various entities. Material in the following brief summary has been drawn liberally from the narratives of these reports[3] and often includes verbatim passages. Accordingly, the Task Force acknowledges the contribution of these reports in its presentation of a cogent, yet brief, historical overview of important events and documents regarding school security and safety in New Jersey. It is further worth noting that this brief summary is intended to be neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. Much has been done in New Jersey in the past several years to protect the safety and well-being of its children and schools, but only the actions that have been deemed most significant are summarized herein. As is noted in the paragraphs that follow, at least some of the reports identified in this brief summary have previously issued a series of recommendations for action in the area of school security and safety, some of which have already been implemented. Therefore, the purpose of the summary review is to provide for the reader a context for this Task Force's recommendations that follow.

Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials

In 1988, the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety and the DOE issued an agreement that documented their mutual commitment to work together as equal partners in addressing the State's alcohol and drug problems as they related to school-age children. This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was subsequently memorialized in regulations promulgated by the DOE and codified at N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.2(b)13-15. The MOA was subsequently revised by the Commissioner of Education and the New Jersey State Attorney General in 1992, 1999, and 2007, and again in 2011 in recognition of the changing scope and nature of the State's drug and alcohol problems, as well as new problems relating to the escalation of the presence of weapons in schools. Other emerging issues attendant to school security and safety that prompted regulatory

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[3] Such reports include the *Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Law Enforcement and Education, New Jersey K-12 School Security Task Force Report, New Jersey SAFE Task Force Report, School Safety and Security Plans: Minimum Requirements, School Safety and Security Manual: Best Practices Guidelines,* and *New Jersey School Boards Association Task Force Final Report*.

revisions included: increasing incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB); hazing; gang reporting; computer crimes; school law enforcement units; child abuse reporting; and School Violence Awareness Week. The 2011 revisions were enacted in response to the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (P.L. 2010, c. 122) and to address the assistance provided to attendance officers handling truancy matters. The most current 54-page MOA includes 16 articles and an addendum that address topics ranging from *Obligations to Report Offenses and Preserve Evidence* and *School Access to Law Enforcement Information* to *School Safety and Security* and *Law Enforcement Participation in Educational Programs.* The MOA provides the framework for interaction among education professionals, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations, and has proven invaluable in mandating regular and ongoing discussions between school administrators and law enforcement.

The New Jersey Guide to Establishing a Safe Schools Resource Officer Program in Your Community

Also in 1998, Governor Christine Todd Whitman, the Attorney General, and the Commissioner of Education released *The New Jersey Guide to Establishing a Safe Schools Resource Officer Program in Your Community*, which presented step-by-step procedures designed to assist schools and communities in reducing juvenile delinquency through the establishment of a School Resource Officer program throughout the State.

New Jersey Domestic Security Preparedness Act

Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, Acting Governor Donald DiFrancesco signed into law on October 4, 2011, the New Jersey Domestic Security Preparedness Act (P.L. 2001, c. 246). The law created the Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force, which was charged with the responsibility to provide Statewide coordination and supervision of all activities related to domestic preparedness for a terrorist attack. Among the specific duties of the task force were: (a) the development of proposals to preserve, protect, and sustain domestic security and to ensure a comprehensive program of domestic preparedness; (b) the development, implementation, and management of comprehensive responses to any terrorist attack or any other technological disaster; and (c) the effective administration, management, and coordination of remediation and recovery actions following any such attack or disaster. Further, the task force was directed to adopt domestic security and preparedness standards, guidelines, and protocols to preserve, protect, and sustain the critical assets of the State's infrastructure, including school buildings. The task force established two entities in accordance with the provisions of this law: the Infrastructure Advisory Committee (IAC) and the Domestic Security Preparedness Planning Group (DSPPG). Once established, the IAC, under the authority of Presidential Policy Directive 21 (PPD-21), further established 16 critical infrastructure sector subgroups, including the Government Facilities Sector, which mirrored sectors at the federal level. Education Facilities, a subsector of the Government Facilities Sector, covers pre-kindergarten through 12th grade schools, institutions of higher education, and business and trade schools, and includes facilities that are owned by both government and private-sector entities.

The Education Facilities Subsector is managed by the DOE as a Sector-Specific Agency (SSA) that provides sector-level performance feedback to enable assessment of cross-sector critical

infrastructure protection and resilience programs. This is a reflection of the national model set forth in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP), in which each SSA is responsible for developing and implementing a Sector-Specific Plan (SSP), in collaboration with public- and private-sector partners and for encouraging the development of appropriate information sharing and analysis mechanisms.

The subsequent work of the Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force has laid the foundation for a number of initiatives regarding the safety and security of schools and children within the State, including a comprehensive set of *Best Practices Standards for Schools Under Construction or Being Planned for Construction.*

Best Practice Standards for Schools under Construction or Being Planned for Construction

First approved by Acting Governor Richard J. Codey on January 6, 2006, the *Best Practices Standards for Schools Under Construction or Being Planned for Construction* were developed as part of a joint effort among the DOE, the OHSP, the New Jersey Schools Development Authority, and the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Subsequently, through the work and cooperation between government and the school community, these standards were revised based on new security requirements that were put in place at the national level. They were subsequently reviewed by the Educational Facilities Subsector of the Government Facilities Sector of the IAC in accordance with <u>N.J.S.A.</u> C. App.A:9-69(6)(a), endorsed by the Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force, and promulgated by the DCA.

School Safety Manual: Best Practices Guidelines

In September 2004, the DOE issued its *School Safety Manual: Best Practices Guidelines*, having previously been endorsed by the Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force and approved by Governor James McGreevey. The document highlighted several best practices, including, but not limited to, the convening of school-district- and school-level planning teams; convening of meetings with law enforcement and local government officials to review law enforcement presence in and around schools; developing protocols to restrict, contain, and control access by outsiders to school buildings; engaging in discussions with local officials regarding code enforcement, fire, etc., and with students and parents regarding best practices in school safety and security; updating and distributing emergency contact information to school staff; updating school district and school internal and external communications procedures and emergency plans, procedures, and mechanisms; providing updated floor plans and/or blue prints for all school facilities as well as updated school evacuation procedures; providing existing/updated school violence procedures to emergency responders (e.g., police, fire, emergency medical services (EMS)); implementing or modifying a student transportation security program; implementing or modifying school perimeter security measures; and implementing or modifying local level bio-security plans. In 2007, this manual was updated and expanded to incorporate information on topics such as site-specific vulnerability assessments, an incident command system, crisis response, target hardening/mitigation measures, communication protocols, gang awareness, and pandemic influenza planning. In addition, the manual was re-organized to help school district personnel in establishing comprehensive plans, procedures, and mechanisms appropriate to their needs.

School Security Audit

In May 2005, at the request of Acting Governor Richard J. Codey, the education and law enforcement communities collaborated in conducting an unprecedented Statewide school security audit, which examined 75 key items in assessing school safety and security and which produced a database that has been made available to every school district in the State, as well as the county prosecutors in each of New Jersey's 21 counties.

K-12 School Security Task Force

In October 2006, at the direction of Governor Jon S. Corzine, the State Attorney General, the Commissioner of Education, and the Director of the OHSP, the K-12 School Security Task Force was created. Consisting of representatives from a cross-section of State, county, and local law enforcement agencies, emergency management personnel, and education leaders, the task force sought to build upon the multitude of federal and State policies relating to school security. Specifically, the task force sought to gather existing information, assess and evaluate it for applicability in New Jersey, and implement lessons learned, where appropriate. To accomplish this objective, the task force organized three committees, charged with the responsibility to: (a) develop model policies for law enforcement agencies; (b) identify areas of training for teachers and school employees, as well as resources to assist in the training; and (c) consider and evaluate the legislative and policy implications of school security. The task force's final report, issued in September 2007, identified eight recommendations, including two regarding the distribution of model policies to law enforcement and local education agencies and three regarding the training of county prosecutors, school administrators, and teachers, and enhanced training for school resource officers. Other recommendations were also made to revise the *Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement* then in effect; revise existing laws then in effect regarding school fire drills and amend the New Jersey Fire Code; and convene school and school-district-level working groups of parents, educators, law enforcement, and emergency management personnel to address issues of school security.

School Administrator Procedures: Responding to Critical Incidents Manual

In July 2007, the State Attorney General issued Directive 2007-1, which required all law enforcement agencies in the State to have and maintain policies and procedures in the following specific areas relating to school safety and security: bomb threats, school lockdowns, school evacuations, active shooter situation responses, and public information. Following the development and promulgation of these policies and procedures, the Commissioner of Education issued in October 2007 the *School Administrator Procedures: Responding to Critical Incidents* manual, together with a memorandum to chief school administrators, charter school lead persons, and nonpublic school administrators directing each school district to develop and implement plans, procedures, and mechanisms that provided for the safety and security of the school district's schools. This 41-page document served as a technical resource for school districts working in collaboration with local law enforcement agencies, to develop, or revise as needed, procedures to ensure the safety of schoolchildren and staff.

Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning

In 2009, the DOE created the Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning (OSPEP) to help school districts and schools in establishing and maintaining their school safety and security plans. OSPEP develops and provides training and technical assistance in the implementation of DOE's best practices for school safety and security, evaluation of school preparedness, and development of action plans to address identified school vulnerabilities and safety and security needs. In early 2012, by agreement between the DOE and the OHSP, OSPEP was operationally moved to OHSP, which resulted in greater collaboration between the two agencies. OHSP currently provides funding in support of DOE's school security initiatives and alignment with OHSP's ongoing planning and training functions. This affiliation has more clearly delineated education as an important subsector within the critical infrastructure of the Government Facilities Sector. In addition, OSPEP has provided input to, and has worked collaboratively with, several key stakeholder and partner groups including, but not limited to, the New Jersey State Police, New Jersey Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force, New Jersey Domestic Security Preparedness Planning Group, School Security Task Force, Ebola State Working Group, and the Education/Law Enforcement Working Group.

School Security Drill Law

On January 11, 2010, Governor Jon S. Corzine signed into law P.L. 2009, c. 178, commonly referred to as the *School Security Drill Law*, which requires every school in the State to conduct within school hours a minimum of one fire drill and one security drill each month that school is in session. The purpose of the law was to ensure that schools practice procedures for responding to emergencies, including active shooter events, school lockdowns, and non-fire evacuations. Drills on specific emergencies, such as the "active shooter" event, are required to be conducted at least twice each academic year. With the passage and implementation of this law, New Jersey became one of only 10 states that requires security drills in schools.

School Safety and Security Plans: Minimum Requirements

In August 2011, the DOE issued the *School Safety and Security Plans: Minimum Requirements* to document the required elements that must be included in every school district's school safety and security plan[4]. These minimum requirements are intended to enhance the development of school districtwide safety and security plans and clearly define its policies and procedures. The document specifies the requirements for: (a) planning process requirements, as well as school district facilities and building occupants; (b) identifying and including appropriate stakeholders in the planning process; (c) required prevention and mitigation strategies; (d) procedures and protocols required to be implemented during emergencies; (e) required tools, including facility schematics, to be provided to emergency responders, administrators, and crisis team members for the purpose of crisis management; (f) required protocols and procedures for recovering from a crisis; and (g) requirements for training on school security and safety plans and security drills.

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[4] In New Jersey, all school districts are required to have a school safety and security plan that has been developed in cooperation with local law enforcement, emergency management, public health officials, and other key stakeholders.

Safer Schools for a Better Tomorrow

The Safer Schools for a Better Tomorrow Initiative was launched in 2012 with the goal of increasing school-district-level preparedness to improve continuity of learning for K-12 schools and minimize the impact of school-related disruptions and emergencies. The initiative combines elements, resources, and guidance from the *School Safety and Security Plans: Minimum Requirements* (N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.1). Specifically, the initiative consists of direct technical assistance to schools, county-specific coordination with law enforcement, increased communication between and among chief school administrators and local emergency responders, and improved infrastructures to facilitate surveillance, as well as symposiums and trainings to advance a skilled work force.

