Arkansas School Safety Commission
State Capitol, Room 151
July 19, 2022

Present:

Dr. Cheryl May, Chair
John Allison
Marvin Burton
Tim Cain
Chris Chapmond
Dr. Laura Dunn
Patricia Gann
A.J. Gary
Bill Gossage
Crystal Green-Braswell
Linda Graham
Dr. Mike Hernandez
Bill Hollenbeck
Dr. David Hopkins
Drew Evans, Designee
Office of Attorney General
Lori Poston
Courtney Salas-Ford
Paula Stone
Bill Temple

Present via ZOOM

Joe Duboise
Tim Helder

Absent: Ricky Hopkins, Tom Jenkins, Donna Wilchie

Dr. Cheryl May, Chair, called the meeting of the Arkansas School Safety Commission (Commission) to order at 1:01 PM, followed by a moment of silence in honor of Officer Vincent Parks, Jonesboro Police Department, who lost his life during a training exercise.

A motion to approve the Minutes of July 12, was made by Mr. Tim Cain, seconded by Mr. A.J. Gary. The motion unanimously passed.

Presentations from students' perspective on school safety were shared by:

- Mr. N'nambi Islam, Little Rock Southwest Magnet High School
- Ms. Mary Emily Wrzensinski, Hamburg High School
- Mr. Webb Storer, Jonesboro High School

In summary, there was agreement by all three students that drills are necessary for students from elementary to high school to know what to do in the event of a real situation. They also agreed that mental health should be addressed; moreover more mental health resources are needed as speaking to an adult and provided prescription medication does not seem to address or resolve individual mental health issues. Additionally, whether one is seeing a counselor or seeking treatment from a mental health facility, the stigma and trust issues still exist. Mr. Islam, Ms. Wrzensinski, and Mr. Storer all saw value in mental health peer support groups. Lastly, all three students felt safer at school with the presence of School Resource Officers with whom they felt they could speak confidentially and were professionals in the area of school safety.

The Commission members reviewed the Texas Legislative Committee Interim Report on the Uvalde School Shooting, specifically, the factual conclusions at the end of the report and discussed them relative to what needs to be done by the Commission.

Dr. May reminded the subcommittees of the need to submit interim reports to her by Friday, July 23, reminding them of the critical importance of providing as much detail as possible on the progress that has been made since the 2018 Arkansas School Safety Commission report.

Also, Dr. May advised that the survey, which contains 92 questions, can go out as early as tomorrow, July 24. The goal is a high response rate like the 97% achieved from the 2018 survey.

Furthermore, Dr. May reminded that new recommendations made by the subcommittees must be explained and adopted by the full Commission after discussion. She asked the subcommittees to begin bringing new recommendations to the next Commission meeting, July 26, for discussion and vote.

The subcommittees provided their respective subcommittee reports:

Mental Health and Prevention
Presented by Ms. Lori Poston, Chair

Law Enforcement and Security
Presented by Sheriff Helder, Chair

Audits, Emergency Operation Plans & Drills
Presented by Mr. A.J. Gary, Chair

Intelligence and Communications
Presented by Chief Chris Chapmond, Chair

Physical Securities
Presented by Mr. Tim Cain, Chair

The next Commission meeting is scheduled on July 26, at 1:00 PM, in State Capitol Room 151.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. A.J. Gary, seconded by Ms. Lori Poston. The motion unanimously passed. Dr. May adjourned the meeting at 3:08 PM.

Cheryl P. May — 7/26/22

Dr. Cheryl May, Chair — Date