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HOUSE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

HOUSE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE ROUNDTABLE

Topic: School Safety

Brownsville Elementary School – Brownsville, PA

March 27, 2018

AGENDA

- 2:00 p.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 2:10 p.m. Discussion with Panelists:
- Carol Kuntz
Director of Safe Schools Office
Pennsylvania Department of Education
 - Dr. Keith Harbauer
Superintendent
Brownsville Area School District
 - Michael Timko
Director of Security
Brownsville Area School District
 - John Menhart
Superintendent
Carmichaels Area School District
 - Brian Tanner
Mayor
Waynesburg Borough
 - Rob Toth
Chief of Police
Waynesburg Borough
- 3:50 p.m. Closing Remarks

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House Co-Sponsorship Memoranda

House of Representatives Session of 2017 - 2018 Regular Session

MEMORANDUM

Posted: January 24, 2017 09:21 AM
From: [Representative Pam Snyder](#) and [Rep. Jason Ortlay](#)
To: All House members
Subject: Rights of Minors to Consent to Mental Health Treatment (former HB 337)

In the near future, we plan to re-introduce legislation – former House Bill 337 of the 2015-16 Legislative Session – amending the Allowing Minors to Consent to Medical Care Act in order to give the Department of Human Services the ability to issue guidelines and promulgate rules and regulations. House Bill 337 passed the House unanimously last session, but was never considered by the Senate.

As many of you may know, the Allowing Minors to Consent to Medical Care Act was amended by Act 147 of 2004 to add provisions regarding the rights of a minor, 14 years of age or older, to consent to outpatient mental health examination and treatment. Since its implementation, there has been much confusion among providers, minors, and parents regarding the rights of each party under the law. Our bill further amends the act to give the Department of Human Services the authority to issue guidelines and adopt rules and regulations to clarify a minor's right to mental health treatment.

It is our hope that granting the Department the ability to provide guidance and resolve any uncertainties and ambiguities presented by current Pennsylvania law.

Please join us in co-sponsoring this important legislation.



Introduced as [HB381](#)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 381 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY SNYDER, ORTITAY, HAHN, O'BRIEN, MURT, MATZIE,
 LONGIETTI, D. MILLER, McNEILL, BULLOCK, SCHLOSSBERG, DAVIS,
 V. BROWN, DOWLING, KORTZ, HILL-EVANS, DAWKINS AND NEILSON,
 FEBRUARY 7, 2017

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, FEBRUARY 7, 2017

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of February 13, 1970 (P.L.19, No.10), entitled
 2 "An act enabling certain minors to consent to medical, dental
 3 and health services, declaring consent unnecessary under
 4 certain circumstances," further providing for mental health
 5 treatment.

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
 7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. Section 1.1 of the act of February 13, 1970
 9 (P.L.19, No.10), entitled "An act enabling certain minors to
 10 consent to medical, dental and health services, declaring
 11 consent unnecessary under certain circumstances," is amended by
 12 adding subsections to read:

13 Section 1.1. Mental Health Treatment.--* * *

14 (c.1) The Department of Human Services shall issue
 15 guidelines and adopt rules and regulations as necessary to
 16 administer the provisions of this section.

17 (c.2) Nothing in this act shall be construed to affect the
 18 consent provisions in subsection (b) (1).

1 * * *

2 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Testimony
presented to the
House Democratic Policy Committee
Carol Kuntz, Director, Office for Safe Schools
in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Tuesday, March 27, 2018

Good morning, Chairman Sturla, Representative Snyder – thank you for hosting us today – and members of the House Democratic Policy Committee. Thank you for your interest in working with the Pennsylvania Department of Education to keep Pennsylvania’s school communities safe.

My name is Carol Kuntz and I am the Director of the Office for Safe Schools in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Our agency performs many functions in support of teaching and learning in the Commonwealth and paramount among them is ensuring the safety of the 1.74 million students we serve.