New Jersey SAFE Task Force on Gun Protection, Addiction, Mental Health and Families, and Education Safety

Following the tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut, in December 2012, Governor Chris Christie issued Executive Order No. 124, which created the New Jersey SAFE Task Force on Gun Protection, Addiction, Mental Health and Families, and Education Safety. The task force was charged with determining and making recommendations about the root causes of mass violence and to consider and explore the role that addiction, mental health, gun control laws, responsible gun ownership, and school safety measures played in ensuring the safety of New Jersey residents. Garnering public feedback at three open meetings as well as briefings from local and State agencies involved in law enforcement, mental health and substance abuse, youth and families, education, and school safety, the task force issued its final report on April 10, 2013. The report included 50 recommendations in five areas of concentration: gun violence prevention, urban violence, mental health, violence in the media, and safe schools. Among the recommendations were 12 recommendations that dealt specifically with school security and emergency response protocols.

Department of Education Memorandum on School Safety and Security

Also following the Newtown tragedy, the DOE issued in December 2012 a memorandum in which the Commissioner and State Board of Education President reminded all chief school administrators of the requirement that all school districts and charter schools update their school districtwide school safety and security plans to align with the newly established minimum requirements for school safety and security plans that were disseminated in August 2011. The memorandum further directed that all public, charter, and nonpublic schools were required to conduct at least two of each of the following security drills annually: active shooter, non-fire evacuation, bomb threat, and lockdown. Finally, the memorandum reminded the chief school administrators about the policies and procedures in the document entitled, *School Administrator Procedures: Responding to Critical Incidents*, and notified them of unannounced visits to schools that would be carried out by members of the State's OSPEP beginning in January 2013.

Final Report: N.J. School Boards Association School Security Task Force Report

Most recently, in October 2014, the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) issued a

report entitled, *What Makes Schools Safe? Final Report: NJSBA School Security Task Force Report*. The NJSBA task force worked on a series of issues relating to school security and safety, including security personnel, school climate, policy and planning, communications, training in school security, physical security of schools, and the financing of school security. The NJSBA task force issued 45 recommendations based on extensive research, including a comprehensive summary of existing laws, regulations, directives, reports, plans, and other documents relating to school security and safety, and testimony from noteworthy experts from State government, law enforcement, business and industry, and academia (including higher education, K-12 education, and professional associations). The NJSBA task force report serves as an excellent compendium regarding numerous legislative actions, reports, programs, and other resources that comprise the extant literature about school security and safety, and its recommendations represent a clear call for action by local school boards and the federal and State governments.

III. Scope of Task Force Work and Methodology

School Security Task Force Membership

Co-chaired by the Commissioner of Education and the Director of the OHSP, the School Security Task Force consists of individuals with broad backgrounds and experiences in educational leadership and administration and in homeland security, including public members who possess specific expertise in the implementation of school security standards or technology. Several staff members of the DOE and the OHSP were also assigned as support staff to the Task Force.

Organizational Structure and Meetings

At its initial meeting, the Task Force organized itself into three working committees: one focused on security issues involving law enforcement on school property; another focused on technology and architectural issues related to school buildings and associated facilities, and a third committee focused on cyber-security and emergency communications. Each committee considered the matter of training relating to its specific areas of focus.

The Task Force met nine times from October 2014 through February 2015. In addition, each committee met at least biweekly during the same period of time. Each committee invited subject-matter experts to make brief presentations and to engage in a dialogue about the various issues under consideration. In addition, members of the Task Force conducted site visits to school districts (e.g., Paterson, NJ, and Newtown, CT) to see first-hand how those school districts were dealing with school security issues and matters. Three public meetings were held in northern, central, and southern New Jersey in January 2015, at which time the Task Force solicited comments from the public. Input was also received from nearly two dozen citizens who provided comments via the Task Force website. Finally, members of the Task Force met with approximately 12 high school-aged youth from the Paterson area who offered comments about issues being considered by the Task Force, specifically on the use of screening devices at school entrances and armed security officers patrolling school buildings.

A complete listing of subject-matter experts invited to make presentations to the Task Force, locations of site visits, and locations of public meetings is included in this report as Appendix C.

During its biweekly meetings, the Task Force committees conducted research and engaged in robust discussions regarding the issues on which it focused. As the discussions evolved, each committee reported its progress at the periodic Task Force meetings. The Task Force vetting and deliberation process began with initial presentations by committee chairs in which they: (a) identified the issue being addressed, (b) described the concerns that had been identified regarding each issue, and (c) proffered one or more proposed recommendations that addressed the concerns and issues. Thereupon, the Task Force engaged in robust discussion and deliberation regarding the recommendation(s). Final approval and final wording of each recommendation was achieved through consensus, and the final Task Force recommendations are presented in the paragraphs that follow.

IV. Task Force Issues and Recommendations

Providing a Perspective for the Task Force Recommendations

As a result of the substantial emphasis on school safety and security that has evolved in the years following the events at Columbine High School, much attention has been paid to the acquisition and installation of physical security equipment (e.g., cameras, screening devices, detectors). The security devices are important deterrents, but they come at a significant cost. All of this equipment requires an initial outlay of significant sums of money, but often little funding has been provided for the ongoing maintenance and replacement of the security equipment. Keeping up with maintenance and replacement needs has placed a strain on already tight school budgets. Moreover, following Columbine, much was accomplished in the way of training school personnel to be more attentive to potential threats of school violence. However, since then, the nation's schools are occupied by a new generation of leaders, teachers, and students, many of whom have had no training in post-Columbine security measures.

In the 15 years since the Columbine shootings, much has been learned about school security and, while the various types of security equipment have significant value in detecting and deterring acts of violence in schools, what seems to have been downplayed might well be the most important and significant tool in combating school violence: the human factor. A lot can be accomplished in the name of school safety and security at a substantially lower cost simply by changing human behavior and increasing human vigilance and activity.

Altering human behavior requires significant cultural change, and such change occurs only when people change their basic core beliefs and values; when they cease doing things the same way simply because it is the way they have always been done; and when people commit to making significant changes in the way in which they think and act. As suggested elsewhere in this report, schools were not constructed throughout most of the last century with security as a primary concern. Schools were to be open, welcoming, and nurturing places for students and the community. Unfortunately, school safety and security can no longer be taken for granted, and stakeholders can no longer act as if the worst case of unimaginable violence "won't happen

here." As the tragedies in Bart, Pennsylvania[5], and Newtown, Connecticut, have clearly shown, unimaginable violence can and does happen everywhere. Twenty-first century awareness of school safety and security must include new strategies for anticipating and countering dangerous, unforeseen perils. This can be accomplished through better training and better planning for staffing and systems as they relate to emergency situations.

Issues and Recommendations

In undertaking its charge, the Task Force carefully reviewed a number of important and relevant security issues, as well as the recommendations in a number of prior reports identified above, including *What Makes Schools Safe? Final Report: NJSBA School Security Task Force Report* (2014), *New Jersey SAFE Task Force on Gun Protection, Addiction, Mental Health and Families, and Education Safety* (2012), and the *K-12 School Security Task Force Final Report* (2007). Each of these reports included a number of excellent recommendations to improve the safety and security of the students, staff, and property of New Jersey's schools. Accordingly, the Task Force members acknowledge the recommendations proffered in the earlier reports, while offering our own recommendations.

The issues identified in the following pages represent those included in the charge given to the Task Force, and the recommendations relate specifically to the issue that is identified.

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[5] In 2006, a shooting occurred at the West Nickel Mines School, an Amish one-room schoolhouse in Bart Township, Pennsylvania, in which 10 girls, aged 6 to 13, were shot and five were killed by an armed intruder.

Issue #1: Establish the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy to Centralize Information, Resources, and Training for School Safety and Security

Recommendations

1.   We recommend that the State establish, through legislation similar to that in Indiana, a permanent and fully funded New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy under the aegis of the DOE, as a central repository for best practices, training standards, and compliance oversight in all matters regarding school safety and security.

2.   We recommend that the State require, either through legislation or regulatory measures, that school districts designate a school safety specialist whose responsibilities would include, but not be limited to: supervision and oversight for all school safety and security personnel, polices, and procedures in the school district; ensure such policies, procedures, and best practices in school safety and security are in compliance with State law and regulations; provide the necessary training and resources to school district staff in matters relating to school safety and security; and serve as the school district liaison with local law enforcement and national, State, and community agencies and organizations in matters of school safety and security.

3.   We recommend that the State develop an approved School Safety Specialist Certification Program and require that all school safety specialists acquire the certification.

Discussion

While New Jersey is among the leaders in the United States on many issues that relate to school safety and security, there remain areas where improvement is needed. One such area is the centralization of information, resources, and training regarding school safety and security. Another area is school safety and security compliance; that is, ensuring that all current school safety and security laws, regulations, and the ever-changing best practices for responding to various crises within schools are maintained, monitored for currency, and updated as necessary. In short, there is no centralized location or system for training, resources, or quality control for ensuring best practice and compliance for many of the important mandates that help make schools safer.

A potential solution to this shortcoming is the creation of a School Safety Specialist Academy similar to those already in operation in approximately 20 other states. A good example of a model that could be adopted in New Jersey is the Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy, which is operated under the jurisdiction of the Indiana Department of Education. The academy was created through legislation (IC 5-2-10.1-9; IC 5-2-10.1-11) and is considered one of the more successful and sustainable school safety academies in the nation.

The New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy would: (a) provide ongoing professional development on national and State best practices, as well as the most current resources on school safety and security, intervention prevention, and emergency preparedness planning; (b) assume a

lead role in setting the vision for school safety and security in the State; and (c) provide a coordinated and interdisciplinary approach to providing technical assistance and guidance to New Jersey schools.

Moreover, in keeping with the Indiana model, each school district in New Jersey would be required to assign and dedicate at least one school safety specialist who would attend the Academy's professional development sessions and who, in turn, would provide the resources and turn-key training to all the employees within the school district. The purpose of the Academy would be to provide ongoing, certified training and information on national and State best practices, as well as exemplary resources for school safety, security, intervention/prevention, and emergency preparedness planning to school safety specialists.

The Academy would also provide an approved school safety specialist training program that would certify its participants had received training in areas including, but not limited to, bullying, hazing, truancy, Internet safety, emergency planning, emergency drills, drugs, weapons, gangs, and school policing. The training program would provide annual training sessions for school safety specialists and information concerning best practices and available resources.

At a minimum, the State should move quickly to create appropriate mechanisms to ensure that uniform training in timely and important school safety and security topics is provided throughout the State. Training should be provided in both face-to-face (regionally) and online formats, as appropriate. The assistance of various school districts and other stakeholders should be sought to determine their willingness to host such trainings. In addition, all training should include post-evaluations to assist in determining the efficacy of the respective training modalities.

Issue #2: Improve Response Times to Emergency Situations, Including Lockdowns, Active Shooter Incidents, and Bomb Threats

Recommendations

The Task Force recognizes that improving response times to emergency situations may involve many actions, including, among other things, the presence of full-time security personnel in and around school buildings, the use of emergency communication systems, and the installation of panic alarms. Since the issues are addressed elsewhere in this report, we have chosen to concentrate in this section on recommendations regarding an over-arching concern; i.e., training of school personnel in emergency situation procedures. The Task Force believes that such training will better equip school personnel to deter, slow, and/or detain school aggressors, thus providing valuable time for emergency responders to arrive on scene.

4.   We recommend that the Attorney General's *Law Enforcement Directive 2007-1* and the *School Safety and Security Manual: Best Practice Guidelines* (2006), neither of which has been subjected to any significant review or revision since 2007, be updated to reflect current best practices in school security for both school personnel and law enforcement agencies.

5. Recognizing that many emergencies are situational and that there is no one-size-fits-all method of responding to identifiable threats, we recommend that the State, through the DOE and the Office of the Attorney General, provide, at least annually, turnkey training and guidance to all school staff and students on current best practices and their roles and responsibilities before, during, and after emergencies, including, where appropriate, lockdowns, bomb threat evacuations, active shooter incidents, and other responses to identifiable threats. This training should be provided regionally in both face-to-face and online formats, as appropriate, and should include updated policies and procedures for the establishment of an Incident Command System and Multi-hazard Emergency Planning for Schools. Options-based response protocols (e.g., *Run, Hide, Fight*, as recommended in the *Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans,* USDOE et al., 2013) or other similar plans that provide options beyond the standard lockdown should also be considered. We further recommend that the DOE support the provision of continuing education credits to provide incentives for attendance at approved school security training sessions. This recommendation could be implemented through the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy, and is not intended to supplant or discourage individual schools or school districts from conducting their own safety and security training.

