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MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Principals, Independent School Headmasters
FROM: Daniel M. French, Ed.D., Secretary of Education 
COPY: Thomas Anderson, Commissioner of Public Safety
SUBJECT: New Homeland Security Grant for School Safety Planning, Training & Exercise
DATE: April 25, 2019

On behalf of Department of Public Safety Commissioner Thomas Anderson and myself, I am pleased to announce that we have awarded a new school safety planning, training and exercise grant to Margolis Healy. The intent of this grant award is to assist all of Vermont's *public and independent* (K-12) schools with enhancing their level of school emergency preparedness. The Margolis Healy team consists of nationally recognized professionals focused on school, college and university safety and security. For more information about Margolis Healy see here: <https://www.margolishealy.com/>

Over the next 16 months, Margolis Healy will have a three-phased approach to support our school safety efforts:

Phase 1: Margolis Healy will distribute an electronic assessment tool (questionnaire) to schools to assess each school's level of emergency preparedness and identify any challenges they are experiencing when trying to implement best and promising practices in school safety and security.

The assessment tool will be similar in many ways to the school safety surveys that have been distributed in the past. However, it is essential for the success of this project that we have the most current information.

It is important that the assessment tool be completed *as soon as possible!* The data received will help develop the planning, training and exercise support during Phases 2 and 3 of this project.

Once the surveys have been received and the data has been analyzed, members from the Vermont School Crisis Planning Team will identify approximately 221 schools to take part in Phases 2 and 3 of the project.

Phase 2: Working with the schools identified in Phase 1, Margolis Healy will offer assistance to develop Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs) for schools that will follow the steps outlined in the federal "Guide for Developing a High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plan." Margolis Healy will then offer (8) regional planning workshops in which:

- a. Participants will learn how to develop a school EOP and be provided training and instructional resources to build local/regional school crisis planning capacity across the state.

- b. Participants will be instructed on how to develop, deliver, and evaluate a school safety exercise. Participants will also be provided 12 unique emergency event scenarios for future school crisis training and exercise initiatives.

Phase 3: Finally, in phase 3 of the project, Margolis Healy will hold 60 training sessions throughout the state. Each session will last 3 hours and will cover both School Safety Best Practices and options-based response approaches to violent intruders or other school emergencies. In addition, school leadership teams will be provided curriculum materials for continued use as a train-the-trainer program.

We anticipate that Phase 1 of the project will begin within the next several weeks. For additional information about the School Safety Initiative, please contact Dee Barbic, Project Manager at dbarbic@margolishealy.com 802-861-1374 or Dawn Lyon, Project Coordinator at dlyon@margolishealy.com 802-861-1381.