

DRAFT MINUTES

State Emergency Operations Center
Department of Public Safety
45 State Drive
Waterbury, VT 05671

Per [Act 190 of 2018](#), (See Section 36C, page 34) there was the creation of the School Safety Advisory Group (SSAG). This group is charged with making recommendations on school safety best practices to the Legislature and is chaired by the Commissioner of Public Safety or his/her designee.

Members Present: Erica Bornemann, Chair, VEM; David Manning, VPA; Don Tinney, VT-NEA; Brooke Farrell, VSBA; Rob Evans, MHA, AOE, DPS; Brad Ferland, Agency of Administration; Sunni Eriksen, VEM.

Call to Order, Roll Call, Amendments to Agenda

Chair Bornemann called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and thanked everyone for their flexibility in rescheduling this meeting and shared that the primary objective for this meeting is to go through the SSAG recommendations in the legislative report. She distributed this and along with feedback provided by Jeff Francis.

Approve Draft Minutes from October 16, 2018 Meeting

Evans moved to approve the draft minutes; Tinney seconded. Chair Bornemann called the vote and the motion to approve the minutes was unanimously approved.

Review and Discuss Draft Legislative Report

Chair Bornemann directed the group to the recommendations on page 3 and proposed that they address these bullet by bullet, with consideration given whether they are legislative, policy/regulatory or best practices recommendations. She shared that Francis had suggested numbering the bullets and she agreed with this suggestion.

The first recommendation addressed egress and lockdown drills. The SSAG's recommendation on this is that this needs to be updated and made permanent and that every school would continue this and incorporate an options-based response in the fall and the spring that would take the place of the egress and lockdown drills. Chair Bornemann suggested that on the 5th line down, that "monthly" be inserted after the word "conduct" and that on the 6th line after "DPS" the words "develop and" be inserted. She asked for discussion on this. There was agreement that this should not be legislated, but kept under the purview of AOE, and discussion on the specifics of an options-based training drill, drill templates and reporting of all drills to AOE. Evans asked that "drill/exercise" replace the word "training" on line 7. There was discussion on training of staff, that this was addressed in the last bullet, if a specified number of hours for staff training is needed, and that if a training requirement

was added that would need to be added to in-service training. There was further discussion on the training program for *Run Hide Fight* and that having an 8-hour training requirement would be a big lift. Chair Bornemann spoke about the specificity needed for a training environment and that schools should really be training specific to their plan, which varies across the state. Evans concurred and said no one is required to use *Run Hide Fight* and some will continue with ALICE, ALERT or other methods. There was further discussion on the State or AOE or DPS formally adopting *Run Hide Fight*, that standardized training is needed and that the SSAG doesn't need to answer this question.

Chair Bornemann moved onto the second recommendation – Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). Evans said this is addressed in both rules and legislation and that it is defined that a plan is required but the framework of the plan is not defined. Chair Bornemann said that at a minimum, this would require that AOE needs to update the rules and assess if there is a legislative change also needed. There was discussion on oversight methodology, support strategies, implementation strategy, capacity issues, avoiding added costs to either schools or the General Fund, outside resources, updating the template, existing requirements, and providing resources for these changes to happen over time.

There was discussion on EOPs, that some events are addressed in the School Safety Guide, that this is only a guide/checklist and not a fully developed EOP and that this has been helpful, but things have changed. There was further discussion about requirements without the resources, updating the planning document to include a EOP template, providing resources from Homeland Securities money, and understanding that this cannot be achieved in one year, that this will be a phased or series-approach. Chair Bornemann asked what was doable and suggested three years. Ferland shared that the state was working on an EOP and have been since August and that last week's event prompted them to get this finished and motivated its completion. Manning spoke about creating the document and then needing to train people.

Chair Bornemann recapped that the group was in favor of adjusting the SSAG recommendation that there is a requirement that all schools have an all hazards EOP to be completed three school years from now, by school year 2021-2022 to be supported by the VT School Safety Center (VTSSC) and recommends that the VTSSC update EOP templates and provide the support to meet that requirement. Evans suggested a caveat that in absence of that plan, schools would need to use the VT School Crisis Planning Guide (VTSCPG) in the interim as their planning document.

