

Safe Schools Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, April 28, 2015 – 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Criminal Justice Institute  
26 Corporate Hill Drive  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72205

1. Dr. Cheryl May (Chair) called the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m. The following members were present: Ms. Deborah Coffman, Mr. Jeff Collum, Ms. Phyllis Curtis, Ms. Linda Graham, Mr. Randy Goodnight, Ms. Katherine Guidry, Capt. Jamie Hammond, Mr. Chester “Bubba” Jones, Mr. Scott Spainhour, and Ms. Otistene Smith. The following non-members were present: Ms. Vicki French, Ms. Kimberly Friedman, Mr. John Gray, Ms. Michelle Griffin, and Mr. John Kaminar.
2. Review and Approval of Minutes. Dr. May asked the committee members to review the minutes from the January 6, 2015 meeting and either offer corrections or move to approve the minutes. Capt. Hammond moved that the minutes be approved as written. Mr. Collum seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
3. Discussion of Criminal Justice Institute (CJI) Funding and Future Plans. Dr. May led a discussion of CJI’s changing role. The following points were discussed:
  - Safe schools instruction and Civilian Response to Active Shooter Event (CRASE) training programs will transition from the Attorney General’s (AG) office to CJI.
  - The legislature approved the AG to provide CJI \$500,000 to support the Safe Schools Initiative.
  - Conducting crisis response drills and exercises at schools remains a challenge’ school districts could benefit from training models which CJI could provide.
  - The Safe Schools Committee could provide guidance for the development of a Safe Schools Academy and Active Shooter drills.
  - CJI would welcome advice and help from schools and school districts to provide effective training.
  - Mr. Collum moved that the Safe Schools Subcommittee act as a guide in the development of a safe schools academy, and the development of model drills and exercises. Mr. Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
  - It was suggested that the subcommittee include representatives from the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM), the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), a law enforcement officer, a first response professional, a mental health professional, and a representative from the Arkansas Safe Schools Association. Dr. May indicated she would ask Mr. David Bertelin to represent ADEM on the subcommittee. Ms. Coffman assigned Mr. Kaminar to represent ADE on the subcommittee. The

subcommittee scheduled its first meeting for May 27, 2015, beginning at 11:00 a.m. at CJJ.

4. Presentation on April 2014 Tornado in Mayflower. Mr. Gray presented to the committee on lessons learned from the tornado that struck Mayflower on April 27, 2014. He made the following points:
  - No amount of planning and preparation can prepare a community adequately for the actual event.
  - The tornado disrupted the entire community. The school became a support agency to the community. School facilities were used to provide shelter for families. The gym was used as a transfer station for supplies.
  - Initially the school district administration did not realize how completely the tornado had affected the community. The administration found itself operating in an information vacuum.
  - For several days social media were used as a primary means of communication.
  - Some relief organizations seemed to want to work independently, creating challenges in working with the various agencies.
  - The demand for law enforcement officers was so high that the school resource officer (SRO) was unable to remain on campus.
  
5. Review of New Legislation (Acts 393, 606, 950, 1078, and 1179). The committee discussed new acts of the 90<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. The following points were discussed about each as indicated:

Act 393 –Arkansas State Police will coordinate the certification program for the position of commissioned school security officer. The law specifies minimum training requirements. Other suggested certification requirements include a psychological evaluation, training in conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques, and “shoot/don’t shoot” scenarios. Others in the school should have training on what to do in the event of an active shooter incident. Schools should also be proactive in conducting site safety assessments, security audits, and develop or review crisis response plans.

Act 606 – In order to prevent an intruder from gaining access to the building, schools can use door barricade devices or security lockdown devices without being cited for violating the fire code.

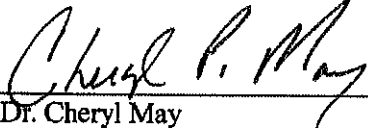
Act 950 – SMART 911 and panic button alert systems. Funding was not provided for implementation of this Act. While CJJ has received some funding from the AG’s Office, however, this funding will not allow Act 950 to be fully implemented. The requirements listed from Line 17 down are tied to funding, and if funding is not provided, schools do not have to comply. Dr. May will obtain further clarification as to whether compliance with this law is mandatory without funding from the legislature. One potential problem with implementing this law is that cellular service is not available in all areas.

Act 1078 –Law enforcement officers can no longer arrest somebody with a concealed handgun license for having a handgun in a locked, unattended vehicle on school grounds. However, the school may implement a “no weapons” policy, in which case the officer can require the individual to leave campus with the weapon.

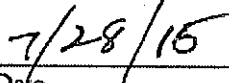
Act 1179 – Statewide jurisdictional authority for School Resource Officers if involved in a school sanctioned event.

Senate Bill 615 – This law would exempt school security plans from public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. The bill was passed in the Senate and House Education Committee, but died in House at Sine Die adjournment. Ms. Coffman moved that the committee should make passage of this bill a priority in the next legislative session. Ms. Curtis seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion of Comprehensive Safe School Initiative (CSSI) Grant Opportunities under NIJ<sup>1</sup>. Dr. May described the CSSI school safety research grant opportunities. She suggested that we brainstorm on how schools, ADE, and CJI can partner in an application to the solicitation.
7. Review and Discussion of Safe Schools Committee Web Page. Ms. Coffman suggested this discussion be tabled until the next committee meeting and asked that recommendations for improving the Safe Schools Committee web page be forwarded to Ms. Friedman.
8. Date, Time, and Location for Next Meeting. Dr. May suggested the committee meet again on July 28, 2015, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at CJI
9. Adjournment. Mr. Jones moved that the meeting be adjourned. Ms. Guidry second. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

  
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Dr. Cheryl May

  
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Date

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<sup>1</sup> National Institute of Justice