6. We recommend that the State amend the existing *School Security Drill Law* (P.L. 2009, c. 178) and require that ongoing training in various formats (e.g., drills, tabletops, functional exercises) be conducted collaboratively by schools and professional emergency responders (i.e., fire, police, emergency medical services) to identify weaknesses in current school safety and security policies and procedures and to increase the effectiveness of emergency responses. We also recommend that the amended law specify that an actual event involving the equivalent of a drill should be considered a drill for purposes of meeting the statutory requirement in the month in which the event occurred. We further recommend that the amended law employ uniform and consistent terminology to avoid confusion (e.g., terms like "lockdown," "active shooter lockdown," and "lock-in" may be misinterpreted and result in different reactions). Finally, we recommend that the amended law require training for all school personnel, not just certified staff.

7. We recommend that school districts allocate adequate time within their school schedules for all training sessions designed to improve school safety and security.

8. We recommend that school districts engage in activities aimed at promoting a positive school climate and establishing relationships that foster ongoing communication among staff and students.

9. We recommend that school districts establish behavioral threat assessment teams to identify potential at-risk students and provide resources to prevent potential violent incidents. The primary purpose of a behavioral threat assessment is to prevent targeted violence.

Discussion

A recent study of active shooter incidents released in September 2014 by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) noted an increase in active shooter incidents annually in the United States (FBI, 2013). The study also noted that nearly one in four incidents studied occurred in an educational environment (FBI, 2013), and that 60% of all incidents ended prior to emergency responders' arrival. While active shooter incidents are clearly not the only emergency situations for which schools must prepare, the information provided by the FBI study illustrates not only the importance of rapid responses by law enforcement, but also the need to train and prepare school staff and students on how to respond in emergency situations prior to the arrival of emergency responders (FBI, 2013, p. 21).

In 2007, the State Attorney General issued *Law Enforcement Directive 2007-1,* which mandated that every law enforcement agency maintain policies and procedures to enhance school security. The mandated policies included bomb threats, active shooter responses, school lockdowns, school evacuations, and public information (AG, 2007-1). Model policies for each issue were distributed through each county prosecutor's office to assist in the implementation of this directive.

In the years since the issuance of this directive, lessons have been learned and studies conducted that indicate the need for reflection and revision of these policies by law enforcement responders and the need for companion policies directed at school administrators and staff. While the model policies call for annual reviews and revisions as needed, such revisions are left to the discretion of local agencies without additional guidance, training, and/or oversight on these important issues.

Improving response times to emergencies is of paramount importance to school and law enforcement personnel alike. Prevention and mitigation, however, are of equal importance. School and security personnel tend to focus on how to respond when an emergency occurs, but the fact that many emergencies or incidents could have been prevented or at least mitigated with proper threat assessment and available resources prior to an incident is often overlooked. Threat assessment (physical and behavioral) and school climate play an important role in school security (FBI, 2013, p. 21). The threat assessment process is centered upon an analysis of the facts and evidence of behavior in a given situation. The appraisal of risk in a threat assessment focuses on actions, communications, and specific circumstances that might suggest an individual intends to mount an attack and is engaged in planning or preparing for that event.

Because the majority of active shooter incidents is generally over prior to the arrival of emergency responders, it is important that school staff and students understand their roles and responsibilities in emergency situations. Even in cases where a police officer is on site during an emergency, school staff must understand that they may be in a position to make life or death decisions for themselves and/or others. School staff must have proper training regarding their school's emergency plan. They must also be aware of the Incident Command System and their roles and responsibilities. Most importantly, they must be provided with a variety of options for survival (FBI, 2013, p. 8).

In New Jersey, the current protocol in most schools is to lock down in the event of an active shooter or other imminent threat in the school. While lockdowns may be the best option in many cases, there is considerable evidence available that suggests a lockdown is not always the only, or the best, option in all situations (NASD/NASRO, 2014; USDOE et al., 2013; FBI, 2013). Providing training to school staff members that encourages them to make the best decision based on situational awareness provides the best chance for survival. Options such as evacuation, barricading, or countering an attacker (only if in imminent danger) should be available in an emergency. Training to the default lockdown essentially removes these as viable options in emergency situations (USDOE et al., 2013, p. 63).

Responding law enforcement officers will also need to improve rapid response procedures. As was learned from Columbine, waiting to assemble highly trained specialized teams is not an option in an active-shooter event. In many cases, even assembling a small group of officers as a contact team may be time consuming when the goal is to locate and confront the threat immediately. Rapid response protocols for law enforcement must consider a single officer response to engage a threat. This is another area for which training must be provided and must be available as a response option.

Embracing the adage "prevention is the best cure," schools that positively enhance their cultures and climates and proactively assess threats may help to prevent emergencies by identifying and changing contributing behaviors. Research shows that positive school cultures and climates enhance safety by increasing communication (USDOE et al., 2013, p. 54).

Issue #3: Emergency Communications

Recommendations

10.   We recommend that the State require, either through legislation or regulatory measures, school districts to provide two-way radios that have the capability for a dedicated channel, separate from regular operational police frequencies, to enable all school security personnel to communicate directly with other emergency responders.

11.   We recommend that the State require, either through legislation or regulatory measures, school districts to ensure that procedures exist to notify parents and other school/school district stakeholders of a school emergency via multiple platforms (e.g., telephone calls, text messaging, email blasts, etc.) with specific instructions about what should be done during the emergency.

12.   We recommend that the State require, either through legislation or regulatory measures, that school districts test the functionality of all of their emergency communication systems, including strength of signals and calls to 911 and to emergency responders' radios within schools, on at least a monthly basis when advising local law enforcement of the date of the monthly school security drill, as mandated by the *School Security Drill Law* (N.J.S.A. 18A:41-1).

13.   We recommend that school districts review and update their existing school safety and security plan to ensure that it clearly identifies who is responsible for contacting the primary emergency response agency in the event of an emergency and that it employs plain language to notify the school population that an emergency condition exists.

14.   We recommend that school districts develop procedures to ensure that all teachers and school staff have the ability to communicate with school administration while school is in session. Communication may be in the form of classroom telephones, portable radios, intercom systems, cell phones, etc. We further recommend that all staff be granted the authority and capability to make 911 calls.

Discussion

Emergencies can create communication challenges that transcend the problems common in everyday communication (e.g., misinterpreting a statement). During a crisis, it is necessary that vital information be sent to those who need it without delay in an understandable format. To understand more fully emergency communications within a school community, it is helpful to identify the domains in which crisis communications occur.

During a school emergency, clear messages must be sent and received within three populations. First, in order for a proper response to take place when an emergency occurs, an initial alert/message must immediately be relayed to potential victims and those most vulnerable to danger (e.g., students, teachers, staff, visitors) to alert them that an emergency condition exists. Second, the communication of an emergency condition must be relayed to the proper emergency response personnel. Third, information must be provided to other stakeholders who may be affected by the crisis (e.g., parents/caretakers, the surrounding community). While the latter audience is not considered part of the "immediate emergency response," it is no less important in the communication chain.

As with general communication, messages to each of the three preceding populations can be hindered by common barriers (e.g., filtering, language, perception, interference, etc.). However, each population can also engender its own set of specific concerns. The recommendations proffered above are provided to ensure that a timely, clear, and concise message is sent, received, and correctly understood by those affected.

Initial Alert Systems to Those in Immediate Danger

School staff must be made aware of the proper emergency communication procedure. The inclusion of an emergency communication plan is consistent with guidance that is provided to institutions of higher education by the Clery-Higher Education Opportunity Act *Handbook for Campus Safety & Security* (OPE, 2011). In addition, clear direction must be provided regarding who must contact the authorities in an emergency. There are often different procedures among educational leaders and staff concerning who is authorized to dial 911 to notify emergency responders of a potential emergency situation. In some cases, the principal makes such a determination; while in others; someone is designated to make the initial emergency notification

call. Still, in other schools, teachers are encouraged to call 911 directly if they see something of an emergent nature (e.g., a teacher who observes someone with a gun outside of the school).

Communication to Emergency Responders

Unannounced drill observations in schools by the DOE have revealed faults during tests of emergency communications. In one instance, the location of the source of the 911 call was misrepresented. In a second instance, the emergency call was directly routed to the school's administration office. Additionally, there have been reports of degraded radio performance at schools within emergency responders' jurisdictions (NSSSS, 2013).

As suggested by a school security employee during a public outreach session conducted by the Task Force, school security communications with emergency responders can provide vital information during the response stage of an emergency. During a crisis, teachers can provide important information both to responding personnel and school administrators as well as provide status updates and classroom accountability reports.

Communicating with Parents and Other Stakeholders

In order to reach the maximum number of recipients, emergency notifications should be made using multiple communication platforms, including, but not be limited to, texts, email, social media, media outlets, telephones via auto-dialers (robocalls), etc. While considering different modes of notification, schools should also account for other communication barriers, such as foreign languages and the hearing impaired.

Issue #4: Stationing Police Officers in Each School Building

Recommendations

15.   We also recommend that the *New Jersey Guide to Establishing a Safe School Resource Officer Program in Your Community* (1998) be updated to reflect current best practices in School Resource Officer (SRO) programs. We recommend that school districts work with local law enforcement to develop strategies for the placement of carefully selected and specially trained SROs in all school buildings.

16.   We recommend that school districts that use school security personnel enter into a written agreement with local law enforcement agencies to stipulate the terms and conditions governing the placement of security personnel in school buildings. The agreement should address such matters, including, but not limited to, the chain of command; roles and responsibilities of security personnel while on school property; work hours and conditions; required qualifications and experience; channels of communication; required training and continuing professional development; and authority to carry firearms.

17.   For school districts that choose to assign and station special law enforcement officers (SLEOs), retired police officers, and/or civilian security staff in their school buildings, we recommend that the final decision regarding whether to permit such individuals to

carry firearms (according to the provisions of State statute) while on school property rests solely with the chief school administrator. We further recommend that the State develop uniform standards to govern the licensing, experience, and training of such individuals.

18.   We recommend that the current New Jersey statute regarding SLEOs -- N.J.S.A. 40A:14-146.10 *et seq.* -- be revised to remove the *Limitations on hours* provisions as stipulated in N.J.S.A. 40A:14-146.16 and *Limitations on number, categories* provisions as stipulated in N.J.S.A. 40A:14-146.17 and any other restrictions that may impede the effective use of SLEOs for school security purposes. We further recommend that all SLEOs who are assigned as SROs be required to attend SRO training, consistent with existing State law (P.L. 2005, c. 276, (N.J.S.A. 52:17B-71.8; N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.1)).

Discussion

In recent years, several reports and monographs have been written about stationing police officers in school buildings (e.g., NJ SAFE Task Force Report, 2013; NJSBA Task Force Report, 2014; K-12 School Security Task Force Report, 2007; NASRO, 2013). Among the arguments supporting a police presence are: (a) incidents of drug abuse, gang activity, and violent crimes have been increasing and police officers are necessary both to deter such criminal activity and to protect students and staff; and (b) police officers are not simply armed guards for the purpose of a security presence; rather, when used appropriately, they can serve as an integral part of the school community and function as safety experts and law enforcers, problem solvers, and liaisons to community resources, educators, and counselors (NJSAFE, 2007; NASRO, 2012).

On the other hand, among the arguments that have been made against this practice are: (a) simply assigning police to schools as law enforcers can have the unintended effect of exposing youth to the criminal justice system in an adversarial and negative way earlier than they may have otherwise been exposed; and (b) there is the potential that actions taken by police officers will result in criminalizing behavior that may otherwise have been handled at the school level if not for the intervention by police in schools. When taken together, these arguments describe what has been labeled as the "school to prison pipeline" (ACLU, 2008).

Despite the fact that there has long been a police presence in many of our nation's schools, it is only in the last two decades that the assignment of police officers in schools on a full-time basis has become more prevalent. According to data published in a U.S. Department of Justice publication entitled *Assigning Police Officers to Schools* (Raymond, 2010), an estimated one-third of all sheriff's offices and almost half of all municipal police departments assign nearly 17,000 sworn police officers to serve in schools.

SROs, who are specially trained sworn police officers who are assigned full-time to protect the children, staff, and property in New Jersey's public schools, were first introduced in the State in 1998, with the release of the *New Jersey Guide to Establishing a Safe Schools Resource Officer Program in Your Community*, which provided a set of procedures designed to reduce juvenile delinquency through the establishment of a SRO program throughout the State. Since that time, this guide has not been updated with current best practices learned from years of experience and practice.