Like others, the department is saddened by the tragic events that have occurred in schools across the country. As a department of former educators, administrators, and parents, many of us reflect after each tragedy about our time in schools and what measures can be implemented to protect our students from harm. Student safety is at the heart of everything we do, because without a feeling of security, students cannot thrive academically, socially, or emotionally.

School safety is a shared endeavor between schools, local communities, and state agencies, and we appreciate the support and collaboration of our partners at the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, the Pennsylvania State Police, and other stakeholders who play a critical role in this important work.

I have witnessed the evolution of school safety firsthand. Conversations have changed significantly in both scope and intensity as we are now discussing tragic events such as the one that recently occurred in Florida. Of great importance in the preparedness plans is that schools collaborate with local law enforcement, county officials and other emergency responders to ensure everyone is prepared and understands their tasks and responses in the case of such an event.

Schools are also providing annual professional development workshops and trainings for all members of their staffs. In some cases, these trainings include table-top exercises in which law enforcement officers act as an intruder and staff members rehearse their planned reactions to the intruder with a focus of getting students to safety. These same drills are then carried out with students to develop their understanding of how to react and respond in case of an actual event.

Some schools are also investing in new safety measures to secure school facilities. Ensuring single entry points during the school day to avoid unwelcome visitors walking into our schools,

checking visitors' identities and signing them into the schools, investing in surveillance equipment, and purchasing many other types of hardware and resources to provide for safety nets and barriers within the schools are some of the actions that are taking place in districts around the commonwealth.

Some of the most important efforts in which schools are engaging, however, are preventative practices; creating a culture within the school that promotes school safety. This includes building positive relationships with all students and staff, including those who may be at a higher-risk for an emotional outburst or those that threaten harm to self and others. Open communication and reporting between and among students, staff, and administrators help to identify potential concerns before they escalate.

PDE's responsibilities lie in providing support, guidance and resources to assist our schools in both preventative schoolwide practices as well as responsive practices such as the development of their emergency response plans.

Within the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at PDE is the Office for Safe Schools (OSS), which provides this support and technical assistance through both our central office staff and by leveraging a team of nine safe schools regional coordinators. These coordinators, located in Intermediate Units throughout the commonwealth, work directly with schools to provide current resources and education. For example, in recent years, Lancaster-Lebanon IU13, performed approximately 150 ALICE trainings (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate). This program prepares individuals and organizations to handle the threat of an aggressive intruder or active shooter event. The Intermediate Unit also created programs to meet the needs of a wider range of school staff. These programs include "Responding to Violent Intruders" which was delivered to approximately 400 people and "Frontline" for front office staff that over 500 people across the state attended. Other regions have provided similar trainings and have worked with the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) to incorporate and benefit from their expertise.

The Office for Safe Schools also provides guidance documents to schools to assist them with emergency response planning, including an Emergency Management Virtual Toolkit and an All-Hazards School Safety Planning Toolkit.

Schools can apply for funding through PDE for the training and compensation of school resource or school police officers, as well as safety equipment and programs, through a \$6.9 million annual targeted grant program. Nonpublic and private school entities may also apply for a school police officer grant.

Applicants may apply for a maximum individual grant of \$60,000 in the first year for a School Resource Officer (two-year grant) or a maximum individual grant of \$40,000 in the first year for a School Police Officer (two-year grant).

Additionally, targeted equipment grants are available, up to \$25,000 which may include the purchase of student, staff and visitor identification systems; metal detectors; protective lighting; surveillance equipment; special emergency communications equipment; electronic locksets; deadbolts and theft control devices; and training in the use of security-related technology. Targeted program grants up to \$20,000 may include programs that address school safety and

violence in areas of conflict resolution, positive behavior support, risk assessment or violence prevention curricula, classroom management, development of Student Codes of Conduct and training to undertake a district-wide assessment of risk factors that increase the likelihood of problem behaviors among students.