Chair Bornemann said she would make the changes that were discussed and circulate them to members. Members should **not** reply all when giving their feedback to be in compliance with Open Meeting Law. Evans cited the [State Board of Education's Manual of Rules and Practices, 4101](#).

Chair Bornemann moved on to the third bullet, related to threat assessment. She emphasized that *capacity* is where the focus is, and it is important to understand who the appropriate people in the school are. Chair Bornemann recommend that this be a best practice recommendation rather than a rule requirement or legislative change. There was discussion on the specifics of a behavioral threat, notification of a behavior that has potential to have a negative impact on the school, national best practice in place, and that a best practice recommendation is preferred. Chair Bornemann suggested adding a line that the SSAG continues to encourage the VTSSC to bring those behavioral threat assessment resources to the schools to build capacity. There was discussion that this is a mechanism to bring the right people together, that all staff need to be aware of this, that the VTSSC will continue

to update and offer training and resources to the field. Manning shared that he included his Active Shooter Drill in his student handbook so that parents are aware of this and this has been very well received. He advocated for making these drills and plans as public as possible so that appropriate people are aware. Chair Bornemann challenged making this a requirement and cautioned sharing too many details so that specific details are not provided to a potential active shooter. Evans spoke to the need for depth of communication and the need to regularly revisit this due to staff and administrative turnover.

Ferland asked about reporting to the AOE and other entities (DPS). There was discussion about mandatory reporting of behavioral threats and school threats, the significant structure that would be needed to support that, not digging too deep into making requirements, what data is collected, how school staff knows when to initiate threat assessment, and the need for continued reinforcement. Tinney asked about potential training for students (*See Something, Say Something*). Chair Bornemann replied that there is not, but there is a grant from the Department of Justice addresses expanding the training program which is part of the general school safety program.

Chair Bornemann moved to the next bullet – access controls. Chair Bornemann suggested changing the order of the first sentence to read: “All schools must develop a policy and practice to control access to their buildings through the single use or combination of electronic access control systems, school administrative staff, and/or security personnel.” She asked if there should be a rule requiring that schools can control access to their building at all times or business hours or not at all. There was discussion on combined community/school events, that some school can limit access, that this bullet doesn’t dictate 24/7, that access to a large campus (hockey rink, baseball field) is difficult, that leaving it as a best practice gives them some flexibility, mandating this would be a significant expense.

Chair Bornemann summarized that the SSAG would a) make this a best practice recommendation and b) that schools have a policy addressing public access and how this is controlled. There was discussion on the importance of local input and decision making, that schools are used differently in different areas, deferring to the local board policy on this, staying silent on this because this policy needs to be individually tailored, if many schools have a policy on this, that if this is policy than it would be voted on by the school boards.

Chair Bornemann addressed the last bullet which is more of a measure to consolidate the resources that should be available. She said that to adopt the *Run Hide Fight* method as the options-based approach (for active shooters) would involve planning for implementation and require working with AoA and BGS (who uses ALICE). Chair Bornemann asked if Ferland had a chance to look this over. Ferland said he would need to speak with BGS to see how ALICE was decided upon. He said he would speak with Commission Cole tomorrow morning and get back to Chair Bornemann tomorrow and get back to Bornemann. Evans said he also needs to speak with Secretary French regarding a few of the rule requirements. Chair Bornemann said she will make the changes discussed today and distribute to the group for final commentary and approval. There was discussion on why *Run Hide Fight* was chosen over ALICE, that *Run Hide Fight* is similar to *Stop Drop Roll*, and is standard and familiar, the goal being to promote a standardized response, that these are the same response actions, differences in costs and training time, that corporate and most of America is using *Run Hide Fight*, ease of understanding being an advantage.

Manning said that he could envision schools that invested in ALICE might be put off by this last bullet and talked about recognizing that it's a change in language and not necessarily strategy, and that some explanation that gives value to ALICE might go a long way.

Chair Bornemann asked for other input on recommendations. She said that she thought the committee on institutions might ask this group to testify on this.

Bornemann said action items were 1) Evans will speak with Secretary French about the recommendations specific to rulemaking and 2) Ferland will speak with Commissioner Cole about ALICE being used as a statewide training tool. Chair Bornemann will make changes, track them and send it out to the group. Bornemann does not intend to have another meeting; approval of the final report will happen through email. She thanked the group for their time and work.

The meeting adjourned 2:16 p.m.