New Jersey has also permitted school districts to employ Class II police officers, also known as SLEOs, who are also trained police officers and who, while "on duty," possess all the powers and responsibilities of law enforcement, as prescribed by New Jersey statute. However, the use of SLEOs is currently encumbered by statutory limitations on work hours and staffing restrictions. Existing laws related to SLEOs would have to be amended to remove these restrictions in order to maximize their use in school security.

Retired police officers and civilian security staff are also permitted to serve as school security personnel, but they are civilians and they possess no official status as police officers or agents of law enforcement agencies.

Provided that carefully selected and appropriately trained personnel are assigned to protect the safety and security of school personnel and property, the concept has merit, and there is an increasing sense among law enforcement and educators that SROs are effective in protecting people and property. Although empirical research that reliably evaluates the effectiveness of police officers in schools is limited, there is evidence that suggests that schools with SROs were more likely to report that school facilities and grounds were patrolled, safety and security inspections were conducted, and student leads about crimes were investigated (James & McCallion, 2013).

Best practice in school safety and security, of course, would entail the use of SROs exclusively. However, that is a very costly practice, and in the event that it proves to be impossible or impractical, the next best alternative would be some combination of SROs, SLEOs, retired law enforcement officers, and civilian security personnel. The Task Force acknowledges that this hybrid model of school security personnel has been successfully implemented in a number of school districts in New Jersey (e.g., Paterson, High Point Regional High School District, Washington Twp., North Brunswick) as well as in Newtown, Connecticut. Furthermore, in 2013, at least 29 states (including New York and Pennsylvania) introduced more than 90 bills related to SROs and other school police. As of September 2013, at least 17 of those bills had been enacted by state legislatures (CSG Justice Center, 2014).

Issue #5: Schedule Periodic Patrols of School Buildings and Grounds by Local Law Enforcement Officers

Recommendations

In making the following recommendations, the Task Force acknowledges that some of these have previously been offered by other organizations and agencies (e.g., NJ SAFE Task Force Report, 2007; NJSBA Task Force Report, 2014; MOA, 2011). The recommendations that follow are intended to support and affirm such recommendations and should be implemented at the discretion of the local law enforcement agency.

19.   We recommend the following strategies be implemented and enhanced according to the needs and resources of each school district. The implementation of these strategies will require significant collaboration and information sharing among schools, law

enforcement, and community partners in order to achieve the maximum amount of police presence with the least amount of disruption to the educational environment.

20.   We recommend that school districts work collaboratively with local law enforcement agencies to provide a police presence in and around school grounds at start and dismissal times in accordance with the approved school calendar. This should be accomplished by the use of directed patrols with proper notice to school officials (MOA, 2011). Directed patrols should also include bus and transportation routes, in addition to physical school grounds.

21.   We recommend that school districts work collaboratively with local law enforcement agencies to include school patrol programs in regularly scheduled police patrol plans. These programs, such as the SWAP Program (Stop, Walk, and Protect) as described in the NJ SAFE Task Force Report (2013), will serve to enhance periodic police presence during the school day (e.g., during lunch periods and student assemblies and activities), as well as after-school hours when extra-curricular activities (e.g., sporting events, dances, proms) are ongoing. They will further serve to provide added layers of security at such activities and events, while also establishing rapport and trust among the staff, students, and police to enhance the school/police partnership (NJSBA Task Force Report, 2014). Such programs should be coordinated in order to accomplish this presence during the times where visibility will be most impactful.

22.   While the current *School Security Drill Law* (P.L. 2009, c. 178) requires 48-hour notification of law enforcement, it does not currently require a police presence. Therefore, we recommend that the *School Security Drill Law* be amended to require a law enforcement presence for at least one drill to ensure emergency procedures are effective and to make recommendations for improvement or revision.

23.   We recommend that school districts work collaboratively with law enforcement agencies to invite, on a regular basis, police personnel with expertise in gang activity, drug awareness, and resistance strategies, as well as subject matter knowledge that affects school safety, such as bullying, cyber safety, "sexting," and school violence, to participate in educational activities for students, staff, and parents. This will also increase the frequency of police presence at schools and enhance the school/police partnership. Inviting parents to such activities extends this relationship to community stakeholders.

Discussion

No school is immune from disruptive influences that affect the school environment. These influences range from drug and alcohol activity to gangs, vandalism, and violence on and off school grounds. For this reason, school and police partnerships are vital to addressing these needs as well as engaging in effective emergency planning.

Collaboration between schools and police may be accomplished in a variety of ways. The assignment of a SRO and the establishment of a designated School Safety Specialist to each school district are among those approaches that aid in this collaboration. These tactics have been

addressed in recommendations found elsewhere in this report.

There are many other strategies and programs that should be explored by schools and law enforcement that increase the presence of police officers in school buildings and on school grounds, and many of these strategies are already recommended in the *Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials* (2011, Article 3), the NJ SAFE Task Force Report (2013), and the NJSBA Task Force Report (2014).

As indicated elsewhere in this report in our recommendation for stationing police in school buildings, proper care must be taken in the implementation of such strategies to ensure that any enhanced police presence does not have the unintended effect of exposing youth to the criminal justice system in an adversarial and negative way earlier than they may have otherwise been exposed, and does not result in criminalizing behavior that may have otherwise been handled at the school level if not for police intervention.

The presence of police in and around schools not only represents a proactive approach to providing an enhanced sense of security and visibility, but it also supports the establishment of a positive relationship among police, school staff, and students.

Stationing police full-time on school grounds is one way to accomplish this added security; however, integrating directed patrols during school hours and at after-school and extra-curricular activities, as well as requiring a police presence at emergency drills, greatly enhances this presence and the resulting atmosphere of safety and trust.

The goal of increasing police presence is not only to provide enhanced physical security, but also to engage in proactive crime prevention efforts and increase cooperation and trust between the police and the school community. This cooperation and trust will increase the likelihood of staff and students providing information regarding existing security issues to police and will enable police and the school community to work collaboratively toward addressing these issues effectively.

Issue #6: Panic Alarms in School Buildings to Alert Local Law Enforcement Authorities to Emergency Situations

Recommendations

24.   While the Task Force recognizes that, depending on the specific situation, panic alarms may have value in alerting law enforcement agencies to school emergencies, the various types of systems available each possess strengths and limitations. Because of these strengths and limitations, as well as the number of different types of panic alarms available, the array of capabilities and functions they offer, and the significant cost variations, we do not think it is prudent at this time to recommend that the State require that panic alarms be installed in every school building.

25.   We recommend, however, that the State and school districts, working in conjunction with law enforcement agencies, continue to research panic alarm options that meet school

districts' needs and provide the best options for communicating the need for emergency responses to the law enforcement agencies that serve them. Accordingly, the decision to purchase and install panic alarm systems that meet their needs should be left to the discretion of school districts.

Discussion

There is current research that suggests the best way to curtail school violence is to stop it before it occurs (CDC, 2013; NCES, 2014). Universal, school-based programs aimed at helping students to develop skills such as emotional self-awareness and control, positive social skills, problem solving, conflict resolution, and teamwork can significantly lower rates of aggression and violent behavior (CDC, 2013). Nevertheless, when school violence occurs either inside or outside the building, it is critical that the response is timely and effective.

The concept of pressing a panic alarm to immediately summon law enforcement to an emergency, on its face, seems like a worthwhile endeavor. However, due to the sheer number and variety of available panic alarm systems, this issue becomes more complex.

The Task Force acknowledges that several states (e.g., Pennsylvania[6] New York[7], North Carolina[8]) have already taken steps to outfit schools with panic alarm systems. In fact, North Carolina has not only mandated their installation in public schools throughout the State, but has also provided a matching grant program for their implementation.

As part of the research associated with this issue, members of the Task Force spoke with representatives of a number of New Jersey police departments and schools to discuss and review the operational aspects of panic alarm systems. Various panic alarm systems are available, which provide a wide array of capabilities and functions. These systems also vary significantly in cost, based on their capabilities and functions. Panic alarms may be as basic as a stationary panic button in one location that sends a message to the local police that an emergency exists. They may also be as complex as handheld, pendant, or Smartphone applications that send an emergency message as well as provide ongoing two-way communication during an emergency and specific location services to direct law enforcement to the exact area of the emergency. These systems each have their own strengths and limitations with their implementation.

Panic alarm systems that only provide a stationary button in one or a few locations may be relatively low in cost, simple in design, and effective in notifying police quickly; however, if the emergency exists in an area that is not in close proximity to the alarm button, the effectiveness of the system becomes questionable.

Panic alarm systems that utilize pendants distributed to teachers and other staff members provide a wider range of coverage than the stationary systems, but they also create the potential for false

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[6] See http://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/Panic-Buttons-Protect-Delaware-County-Schools-277912951.html

[7] See http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/Alarms-Panic-Buttons-Schools-New-York-Long-Island-School-Shootings-228789561.html

[8] See http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2013/Bills/House/HTML/H452v0.html

alarms due to the number of available activation points and portability. Moreover, by virtue of the sheer number of devices that may be necessary, they also require additional costs, distribution, accountability, and training measures.

The more technologically advanced systems, including Smartphone devices, provide functions beyond simply notifying police. These systems may provide two-way radio communication, location services, and in some cases, they may even provide access to the school's video camera systems. The ongoing flow of information and location services provides additional information to emergency responders not only to respond to a particular school, but they also provide information regarding the nature and exact location of the emergency. These advanced services come with additional costs, particularly in schools that do not already possess the requisite radio communication or video infrastructure needed to make the best use of this emerging technology. Additionally, the more advanced the systems become, the more training is required for both schools and emergency responders to utilize them effectively.

Despite the many variables involved, panic alarms, in general, appear to demonstrate value in notifying emergency responders of emergencies at schools. The ability of schools to immediately notify police by the push of a button that an emergency exists and that an emergency response is required will, in most cases, enable police to get to the building location faster, even if more information will be needed at the scene to determine further response options. Caution should be emphasized, however, that regardless of the type of alarm utilized, panic alarms should be used only in conjunction with, and not in place of, 911 emergency notifications.

In furtherance of the Task Force's research into panic alarms, several New Jersey law enforcement agencies and schools (e.g., Bernardsville, Brielle, Montvale, Bergen County)[9] were visited or interviewed regarding the panic alarms they had in place. These sites were selected based on the type of alarms in use and the information that could be acquired.

As discussed above, the systems that have only a single or few stationary panic buttons in place could potentially be effective, but only if they happen to be in close proximity during an emergency. However, the limited number of locations of these systems ultimately limits their effectiveness and the likelihood of their immediate availability in the event of an emergency. Additionally, the lack of an ongoing communication feature regarding the nature and location of the emergency, in addition to the potential for false alarms, are among the limitations of these systems.

Those systems that provide opportunities for ongoing communication and location services, in addition to the emergency responders notification function, seem to have the most likelihood of being effectively utilized in an emergency and the ability to provide the real-time information necessary to conduct the most effective and expedient law enforcement response.

While the Task Force recognizes the potential value of panic alarms in alerting law enforcement to school emergencies, due to the significant variations, capabilities, and costs of these systems, as well as their different strengths and limitations, the Task Force believes that, prior to any State

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[9] A complete list of these sites and the types of panic alarm systems that were reviewed is presented in Appendix C of this report.

mandate for their implementation, more research is needed on the State and/or local level to determine what types of systems will be most effective given the unique needs and resources of individual school districts and the law enforcement agencies that serve them. At this time, the Task Force does not think it is prudent for the State to require that panic alarms be installed in each school building.

Issue #7: Screening Systems at School Entrances

Recommendation

26.   Screening systems may encompass vehicle and package inspection, search of persons and bags, and metal or explosive detectors. Each of these alternatives is labor intensive, time consuming, and costly. We recommend that decisions regarding the employment of screening systems be left to the discretion of school districts commensurate with local resources and security assessment. We further recommend that school districts that choose to install and use screening systems also develop the appropriate procedures for staff training and equipment use. If detection and screening capabilities can be included in new construction that would address some of the listed concerns, it may be a viable addition to security protocols.