Parents and guardians throughout the state entrust our schools with their children and there is nothing more important than their well-being while in their school's care. PDE continues to support school administrators who must work closely with their local authorities and agencies, school boards, parents, students and teachers to review and refine their comprehensive disaster response and emergency preparedness plans. We encourage administrators to continue to express the importance of safe, supportive, and meaningful relationships with students as the most important foundational element of school safety and effective violence prevention activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this morning. At this point, I would be happy to take questions from the committee.

School Safety Policy Hearing

March 27, 2018

Brownsville Pa.

- **My name is Brian Tanner and I am the Mayor of Waynesburg Pennsylvania.**
- **I sit in front of you here today, representing the children and parents of the Central Greene School District.**
- **First and foremost, thank you for holding this hearing. Sadly it is long overdue...**
- **As Mayor of Waynesburg, I have taken on the responsibility to educate myself on school security.**
- **I preface my testimony with the knowledge that security upgrades at all school buildings is contingent on very limited local, state, and federal funding.**
- **In the Central Greene School District I have learned that they are doing everything within their capabilities to maintain the highest level of security with the funding available.**
- **As we sit here today. The frequency of school shootings in the United States has reached a point of “National Emergency”.**
- **Too often these tragic events have occurred and received national coverage, only to be dismissed after the news cycle has ran its course.**
- **The days of only offering prayers of condolence and comfort for these young victims and their families must come to an end...**

- You, I, and others, as elected representatives on the local, county, state, and national level, must find the ways to make funding for school security a top priority. We can no longer offer excuses; **BECAUSE THERE ARE NONE!!!**

On March 1, 2018, I arranged a walk thru off Margaret Belle Middle School and Waynesburg Central High School in the Central Greene School District.

I had with me the representatives from the following...

- **Greene County Sheriff's Office.**
- **Waynesburg Borough Police.**
- **The Greene County Prison Warden.**
- **And a Security Consultant that has studies school shootings.**

Between them, these individuals have well over 100 years of law enforcement, military, corrections, and security experience.

The following are the priorities we entered this tour with. In an effort to offer our experience on the most efficient and logical ways of increasing the overall security of our school buildings...

1. **Securing the physical plant:** The entrance and egress points of all of our school buildings. To include the complete usage of video surveillance, locking mechanisms, tinting of 1st floor classroom windows, ballistic glass, and metal detectors. Any and all other methods to insure our children are safe when attending school.

Keeping in mind that the first and most important step from preventing a school shooting is preventing an individual from ever entering the school...

I can assure you that the Waynesburg Borough Police are doing everything within their current means to provide the Central Greene School District with local resources to train, coordinate, and respond in the event of an active school shooting.

With that being said, IT'S NOT ENOUGH!!!

All Local, County, and State law enforcement agencies need to be provided with additional funding and resources to specifically address their ability to respond to an active shooter in a school building.

This must include the funds to train, coordinate, and respond, to any and all active shooter incidents...

And let us not forget, here today, our local EMT's, Fire Departments, and Emergency Management personnel. ALL the agencies that are a vital part of responding to an active school shooting incident...

They, as well as the school districts, the local, county, and state law enforcement agencies, ARE NOT provided with the appropriate funding and resources to respond to an active school shooting!!!

These men and women; school administrators, police, firemen, EMT'S, Emergency Management, NEED OUR, YOUR SUPPORT!!!

With that support, with that funding, they will be able to train, coordinate, respond, and most importantly, DETER, the senseless loss of our children...

- 4. MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS: I mention this last, BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST, the urgent need for increased resources and funding for counseling and mental health awareness in our schools.**

I don't have to tell anyone here, that if you can identify a troubled student, provide school staff with the resources to assist them. This will ultimately reduce the odds of a tragic event...

I will quote a scene from the 2012 movie "Lincoln"...

"We've stepped out upon the world stage. NOW!!! With the fate of human dignity in our hands.

Blood's been spilled to afford us this moment NOW, NOW, NOW!!!"