

Michigan School Safety Commission Minutes – July 27, 2022

The Michigan School Safety Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, July 27, 2022, at the Michigan State Police (MSP) Headquarters in Dimondale, Michigan.

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Lt. Col. Chris Kelenske.

Roll call was taken by Ms. Melissa Sultana.

The following commission members were present:

- Lt. Col. Chris Kelenske
- Mr. Brian Gard
- Ms. Justine Galbraith
- Ms. Elizabeth Newell
- Ms. Alicia Urbain
- Ms. Theresa Bassett
- Mr. Larry Johnson

The following representatives for a commission member were present:

- Ms. Aimee Alaniz, Michigan Department of Education (MDE), on behalf of Mr. Kyle Guerrant
- Ms. Chardae Burton, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, on behalf of Mr. David Knezek

The following MSP Office of School Safety (OSS) staff were present:

- Ms. Nancy Becker Bennett
- Ms. Kimberly Root
- Ms. Beth Beattie
- Ms. Mary Gager Drew
- Mr. Jonathan Allen
- Ms. Randa Hanes
- Ms. Melissa Sultana

The following guest was present:

- D/Sgt. Carlos Fossati, MSP, Michigan Intelligence Operations Center

Approval of April 27, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Ms. Bassett motioned to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was supported by Mr. Gard and approved unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Lt. Colonel Kelenske motioned to modify the meeting agenda to strike the third bullet under old business as a meeting with legal counsel is needed prior to a commission discussion: *From PA 548 of 2018 – Make New or Accept Current Recommendations about Model Practices.*

The motion to strike the third bullet was supported by Ms. Newell and all were in favor. The agenda was approved as amended.

Old Business

A. Incident Report – Ms. Nancy Becker Bennett

An overview of the third quarter report for fiscal year 2022 was given. Incidences were reported by 11 intermediate school districts and 31 schools, and 47 percent of reports were made within 24 hours

following the incident, as required. There were three reports of criminal sexual conduct, one report of gang related activity, 66 reports of illegal possession of controlled substances or alcohol, three reports of larceny or theft, seven reports of other crime, 39 reports of physical assault or other crime involving physical violence, and five reports of vandalism. An estimated \$351 was needed to repair school property.

For incidents involving the attempted commission of a crime, there was one report of criminal sexual conduct, 10 reports of illegal possession of controlled substances or alcohol, two reports of larceny or theft, one report of other crime, and three reports of physical assault or other crime involving physical violence.

Incidents reported were down from the second quarter, which included 17 intermediate school districts and 45 schools. In the first quarter, 21 intermediate school districts and 41 schools reported. In the previous two quarters, 70 percent and 74 percent of reports were made within 24 hours.

Due to the confidentiality of the information, copies of the report were not distributed.

B. Office of School Safety (OSS) Updates – Ms. Kimberly Root

The OSS continues to work to implement the Final Recommendations of the School Safety Task Force. A Recommendations Status Summary report was provided to the commissioners. A quick overview was provided which included recommendation number 22. The OSS is researching streamlining a process for schools to comply with designating school safety liaisons, providing OK2SAY contact information, and affirming emergency operations plans in one online platform.

C. 2022 Competitive School Safety Grant Program (CSSGP) – Ms. Becker Bennett

The announcement of the CSSGP awards was made on April 29, 2022. The OSS received 517 applications requesting approximately \$35 million. The total allocation of \$10 million was awarded to 150 applicants. A diverse review committee included members from the MSP, the MDE, the Michigan Sheriff's Association, the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, emergency management professionals, charter schools, non-public schools, and school safety professionals. The committee made the selections based upon project categories and the required balance of public and non-public school awards.

New Business

A. New Personnel Update – Ms. Becker Bennett

The MSP Grants and Community Services Division recently hired:

- i. Ms. Melissa Sultana, OSS departmental technician.
- ii. F/Lt. Aric Dowling, Prevention Services Section Commander. The section includes the OSS/OK2SAY, the Automobile Theft Prevention Authority, and the Prevention Services Unit.

B. OK2SAY

- i. Reporting/Tips Update – D/Sgt. Carols Fossati

The top three OK2SAY tip categories for the period of April 2022 through June 2022, included bullying (18 percent), suicide threats (13 percent), and other (e.g., anxiety, stress, depression, harassment) (10 percent). April saw a 242 percent increase over April 2021, May saw a 276 percent increase over May 2021, and June saw a 211 percent increase over June 2021.