Discussion

Much media attention has been given to the episodes of random, mass shootings at schools and universities. Such attention, while often overplaying the rate of such episodes, has significantly increased the visibility of the school security issue. Controlling entrances to educational buildings plays an important role in the reduction of unwanted visitors, contraband, and the resulting violence that may occur.

In the security field, there is a distinction between access control and screening systems. According to the New York City Police Department's report *Engineering Security,* access control systems limit who can enter a building; screening systems limit what can enter a building; and monitoring systems observe the people and things in and around a building. At times, the terms "access control" and "screening" are incorrectly used interchangeably. Insofar as the issues of access control and monitoring systems are addressed elsewhere in this report, only the issue of screening systems is addressed in this section.

By their very nature, K-12 schools have short bursts of non-controllable population flows; specifically, at times of arrival and dismissal of students. Screening systems require one-at-a-time entry to check the person and belongings. Such systems can use metal detection, X-ray, explosives detection devices, or a physical search.

Portable metal detectors can detect any material that will conduct electricity. However, many weapons increasingly are being made of material that will not be detected by these devices. Weapons can now be manufactured using polymers, acrylics, or even paper using a 3-D printer (Green, 1999). Disguised weapons, such as cell phone guns, may also be missed if screening relies on metal detection alone. A metal detector cannot distinguish between metal items; a gun

and a large belt buckle will each activate the alarm (Green, 1999). Finally, metal detectors are not efficient in detecting objects within a bag, often necessitating an X-ray or a hand search.

Space and layout for any such screening device or procedure may pose a problem for some schools. The average portable walk-through detector requires approximately 3' x 3' of floor space, is approximately 7' in height, and may require a proximate power outlet, although battery operated models are available. They can weigh between 60 to 100 pounds. In addition to the space for the device itself, adequate area for a waiting line would also be necessary.

A well-trained operator of a single device can have a throughput of approximately 15 to 20 individuals per minute, which would require more than one hour to screen 1,000 people (Green, 1999), assuming that none of the entrants activated an alarm, which would require further investigation. Since most students arrive at school with backpacks, pocketbooks, and/or gym bags, the number of individuals screened per minute would drop dramatically. More devices would reduce this wait time, but additional trained staff would also be required. In addition, the cost of a moderately priced walk-through detector is between $4,000 and $5,000. Handheld devices are available at a reasonable cost, but they also require trained personnel, are not as reliable as walk-through devices, and would result in even slower throughput.

According to a report published by the National School Security Services (Trump, n.d.), "the majority of schools in the U.S. do not use metal detectors on a day-to-day basis. While there are no credible statistics on the exact number of schools using metal detectors, stationary metal detectors used on a daily basis are typically limited to large urban school districts with a chronic history of weapons-related offenses. U.S. schools regularly using stationary metal detectors on a day-to-day basis are the exception, not the rule." (Trump, p.1)

Following high-profile incidents of school violence (e.g., Sandy Hook Elementary, Arapahoe High, Virginia Tech), parents understandably seek some type of guarantee that such attacks can be prevented from happening again, and some believe that metal detectors can provide that guarantee. While there is evidence that suggests that screening devices like metal detectors do serve as risk-reduction tools, there is no single strategy or combination of strategies that will provide the guarantees that parents and the public seek.

There are both strengths and limitations of screening systems like metal detectors. During our public hearings, we encountered school security officers and parents who championed the use of metal detectors in schools, and there is evidence that shows they both detect contraband and deter individuals who might bring contraband into school buildings. On the other hand, we also encountered students who expressed concern that the deployment of metal detectors made them feel as though they were to blame for school violence. In addition, such devices are costly in terms of equipment, space, personnel, and training resources and cannot be used effectively in school buildings with multiple entrances that cannot be closed or restricted or staffed by adequate security personnel.

Issue #8: Advanced Student and Visitor Identification Cards

Recommendations

27.   We recommend that the State require, either through legislation or regulatory measures, that school districts develop and implement a policy and system in which all staff must have identification (ID) cards that must be clearly visible at all times while they are in the building when school is in session. The ID card should contain the individual's name, his/her position and affiliation with the school/school district, a photograph, and the current school year. Photographs should be updated as needed. We recommend that staff ID cards should be used only for basic access control.

28.   We recommend that school districts develop and implement a policy and system in which all students must have ID)cards that must be clearly visible at all times while in the building when school is in session. We further recommend that school districts should be encouraged to use student ID cards that are also tied to other school/school district functions; e.g., meals, library/media use, and/or entrance to activities, as these may motivate students to consistently bring their ID cards to school. Finally, we recommend that a requirement to use student ID cards for the purpose of identification to board school buses should be considered.

29.   For visitors to the school building, we recommend that school district policy require that visitor passes and screening procedures be utilized to monitor entry and access to school facilities.

30.   There exists a danger and a liability in allowing a registered sex offender unfettered access to students. Therefore, we recommend that the DOE determine the process for school districts to develop and implement a policy and procedures for checking the Sex Offender Registry for all visitors[10] to New Jersey's public schools when school is in session and students are present. Visitor control systems can check databases for registrants, and access to the State registry is available at http://www.njsp.org/info/reg_sexoffend.html

31.   For school districts that choose to employ advanced identification card systems, we recommend that they develop policies and procedures that ensure suspended or terminated students' and employees' ID cards are confiscated.

It is important to note that all of the above recommendations require consistent and stringent enforcement by school administration.

Discussion

An unwelcome or unknown visitor to a school can create a feeling of insecurity to the occupants and the guardians of students. The ability to easily determine if an occupant of a building is

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[10] As the term *visitor* is used here, it is not intended to apply to citizens who enter school buildings for purposes of voting on election days.

authorized can help to quickly identify a potential threat or hazard to the students, staff, and the building. The most widely used method of such a determination is an officially issued ID card.

ID cards can merely identify the person, or they can be used in connection with a computerized access control system. In education, basic ID cards usually contain the holder's name, a photograph, the school or school district affiliation, and the school year. Such cards can be produced for approximately $1 each. For students, a UPC code also can provide grade and school-issued ID number and can be utilized merely for access, or also for meals, library, and/or media use.

ID cards used for access are computer-chipped proximity or scan cards and cost between $10 to $15 to create. Since there is substantial potential for lost or missing cards, this can become costly for school districts. As with screening systems, using computer ID cards for students for access control may negatively affect the time it takes for processing student arrivals. Safeguards must also be put in place to thwart fraudulent production of either type of card.

Issue #9: Biometric, Retina, or Other Advanced Recognition Systems for Authorized Entrance to School Buildings

Recommendations

32.   The Task Force does not recommend that the State require or encourage the use of biometrics at school entrances as a means of access control. The short burst of mass entry at schools, privacy issues, and cost make biometrics an ill-suited application at this time.

33.   In recognition of the fact that some school districts have already adopted iris recognition systems for access control, we recommend that the State and school districts continue to research advanced recognition technologies. In the future, such technologies may increase in validity and reliability at reduced costs that will also increase their viability as potential tools for school safety and security. At this time, we recommend that decisions regarding the employment of biometric systems be left to the discretion of school districts.

Discussion

Properly identifying and granting access to people is an essential ingredient to security in any venue. It contributes to the detecting, deterring, and delaying of potential threats. Access control can also be used for sensitive areas like HVAC and utility systems, computer servers, and high-end equipment, or to safeguard confidential information. The most common system for identification and entry is the ID card. Biometrics uses advanced technology to ensure proper access, and it relieves the school of having to manage an ID card system, replace lost or stolen cards, and prevent the sharing or fraudulent reproduction of access control items. The two most prevalent biometric systems use fingerprints or iris scanning.

The concerns for the use of this technology in schools are cost, vandalism, environmental issues, privacy issues, and processing time. The purchase and installation of one scanner system for a

two-door entrance costs approximately $10,000. It requires a control box, reader or camera, electronic locks, door releases, and the creation of a database. To have a vandal-proof system adds to the cost.

The use of biometrics also requires the collection of fingerprints or iris patterns and a database to maintain them. This collection and maintenance may be viewed as overly invasive of personal information and induce the fear that the information could be comprised or used for purposes other than access control.

Beyond the concerns discussed above, the systems themselves are susceptible to climate conditions, including direct sunlight, low temperatures, and precipitation, all of which can affect the use and accuracy of the equipment. There is also a small portion of the population whose fingerprints are unreadable (personal communication, Roy Bolling, President, Eyemetric Identity Systems, December 9, 2014).

Issue #10: Addressing Elevated Risks, Including Proximity to a Chemical Facility or Nuclear Power Plant and Assessing and Abating Security Risks in Existing School Facilities

Recommendations

34.   We recommend that school districts conduct and update at least annually a risk assessment for all of its school buildings and use it as a basis for security policy, procedures, and planning. The stakeholders involved in the annual review of the school district's emergency plan should engage in fact finding for each potential risk.

35.   We recommend that the State develop and disseminate a standard risk assessment matrix for school security to all school districts in New Jersey.

Discussion

The purpose of a risk assessment is to estimate the amount of potential harm that may be caused due to a specific event. It should be used to create an all-hazards emergency plan. It begins with identifying the most important function of the entity. In schools, the most important function is the education of students in a safe and secure environment. For a proper risk assessment, the school district should identify the potential risks to the school occupants and building and develop a matrix to categorize them. For example, the probability of harm should an accident or act of violence occur may be classified as *rare, unlikely, possible,* or *certain*. The potential severity of that harm may be categorized as *catastrophic, critical, marginal*, or *negligible*. Currently, risk assessment matrices exist only for business and industrial organizations, but until such time as one can be developed specifically for schools, these can be used as guides for educational institutions.

Some issues to be considered when creating the risk assessment matrix include a school's location in relation to potentially perilous sources including, but not limited to, utility pipelines (this can be determined by contacting the utility company or via an Internet search), military

installations, chemical plants, power plants, high crime areas (this can be determined by consulting the Uniform Crime Reports and local law enforcement agencies), high volume or specialized vehicular traffic (this can be determined by consulting county traffic engineers or local law enforcement agencies), airports, hazardous waste sites, water towers, high voltage electric towers, wastewater treatment plants, flood plains, and tornado alleys.

Regarding chemical and nuclear power plants, schools should contact their local or county Office of Emergency Management to obtain the risk assessment and protocols that will be used in the event of emergencies associated with those facilities.

Issue #11: Architectural Design for New Construction

Recommendation

36.   In addition to the *Best Practices Standards for Schools under Construction or Being Planned for Construction* set forth by the DCA, the Task Force recommends the following for the architectural design for new school construction:

(a)   Wherever possible, a building site should be chosen with adequate space to accommodate bus and vehicular traffic separately and permit additional space for the proper evacuation of occupants;

(b)   Wherever possible, bus drop-off/pick-up areas should be separated from other vehicular drop-off/pick-up areas;

(c)   Wherever possible, pedestrian routes should be separated from vehicular routes and crossing of the two should be minimized;

(d)   The number of interior doors should be kept to a minimum as necessary to satisfy operational considerations and meet code requirements. Whenever possible, exterior door hardware should be eliminated from doors that are intended only for emergency egress;

(e)   New schools should be designed with a single public entrance to be used during the school day, which should be equipped with a security vestibule with interior doors that must be released by school security or other staff. Consideration should be given to providing bullet resistant glazing in the interior vestibule doors and windows;

(f)   All marked entrances should conform to a uniform numbering system (e.g., the main entrance is #1 and numbered clockwise from there) in order to assist emergency responders in locating particular areas. The principal's office should have a secondary exit;

(g)   Interior door locks on spaces that would serve as safe havens during lockdowns should have a keyless locking mechanism;

(h)   New buildings should be provided with access control systems, which allow for remote locking and unlocking of all building access doors;

(i)   New buildings should be designed and built such that areas intended for public use (i.e., auditorium, gymnasium, media center, etc.) may be separated and secured from all other areas;

(j)	Classroom doors and all other spaces that could be used as safe havens during lockdowns should not have sidelights;
(k)	All interior doors and windows in spaces that could be used as safe havens during lockdowns should be equipped with blinds, shades, or similar devices;
(l)	Roof hatches and other gateways to areas of the school building that are off-limits to teachers, students, and other unauthorized personnel should be locked and alarmed;
(m)	The use of courtyards should be avoided and/or eliminated. Where courtyards are provided, measures should be taken to ensure that they do not compromise the security of the school; and
(n)	Sufficient space for evacuation must be provided at all new school sites.

Discussion

According to data published by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2014), during most of the 20th century, the trend to consolidate small schools brought about declines in the total number of public schools in the United States. In 1929-30, there were approximately 248,000 public schools, compared with slightly fewer than 99,000 in 2012-13. However, the number of public schools has increased in recent decades: between 1988-89 and 2006-07, there was an increase of approximately 15,600 schools. In 2012-13, 1,483 new schools were opened in the United States. In New Jersey in 2012-13, there were 2,598 operating public schools, which served approximately 1.37 million students (NCES, 2014).

The condition of schools has long been a problem particularly for educators, students, and parents. According to data compiled by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), a branch of the NCES, in 1998 (the latest year for which such data are available), the average age of a public school building in the United States was 42 years old. The mean age ranged from 46 years in northeastern states to 37 years in the southeastern states (IES, 1999). In urban areas, particularly in the northeastern states, many of the schools are considerably older, and in some cities, school buildings are from 75-100 years old.

Very few, if any, of the schools built in the middle decades of the 20th century were built with security issues in mind. In fact, approximately 10% of all the schools in the United States were built after 1985 (IES, 1999). However, as the number of acts of violence in the nation's schools has increased, considerable attention has been given to the subject of school safety and security. School renovations and new construction must strike a balance between providing a welcoming educational environment and a safe environment in which students can learn and teachers can teach. Well-reasoned school design will encourage proper security measures to be employed by school districts and save the cost of retrofitting buildings.

Issue #12: Hardening School Perimeters and Building Entryways

The Task Force acknowledges that some redundancies exist in the recommendations for Issue #11 *Architectural Design for New Construction* and Issue #12 *Hardening School Perimeters and Building Entryways*. Insofar as some of these recommendations apply both to new construction and existing buildings, we reasoned that they had application to both issues.

Recommendation

37.   We recommend that:

    (a)   Schools should employ *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* principles, including:

        (1)   School sites should utilize any available natural barriers such as a tree line, creek, or other waterway to clearly establish school property;

        (2)   Fencing and signs should be employed to delineate school property, and signs should be placed in multiple locations that clearly dictate that no trespassing is permitted during school or other posted hours and that visitors must register at a school's main office;

        (3)   A clear line of site from a school to the immediate surroundings should be established; trees and shrubs should be placed away from the building to remove hiding places and the ability to climb and access the roof;

    (b)   Security personnel should be in uniform to act as a deterrent to those who might choose to do harm;

    (c)   Driveways should be one way if possible and lead to a clearly marked visitor parking area; STOP signs and other traffic calming devices should be used to keep vehicles at a reasonable speed;

    (d)   Bollards should be placed along the roadway or curb line in front of the school to prevent vehicles from gaining access to exterior walls, windows, and doors, or in areas on the property where vehicles are prohibited;

    (e)   The school's main entrance should be clearly marked and easily visible and recognizable;

    (f)   The number of doors for access by staff should be limited. (Egress cannot be prevented.);

    (g)   Exterior doors should remain locked, and when in use for a large entry/exit of people, they should be staffed and monitored;

    (h)   At a minimum, an access control system utilizing remote unlocking features, an intercom, and fixed cameras should be used at the school's main entrance and for other entrances as funding permits;

    (i)   All entrances should be clearly marked with a numerical sequence to allow for specific response by police, fire, and EMS. Classrooms with outside walls should be marked exteriorly for the same purpose. The coding/numbering scheme, which should be shared with emergency responder agencies (i.e., police, fire, EMS), should be uniform for all schools, e.g., the main entrance should be #1 and all other entrances and classrooms should be numbered in a clockwise direction;

    (j)   A parking decal or tag system should be maintained for all staff and students who park on campus in order to easily identify unauthorized vehicles on the property;

    (k)   Enclosures for utilities outside a school building should be located away from the building to ensure that they do not provide roof access;

    (l)   Adequate and properly maintained lighting should be provided around the building and parking lots;

(m)   If the funding, staffing, and site approval are possible, a guard shack and gate should be provided on campus as an effective perimeter control;

(n)   Where the footprint of the school allows and where funding is available, secure vestibules at the main entrance should be created. The exterior door entrance to the school should allow access by a visitor only to the vestibule; doors to the remainder of the building should be locked;

(o)   School district policy and procedure should clearly indicate that propping open doors is strictly prohibited, and students and staff should not open the door for anyone. All persons seeking entry to the building should be directed to the main entrance;

(p)   Surveillance cameras should be used as a target-hardening tool. Visible, exterior cameras act as deterrents. The intended purpose of video surveillance cameras should dictate the type of equipment selected for purchase;

(q)   Security systems, such as access control and surveillance cameras, should have their own dedicated server and generator both to secure information and to ensure efficient operation in an emergency;

(r)   Ballistic or shatter resistant film should be used for glass entrance door sidelights and other vulnerable first floor areas; and

(s)   Schools should maintain a strict key distribution protocol. Staff should be required to sign for keys and return them at the end of each school year. Distribution of keys should be made for bona fide reasons only.

Discussion

Up to the time of the Columbine High School shootings in 1999, schools were open buildings; welcoming and nurturing to the students and the community. However, in light of Columbine and several other recent violent episodes at schools across the United States, the emphasis has turned to target hardening of school property and emergency actions designed to increase the efforts that offenders must expend in the commission of a crime. School officials need to create a physical environment and procedures that provide a security presence or physical barriers that will detect a possible threat to security, deter a possible aggressor, deny entry to unwanted visitors, and delay the threat's ability to move about the building.

According to a recent survey conducted by *Campus Safety Magazine* (Gray as cited in Byer, 2014, p.3), 88% of K-12 respondents reported that they have or will make changes to their security, public safety, or emergency management programs, which could include any or all of the following: installing new, more, or better access control systems; radio communications with emergency responders; panic alarms; intercoms; emergency notification systems; window glazing; video surveillance; and fences or locks.

Security measures should be applied in a layered approach, starting at the perimeter, at the exterior of the building, and then proceeding to the interior. Such measures should create a redundancy or overlapping of equipment and procedures to further ensure target hardening. Moreover, besides providing a deterrent, visible security measures offer a sense of security to students, staff, and guardians, which is often as important as actual security.

Schools must also control the people seeking to enter the building. Some exterior security measures (e.g., video surveillance, window glazing, locks) can help to detect and/or deter a possible threat outside the building, keeping the threat away from children and staff. The farther the threat from the building, the more likely the security measures can mitigate any actions and allow law enforcement more time to respond effectively.

As with all recommendations, policies, procedures, and on-going training are crucial to their effectiveness. Among the most important responsibilities of school district and school administrators and staff is to ensure that all policies and procedures are consistently applied and monitored. Consequences for the violation of security policies and procedures should be clearly defined and employed.

Issue #13: Securing Computer Networks to Mitigate Cyber Risk

Recommendations:

38.   Each school or, in some cases, each district should designate an information technology (IT) professional to implement, to the best of his/her ability, the risk management best practices prescribed in the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) *Cybersecurity Framework.*

39.   The designated IT professional should classify each school in accordance with NIST's Framework Implementation Tier. The tier selection process should consider, at a minimum, a school's risk management goals and the feasibility of implementation under current and projected resource levels.

40.   The designated IT professional should comply with the best practices for mitigating and preventing cyber threats outlined in Chapter 1 of *School Safety and Security Manual: Best Practices Guidelines*.

41.   The DOE, in collaboration with the OHSP and the State Office of Information Technology, should periodically and formally review and, as necessary, update the *School Safety and Security Manual: Best Practices Guidelines* to account for changes in cyber-security standards and technology.

Discussion

Data security is a growing concern in both the private and public sectors. Recent unauthorized intrusions into the computer systems of private industry have both political and business implications. School district networks contain private identity information of students and staff, and school districts with advanced screening processes capture digital images of private citizens' (visitors) State-issued identification (e.g., drivers' licenses). Protecting private and sensitive digital information from data theft or manipulation is an important aspect of school security protocols.

In addition to personal identifying information stored on electronic media, schools also store building plans and sensitive safety information on their computer systems. Many districts employ Internet Protocol (IP) cameras that may be viewed remotely by school district and law enforcement personnel. Computerized access control systems are becoming more common across school districts.

Preventing unauthorized access to school district computer systems is a paramount concern. Designated IT professionals can ensure compliance with recommended best practices, and, among other tasks, can scrutinize systems proposed for data storage, testing, and grade integrity; develop retention schedules for personal information; monitor logging information regarding access to network databases; and develop and implement acceptable use policies for computer resources and "*bring your own device*" instruments that access school networks via WiFi or Ethernet cable.

A school's or school district's designated IT professional should serve as the central point of contact for all issues regarding cyber security. If a school does not employ a qualified IT professional, the central point of contact should reside at the school district level. The IT professional should be familiar with the network topology and location of servers and storage devices; should implement and maintain signed acceptable use policy forms of all users including staff, students, and outside vendors with access to the system; and should serve as the liaison to law enforcement in the event that a cyber-intrusion or other unauthorized access occurs.

The *School Safety & Security Manual: Best Practices Guidelines* was developed in 2006. Technology is constantly changing, and periodically reviewing and updating the Assessment of Cyber Security section of the manual is warranted.

Issue #14: Using School Facilities as Polling Places

Recommendation

42.   We recommend that school districts work collaboratively with local law enforcement and local election agencies to identify and use suitable facilities for voting that meet all of the community's needs. To the extent that school buildings are to be used for election purposes, care should be taken and caution exercised to ensure the safety and security of students and school staff. Such care and caution could conceivably include using election days for professional development for school staff when students are not expected to be in the school building.

Discussion

Using schools as polling places has been discussed and debated in many communities over the years. However, with the school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, in December 2012, the intensity of the debate has escalated, and there have been renewed calls to cease using school facilities as polling stations.

As noted in the report entitled *The American Voting Experience: Report and Recommendations*

of the Presidential Commission on Election Administration (January, 2014), best practice in polling location and design dictates that a polling place must: (1) have room to comfortably accommodate voters; (2) provide accessibility for voters with disabilities; (3) have adequate infrastructure, such as the capacity for appropriate levels of Internet and telephone connections; (4) offer adequate parking, and (5) be located in reasonable proximity to the population of voters it is intended to serve (p. 32). The Presidential Commission further determined that schools often provide the best facilities to meet voters' needs. In fact, the commission reported that state and local election administrators identified schools as the preferred venue for polling because they provided necessary and desirable space and were inexpensive, widespread, conveniently located, had ample parking, and were easily accessible for people with disabilities. About a quarter of voters nationwide voted in schools in the 2008 and 2012 elections (p. 33). Nevertheless, the commission also reported that security was identified as the largest obstacle to the widespread use of schools as polling locations.

School staff, parents, and the community-at-large remain concerned about the apparent contradiction between expensive screening devices at school entrances; advanced identification systems for staff, students, and visitors; and the hardening of school perimeters and building entryways on the one hand and allowing unfettered access by hundreds or even thousands of unknown visitors to school facilities on election days when classes are in session on the other hand. For some schools, it is relatively easy to create a zone where voters can avoid interacting with students. For example, some schools may have a separate entrance from the outside into the gym so voters do not walk through the halls. However, many schools do not have that option.

At its 2014 Annual Business Meeting, the New York State School Boards Association recently resolved to support legislation that would prohibit local boards of election from designating public school buildings as polling places without a school district's consent. The resolution was in response to an incident that occurred in a Long Island school in which a school building went into emergency lockdown while part of the building was being used as a polling place. Police entered the building, which was then still in lockdown mode, and found members of the public and the board of elections roaming the school hallways, and even in the basement, in clear violation of lockdown procedures (NYSSBA, 2014).

The Presidential Commission recommended that all states review their laws and contemporary practices within their jurisdictions to ensure the continued and future use of schools as polling places. The commission further specifically recommended that close attention be paid to the use of professional or in-service training days to enable voting to occur on days when students would not be in the school building (*The American Voting Experience*, 2014, p.34).

APPENDIX A
Summary List of Task Force Recommendations

The issues identified in the following pages represent those that were included within the charge given to the Task Force, and the recommendations relate specifically to the issue that is identified.

Issue #1: Establish the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy to Centralize Information, Resources, and Training for School Safety and Security

1. We recommend that the State establish, through legislation similar to that in Indiana, a permanent and fully funded New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy under the aegis of the Department of Education (DOE), as a central repository for best practices, training standards, and compliance oversight in all matters regarding school safety and security.