A couple of success stories were provided. The OK2SAY team received a tip involving a teacher who was bribing students by supplying alcohol. The tip was referred to school personnel and law enforcement. A thorough investigation was conducted, the teacher was removed and suspended, and the termination process begun. In May, the OK2SAY team received a tip regarding a TikTok threat to blow up a school. Technicians were able to work with technology images and information provided by the tipster. The information was then provided to law enforcement and school personnel. School personnel were able to follow up with the student to provide support and appropriate disciplinary action.

A printout of OK2SAY tip totals was provided to commission members as requested by Mr. Gard at the previous commission meeting. The printout provided a snapshot of tip totals from 2014-2022 broken down by tip categories.

Ms. Urbain asked if there was an increase or decrease in any tip categories that stood out. D/Sergeant Fossati stated that bullying was the top tip category for a short period as opposed to suicide threats, although the occurrence is unknown. Ms. Urbain commented that planned school attacks, guns, and other tip categories were significantly higher in 2022 than 2020 and asked if this was due to fallout from Oxford. D/Sergeant Fossati advised that a direct correlation could not be determined, but there was a significant impact from December tip totals reaching approximately 3,200 tips mainly associated with threats and planned school attacks.

Ms. Bassett expressed that she enjoys hearing the OK2SAY success stories. D/Sergeant Fossati advised the success stories will be included in future meetings.

ii. Program Update – Ms. Mary Gager Drew

Ms. Gager Drew reviewed OK2SAY [2021 Annual Report](#) data; the full report was sent to members prior to the meeting. Reports from prior years can be found on the [OK2SAY website](#).

Starting this fall, OK2SAY school presentations will expand to include presentations to grades 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

OK2SAY staff worked over the summer with several camps as well as the Michigan High School Athletic Association and has presented or has plans to present to different organizations. The MSP Grants and Community Services Division (GCSD), OSS/OK2SAY is coordinating with the Volunteers of America Michigan on Operation Backpack. Operation Backpack is a back-to-school drive that collects and distributes new backpacks full of grade-specific supplies to thousands of homeless and low-income children in the state. Every backpack will contain OK2SAY promotional items.

Mr. Gard asked if any proactive parent-focused educational tools are available. Ms. Gager Drew stated that information is made available on the OK2SAY [website](#). Presentations previously included grades K-12 and community parent seminars. However, due to decreased resources, school presentations are now primarily conducted to get the OK2SAY message directly to students. Promotional materials and additional information that can be placed in school newsletters or information packets for parents to engage and reinforce the OK2SAY message are sent to schools.

Mr. Johnson asked what types of OK2SAY promotional materials are available to schools prior to presentations. Ms. Gager Drew stated there are various promotional materials including banners, posters, contact cards, brochures, silicone phone wallets, and other materials that are sent to schools and distributed directly to students prior to presentations. Promotional material requests can also be made from the OK2SAY website.

Ms. Newell asked if OK2SAY has a social media presence so schools and families can promote it. Ms. Gager Drew stated that it is available on the OK2SAY website.

C. Office of School Safety Projects – Ms. Root

i. Behavioral Threat Assessment Request for Proposal

The OSS awarded a contract to Ontic/SIGMA for development of and training on a model threat assessment program designed specifically for Michigan schools. Dr. Melissa Reeves will be an integral part of this work. The initial phase will include the development of a workgroup and timeline for how training will be developed and executed.

ii. Michigan State University (MSU), Michigan Virtual School Resource Officer Training Modules

The OSS has been working in partnership with MSU and Michigan Virtual University to develop training for school resource officers. The first three of six modules have been developed and are in the review phase. A multidisciplinary group will review and provide feedback before launching the training. Modules three through six are currently in development. School resource officers can receive training on building relationships and the importance of building relationships in schools.

iii. Safe Schools Week

The OSS is working to provide schools with resources and creative engagement ideas with students. These will be implemented during Safe Schools Week, October 16-22, 2022.

iv. Legislation

Ms. Root provided an overview on school safety funding for fiscal year 2023. The state school aid act allocates \$163 million, distributed directly to schools for expenditures related to school safety. Payments to schools will be distributed by the MDE on a per capita basis and eliminate the grant process. A \$25 million allocation is included for a grant program to fund school resource officers. This grant will be administered by the GCSD/OSS. The state school aid act also establishes the School Safety and Mental Health Commission through the MDE and allocates funds for staff and meeting costs.

A series of house bills have been introduced as a result of the School Safety Task Force. Commission members were encouraged to review House Bills 6319-6333.

Mr. Gard asked how the new school safety budget would be communicated to schools, and about the potential application process and reimbursement of funds. Ms. Root advised communication would need to come from the MDE.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Adjournment

Ms. Urbain motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was supported by Mr. Johnson. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:03 p.m.