2. We recommend that the State require, either through legislation or regulatory measures, that school districts designate a school safety specialist whose responsibilities would include, but not be limited to: supervision and oversight for all school safety and security personnel, polices, and procedures in the school district; ensure such policies, procedures, and best practices in school safety and security are in compliance with State law and regulations; to provide the necessary training and resources to school district staff in matters relating to school safety and security; and serve as the school district liaison with local law enforcement and national, State, and community agencies and organizations in matters of school safety and security.

3. We recommend that the State develop an approved School Safety Specialist Certification Program and require that all school safety specialists acquire the certification.

Issue #2: Improve Response Times to Emergency Situations, Including Lockdowns, Active Shooter, and Bomb Threats

The Task Force recognizes that improving response times to emergency situations may involve many actions including, among other things, the presence of full-time security personnel in and around school buildings, the use of emergency communication systems, and the installation of panic alarms. Since the issues are addressed elsewhere in this report, we have chosen to concentrate in this section on recommendations regarding an over-arching concern; i.e., training of school personnel in emergency situation procedures. The Task Force believes that such training will better equip school personnel to deter, slow, and detain school aggressors, thus providing valuable time for professional emergency responders to arrive on scene.

4. We recommend that the Attorney General's *Law Enforcement Directive 2007-1* and the *School Safety and Security Manual: Best Practice Guidelines* (2006), neither of which have been subjected to any significant review or revision since 2007, be updated to reflect current best practices in school security for both school personnel and law enforcement agencies.

5. Recognizing that many emergencies are situational and that there is no one-size-fits-all method of responding to identifiable threats, we recommend that the State, through the DOE and the Office of the Attorney General, provide, at least annually, turnkey training and guidance to all school staff and students on current best practices and their roles and responsibilities before, during, and after emergencies including, where appropriate, lockdowns, bomb threat evacuations, active shooter events, and other responses to identifiable threats. This training should be provided regionally in both face-to-face and on-line formats, as appropriate and should include updated policies and procedures for the establishment of an Incident Command System and Multi-hazard Emergency Planning for Schools. Options-based response protocols (e.g., *Run, Hide, Fight*, as recommended in the *Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans,* USDOE et al., 2013) or other similar plans that provide options beyond the standard lockdown, should also be considered. We further recommend that the DOE support the provision of continuing education credits to provide incentives for attendance at approved school security training sessions. This recommendation could be implemented through the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy, and is not intended to supplant or discourage individual schools or school districts from conducting their own safety and security training.

6. We recommend that the State amend the existing *New Jersey School Security Drill Law* (P.L. 2009, c. 178) and require that ongoing training in various formats (e.g., drills, tabletops, functional exercises) be conducted collaboratively by schools and professional emergency responders (i.e., fire, police, emergency medical services (EMS) to identify weaknesses in current school safety and security policies and procedures and to increase the effectiveness of emergency responses. We also recommend that the amended law specify that an actual event involving the equivalent of a drill should be considered a drill for purposes of meeting the statutory requirement in the month in which the event occurred. We further recommend that the amended law employ uniform and consistent terminology to avoid confusion (e.g., terms like lockdown, active shooter lockdown, and lock-in may be misinterpreted and result in different reactions). Finally, we recommend that the amended law require training for all school personnel, not just certified staff.

7. We recommend that school districts allocate adequate time within their school schedules for all training sessions designed to improve school safety and security.

8. We recommend that school districts engage in activities aimed at promoting a positive school climate and establishing relationships that foster ongoing communication among staff and students.

9. We recommend that school districts establish behavioral threat assessment teams to identify potential at-risk students and to provide resources to prevent potential violent incidents. The primary purpose of a behavioral threat assessment is to prevent targeted violence.

Issue #3: Emergency Communications

10.   We recommend that the State require, either through legislation or regulatory measures, school districts provide two-way radios that have the capability for a dedicated channel, separate from regular operational police frequencies, which will enable all school security personnel to communicate directly with other emergency responders.

11.   We recommend that the State require, either through legislation or regulatory measures, school districts to ensure that procedures exist to notify parents and other school/school district stakeholders of a school emergency via multiple platforms (e.g., telephone calls, text messaging, email blasts, etc.) with specific instructions about what should be done during the emergency.

12.   We recommend that the State require, either through legislation or regulatory measures, that school districts test the functionality of all of their emergency communication systems, including strength of signals and calls to 911 and to emergency responders' radios within schools, on at least a monthly basis, when advising local law enforcement of the date of the monthly school security drill, as mandated by the *New Jersey School Security Drill Law* (N.J.S.A 18A:41-1).

13.   We recommend that school districts review and update their existing school safety and security plan to ensure that it clearly identifies who is responsible for contacting the primary emergency response agency in the event of an emergency and should employ plain language (clear text) to notify the school population that an emergency condition exists.

14.   We recommend that school districts develop procedures that ensure that all teachers and school staff have the ability to communicate with school administration while school is in session. Communications can be in the form of classroom telephones, portable radios, intercom systems, cell phones, etc. We further recommend that all staff should have the authority and capability to make 911 calls.

Issue #4: Stationing Police Officers in Each School Building

15.   We also recommend that the *New Jersey Guide to Establishing a Safe School Resource Officer Program in Your Community* (1998) be updated to reflect current best practices in School Resource Officer (SRO) programs, and further recommend that school districts work with local law enforcement to develop strategies for the placement of carefully selected and specially trained SROs in all school buildings.

16.   We recommend that school districts that use school security personnel enter into a written agreement with local law enforcement agencies to stipulate the terms and conditions governing the placement of security personnel in school buildings. The agreement should address such matters including, but not limited to: the chain of command; roles and responsibilities of security personnel while on school property; work hours and conditions; required qualifications and experience; channels of communication; required

training and continuing professional development; and authority to carry firearms.

17. For school districts that choose to assign and station special law enforcement officers (SLEOs), retired police officers, and/or civilian security staff in their school buildings, we recommend that the final decision regarding whether to permit such individuals to carry firearms (according to the provisions of State statute) while on school property rests solely with the chief school administrator. We further recommend that the State develop uniform standards to govern the licensing, experience, and training of such individuals.

18. We recommend that the current New Jersey statute regarding SLEOs -- N.J.S.A. 40A:14-146.10 *et seq.* -- be revised to remove the *Limitations on hours* provisions as stipulated in N.J.S.A. 40A:14-146.16 and *Limitations on number, categories* provisions as stipulated in N.J.S.A. 40A:14-146.17 and any other restrictions that may impede the effective use of SLEOs for school security purposes. We further recommend that all SLEOs who are assigned as SROs be required to attend SRO training, consistent with existing State law (P.L. 2005, c 276, (N.J.S.A. 52:17B-71.8; N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.1).

Issue #5: Schedule Periodic Patrols of School Buildings and Grounds by Local Law Enforcement Officers

In making the following recommendations, the Task Force acknowledges that some of these have previously been offered by other organizations and agencies (e.g., NJ SAFE Task Force Report, 2007; NJSBA Task Force Report, 2014; MOA, 2011). The recommendations that follow are intended to support and affirm such recommendations and should be implemented at the discretion of the local law enforcement agency.

19. We recommend the following strategies be implemented and enhanced according to the needs and resources of each school district. The implementation of these strategies will require significant collaboration and information sharing among schools, law enforcement, and community partners in order to achieve the maximum amount of police presence with the least amount of disruption to the educational environment.

20. We recommend that school districts work collaboratively with local law enforcement agencies to provide a police presence in and around school grounds at start and dismissal times in accordance with the approved school calendar. This should be accomplished by the use of directed patrols with proper notice to school officials (MOA, 2011). Directed patrols should also include bus and transportation routes, in addition to physical school grounds.

21. We recommend that school districts work collaboratively with local law enforcement agencies to include school patrol programs in regularly scheduled police patrol plans. These programs, such as the SWAP Program (Stop, Walk, and Protect) as described in the NJ SAFE Task Force Report (2013), will serve to enhance periodic police presence during the school day (e.g., during lunch periods and student assemblies and activities), as well as after-school hours when extra-curricular activities (e.g., sporting events, dances, proms) are ongoing. They will further serve to provide added layers of security at

such activities and events, while also establishing rapport and trust among the staff, students, and police to enhance the school/police partnership (NJSBA Task Force Report, 2014). Such programs should be coordinated in order to accomplish this presence during the times where visibility will be most impactful.

22.   While the current *New Jersey School Security Drill Law* (P.L. 2009, c. 178) requires 48-hour notification of law enforcement, it does not currently require a police presence. Therefore, we recommend that the *New Jersey School Security Drill Law* be amended to require law enforcement presence for at least one drill to ensure emergency procedures are effective and to make recommendations for improvement or revision.

23.   We recommend that school districts work collaboratively with law enforcement agencies to invite, on a regular basis, police personnel with expertise in gang, drug awareness, and resistance strategies, as well as subject matter knowledge that affects school safety, such as bullying, cyber safety, "sexting," and school violence, to participate in educational activities for students, staff, and parents. This will also increase the frequency of police presence at schools and enhance the school/police partnership. Inviting parents to such activities extends this relationship to community stakeholders.

Issue #6: Panic Alarms in School Buildings to Alert Local Law Enforcement Authorities to Emergency Situations

24.   While the Task Force recognizes that, depending on the specific situation, panic alarms may have value in alerting law enforcement to school emergencies, the various types of systems available each possess strengths and limitations. Because of these strengths and limitations, as well as the number of different types of panic alarms available, the array of capabilities and functions they offer, and the significant cost variations, we do not think it is prudent at this time to recommend that the State require that panic alarms be installed in every school building.

25.   We recommend, however, that the State and school districts, working in conjunction with law enforcement agencies, continue to research panic alarm options that meet school districts' needs and provide the best options for communicating the need for emergency responses to the law enforcement agencies that serve them. Accordingly, the decision to purchase and install panic alarm systems that meet their needs should be left to the discretion of school districts.

Issue #7: Screening Systems at School Entrances

26.   Screening systems may encompass vehicle and package inspection, search of persons and bags, and metal or explosive detectors. Each of these alternatives is labor intensive, time consuming, and costly. We recommend that decisions regarding the employment of screening systems be left to the discretion of school districts commensurate with local resources and security assessment. We further recommend that school districts that choose to install and use screening systems also develop the appropriate procedures for staff training and equipment use. If detection and screening capabilities can be included

in new construction that would address some of the listed concerns, it may be a viable addition to security protocols.

Issue #8: Advanced Student and Visitor Identification Cards

27.   We recommend that the State require, either through legislation or regulatory measures, that school districts develop and implement a policy and system in which all staff must have identification (ID) cards that must be clearly visible at all times while they are in the building when school is in session. The ID card should contain the individual's name, his/her position and affiliation with the school/school district, a photograph, and the current school year. Photographs should be updated as needed. We recommend that staff ID cards should be used only for basic access control.

28.   We recommend that school districts develop and implement a policy and system in which all students must have ID cards that must be clearly visible at all times while in the building when school is in session. We further recommend that school districts should be encouraged to use student ID cards that are also tied to other school/school district functions; e.g., meals, library/media use, and/or entrance to activities, as these may motivate students to consistently bring their ID cards to school. A requirement to use student ID cards to gain access to school buses should also be considered.

29.   For visitors to the school building, we recommend that school district policy require that visitor passes and screening procedures be utilized to monitor entry and access to school facilities.

30.   There exists a danger and a liability in allowing a registered sex offender unfettered access to students. Therefore, we recommend that school districts develop and implement a policy and procedure for checking the Sex Offender Registry for all visitors[11] to New Jersey's public schools when school is in session and students are present. Visitor control systems already exist that can check databases for registrants, and access to the State registry is available at http://www.njsp.org/info/reg_sexoffend.html

31.   For school districts that choose to employ advanced identification card systems, we recommend that they develop policies and procedures that ensure suspended or terminated students' and employees' ID cards are confiscated.

Issue #9: Biometric, Retina, or Other Advanced Recognition Systems for Authorized Entrance to School Buildings

32.   The Task Force does not recommend that the State require or encourage the use of biometrics at school entrances as a means of access control. The short burst of mass entry at schools, privacy issues, and cost make biometrics an ill-suited application at this time.

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[11] As the term *visitor* is used here, it is not intended to apply to citizens who enter school buildings for purposes of voting on election days.

33.   In recognition of the fact that some school districts have already adopted iris recognition systems for access control, we recommend that the State and school districts continue to research advanced recognition technologies. In the future, such technologies may increase in validity and reliability at reduced costs that will also increase their viability as potential tools for school safety and security. At this time, we recommend that decisions regarding the employment of biometric systems be left to the discretion of school districts.

Issue #10: Addressing Elevated Risks, Including Proximity to a Chemical Facility or Nuclear Power Plant and Assessing and Abating Security Risks in Existing School Facilities

34.   We recommend that school districts conduct and update at least annually a risk assessment for all of its school buildings and use it as a basis for security policy, procedures, and planning. The stakeholders involved in the annual review of the school district's emergency plan should engage in fact finding for each potential risk.

35.   We recommend that the State develop and disseminate a standard risk assessment matrix for school security to all school districts of New Jersey.

Issue #11: Architectural Design for New Construction

36.   In addition to the *Best Practices Standards for Schools under Construction or Being Planned for Construction* set forth by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, the Task Force recommends the following for the architectural design for new school construction:

(a)   Wherever possible, a building site should be chosen with adequate space to accommodate bus and vehicular traffic separately and permit additional space for the proper evacuation of occupants;

(b)   Wherever possible, bus drop-off/pick-up areas should be separated from other vehicular drop-off/pick-up areas;

(c)   Wherever possible, pedestrian routes should be separated from vehicular routes and crossing of the two should be minimized;

(d)   The number of interior doors should be kept to a minimum as necessary to satisfy operational considerations and meet code requirements. Whenever possible, exterior door hardware should be eliminated from doors that are intended only for emergency egress;

(e)   New schools should be designed with a single public entrance to be used during the school day, which should be equipped with a security vestibule with interior doors that must be released by school security or other staff. Consideration should be given to providing bullet resistant glazing in the interior vestibule doors and windows;

(f)   All marked entrances should conform to a uniform numbering system (e.g., the main entrance is #1 and numbered clockwise from there) in order to assist

emergency responders in locating particular areas. The principal's office should have a secondary exit;

g)   Interior door locks on spaces that would serve as safe havens during lockdowns should have a keyless locking mechanism;

(h)   New buildings should be provided with access control systems, which allow for remote locking and unlocking of all building access doors;

(i)   New buildings should be designed and built such that areas intended for public use (i.e., auditorium, gymnasium, media center, etc.) may be separated and secured from all other areas;

(j)   Classroom doors and all other spaces that could be used as safe havens during lockdowns should not have sidelights;

(k)   All interior doors and windows in spaces that could be used as safe havens during lockdowns should be equipped with blinds, shades, or similar devices;

(l)   Roof hatches and other gateways to areas of the school building that are off-limits to teachers, students, and other unauthorized personnel should be locked and alarmed;

(m)   The use of courtyards should be avoided and/or eliminated. Where courtyards are provided, measures should be taken to ensure that they do not compromise the security of the school; and

(n)   Sufficient space for evacuation must be provided at all new school sites.

Issue #12: Hardening School Perimeters and Building Entryways

The Task Force acknowledges that some redundancies exist in the recommendations for Issue #11 *Architectural Design for New Construction* and Issue #12 *Hardening School Perimeters and Building Entryways.* Insofar as some of these recommendations apply both to new construction and existing buildings, we reasoned that they had application to both issues.

37.   We recommend that:

(a)   Schools should employ *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* principles, including:

(1)   School sites should utilize any available natural barriers such as a tree line, creek, or other waterway to clearly establish school property;

(2)   Fencing and signs should be employed to delineate school property, and signs should be placed in multiple locations that clearly dictate that no trespassing is permitted during school or other posted hours and that visitors must register at the school's main office;

(3)   A clear line of site from the school to the immediate surroundings should be established; trees and shrubs should be placed away from the building to remove hiding places and the ability to climb and access the roof;

(b)   Security personnel should be in uniform to act as a deterrent to those who might choose to do harm;

(c)   Driveways should be one way if possible and lead to a clearly marked visitor parking area; STOP signs and other traffic calming devices should be used to keep vehicles at a reasonable speed;

(d) Bollards should be placed along the roadway or curb line in front of the school to prevent vehicles from gaining access to exterior walls, windows and doors, or in areas on the property where vehicles are prohibited;

(e) The school's main entrance should be clearly marked and easily visible and recognizable;

(f) The number of doors for access by staff should be limited (Egress cannot be prevented.);

(g) Exterior doors should remain locked, and when in use for a large entry/exit of people, they should be staffed and monitored;

(h) At the minimum, an access control system utilizing remote unlocking features, an intercom, and fixed cameras should be used at the school's main entrance and for other entrances as funding permits;

(i) All entrances should be clearly marked with a numerical sequence to allow for specific response by police, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS). Classrooms with outside walls should be marked exteriorly for the same purpose. The coding/numbering scheme, which should be shared with emergency responder agencies (i.e., police, fire, EMS), should be uniform for all schools, e.g., the main entrance should be #1 and all other entrances and classrooms should be numbered in a clockwise direction;

(j) A parking decal or tag system should be maintained for all staff and students who park on campus in order to easily identify unauthorized vehicles on the property;

(k) Enclosures for utilities outside the school building should be located away from the building to ensure that they do not provide roof access;

(l) Adequate and properly maintained lighting should be provided around the building and parking lots;

(m) If the funding, staffing, and site approval are possible, a guard shack and gate should be provided on campus as an effective perimeter control;

(n) Where the footprint of the school allows and where funding is available, secure vestibules at the main entrance should be created. The exterior door entrance to the school should allow access by a visitor only to the vestibule; doors to the remainder of the building should be locked;

(o) School district policy and procedure should clearly indicate that propping open doors is strictly prohibited, and students and staff should not open the door for anyone. All persons seeking entry to the building should be directed to the main entrance;

(p) Surveillance cameras should be used as a target-hardening tool. Visible, exterior cameras act as deterrents. The intended purpose of video surveillance cameras should dictate the type of equipment selected for purchase;

(q) Security systems, such as access control and surveillance cameras, should have their own dedicated server and generator both to secure information and to ensure efficient operation in an emergency;

(r) Ballistic or shatter resistant film should be used for glass entrance door sidelights and other vulnerable first floor areas; and

(s) Schools should maintain a strict key distribution protocol. Staff should be required to sign for keys and return them at the end of each school year. Distribution of keys should be made for bona fide reasons only.

Issue #14: Securing Computer Networks to Mitigate Cyber Risk

38.   Each school or, in some cases, each school district should designate an information technology (IT) professional to implement, to the best of his/her ability, the risk management best practices prescribed in the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) *Cybersecurity Framework.*

39.   The designated IT professional should classify each school in accordance with NIST's Framework Implementation Tier. The tier selection process should consider, at a minimum, the school's risk management goals and the feasibility of implementation under current and projected resource levels.

40.   The designated IT professional should comply with the best practices for mitigating and preventing cyber threats outlined in Chapter 1 of the New Jersey Department of Education *School Safety and Security Manual: Best Practices Guidelines*.

41.   The DOE, in collaboration with the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) and the State Office of Information Technology, should periodically and formally review and, as necessary, update the *School Safety and Security Manual: Best Practices Guidelines* to account for changes in cybersecurity standards and technology.

Issue #14: Using School Facilities as Polling Places

42.   We recommend that school districts work collaboratively with local law enforcement and local election agencies to identify and use suitable facilities for voting that meet all of the community's needs. To the extent that school buildings are to be used for election purposes, care should be taken and caution exercised to ensure the safety and security of students and school staff. Such care and caution could conceivably include using election days for professional development for school staff when students are not expected to be in the school building.

APPENDIX B
Public Law 2013, Chapter 142

AN ACT establishing a School Security Task Force. BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1.   There is established a School Security Task Force. The purpose of the task force shall be to study and develop recommendations to improve school security and safety, and to ensure a safe learning environment for students and school employees.

2.   The task force shall consist of the following 11 members:
      a.   the Commissioner of Education, the Director of the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, and the Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Schools Development Authority, or their designees;

      b.   Eight members who shall be appointed no later than the 30th day after the effective date of this act, as follows:
            (1)   four members appointed by the Governor, who shall include: one member upon the recommendation of the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials, one member upon the recommendation of the New Jersey Education Association, one member upon the recommendation of the New Jersey School Boards Association, and one member upon the recommendation of the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association; and
            (2)   four members of the public, two selected by the Governor who have demonstrated expertise in the development or implementation of school security standards or technology, one selected by the President of the Senate, and one selected by the Speaker of the General Assembly.

3.   Vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments were made. Members of the task force shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenditures incurred in the performance of their duties as members of the task force within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the task force for its purposes.

4.   The task force shall organize as soon as may be practicable after the appointment of its members, but no later than 60 days following the effective date of this act. The task force shall choose a chairperson from among its members, and shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the task force.

5.   The Department of Education shall provide such stenographic, clerical, and other administrative assistants, and such professional staff, as the task force requires to carry out its work. The task force also shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it may require and as may be available for its purposes.

6. a. The task force shall identify physical and cyber vulnerabilities and potential breaches of security in the public schools, and make recommendations to improve school safety and security. The issues studied by the task force shall include, but are not limited to:
   (1) placing screening systems at school entrances;
   (2) stationing police officers in each school building;
   (3) improving response times to emergency situations, including lockdowns, active shooter, and bomb threats;
   (4) requiring advanced student and visitor identification cards;
   (5) using biometric, retina, or other advanced recognition systems for authorized entrance into school buildings;
   (6) installing panic alarms in school buildings to alert local law enforcement authorities to emergency situations;
   (7) securing computer networks to prevent cyber attacks;
   (8) scheduling periodic patrols of school buildings and grounds by local law enforcement officers; and
   (9) hardening the school perimeter and building entryways.

   b. The task force shall review and develop recommendations on building security and assessment standards for existing school facilities and new construction, including, but not limited to, standards for:
   (1) architectural design for new construction;
   (2) assessing and abating security risks in existing school facilities;
   (3) emergency communication plans;
   (4) staff training; and
   (5) addressing elevated risk factors, including proximity to a chemical facility or nuclear power plant.

   c. In developing its recommendations, the task force shall: research effective strategies that have been employed in other states; refer to and incorporate existing State research, data, recommendations, and standards, including the School Safety and Security Plans Minimum Requirements set forth by the Department of Education and the September 2007 Final Report of the New Jersey K-12 School Security Task Force; and solicit public input.

   d. The task force is authorized, within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to it for its purpose, to commission professional engineering firms and certified information systems professionals in identifying, interviewing, researching, and documenting security best practices.

7. The task force shall issue a final report within six months after its organizational meeting to the Governor, the State Board of Education, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), containing its findings and recommendations, including any recommendations for legislation or regulations that it deems appropriate.

8. This act shall take effect immediately and the task force shall expire upon the issuance of the task force final report. Approved August 16, 2013.

APPENDIX C
List of Presenters at Committee and Task Force Meetings and Sites Visited

List of Subject Matter Experts Making Presentations at Committee Meetings

11/5/14   New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
                 Emily Templeton (Code Development), Rob Austin (Code Enforcement), Tim
                 Waller (Education Plan Review Unit)

11/5/14   William Kramer, New Jersey State Fire Marshall

11/25/14   Ritchard Sherman, New Jersey Schools Development Authority

12/9/15   Roy Bolling, President, Eyemetric Identity Systems, Inc.

List of Subject Matter Experts Making Presentations at Full Task Force Meetings

12/23/14   Fred Scalera, Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness

1/13/15   Ken Trump, National School Safety and Security Services (via video link)

List of Sites Visited

12/9/14   Bernardsville School District/ Bernardsville Police Department
                 Security One Alarm System (Telephone Interview)

12/11/14   Brielle School District/Brielle Police Department
                 The WAVE Rapid Response Emergency Call System

12/17/14   Bergen County Technical High School/Bergen County Police
                 Motorola Safety Badge

12/18/14   Montville High School/Montville Police Department
                 Centurion Scout Wireless Security System

1/23/15   Newtown, Connecticut, Police Department

List of Sites of Public Meetings

1/12/15   International High School, Paterson

1/14/15   The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

1/15/15   Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness

APPENDIX D
Resources

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APPENDIX E
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