

## District Wide Safety Committee

### Meeting Minutes

3/6/2018 4pm – 6pm

#### Minutes:

- **Reviewed status of Security Vestibule Project:** On January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018 we received notice from NYSED Facilities and Planning Department that our capital project for our security vestibules has been approved. Typically on a capital project we would then go out to bid for vendors on this project and schedule the work to be completed. However, the district is looking to fund this through the Smart Schools Bond Act (SSBA). SSBA must now review our project and provide their approval. According to their offices we are looking at a very long turnaround time on our project (They are currently reviewing a project from November 2016). Mr. Lolkema has sought out the assistance of our State Representatives (Assembly Members Lalor and Barrett, as well as Senator Serino). We are hoping for an expedited review of our project so we can move ahead with construction.
- **Metal Detectors:** We spoke about the possibility of adding metal detectors to our schools. Mr. Lolkema summarized a conversation he had with Newburgh City School District, he noted how one of their high schools with 2400 students has used them for years. It typically takes their 2400 students 30 to 40 minutes to enter via 2 points of entry (2 detectors at each entry point) each morning. There are a number of logistical issues to be considered with this technology. Mr. Lolkema shared a notice that came out on 3/5/2018 from the NYS senate noting the passing of a [Comprehensive School Safety Package](#) which speaks of the idea that new 'scanner technology' may be available that is an improvement beyond typical metal detectors. Mr. Lolkema will look into this new technology and provide an update as to what it encompasses. There was a lot of discussion about the pros and cons of using metal detectors. Armed guards should be considered to monitor this technology each day in case something significant is intercepted.
- **Badge Access for Emergency Responders:** Mr. Lolkema spoke of a request by law enforcement for us to consider activating their employee ID badges in our door access system. Mr. Lolkema spoke of how this is technically doable as the district uses standard access card types that most organizations use. The idea of providing law enforcement access to our on premise knox boxes was discussed, as these boxes store a key that can be used to access the building. An advantage of using a door access system is it gives police the tactical advantage of accessing multiple doors in the school versus trying to access the building using a key at a single knox box which may or may not be easy to access in an emergency. Providing police with access at the door will allow them to enter without destroying a door or glass and may help them enter quietly, providing them an additional tactical advantage. Mr. Lolkema reports he can limit access to specific times of day as well as our school schedule.
- **Police Dogs and Random K9 Searches:** The committee discussed K9 searches for weapons and how the district already utilizes K9 searches for narcotics. It was noted that the district should increase the frequency of this practice in our schools. It was also explained that when these searches are conducted students are held in their classrooms and the dogs never interact with students which limits their ability to search bags or persons. This may make the searches less

effective but at the same time we acknowledge that these are schools and we do not want to create an environment that looks more like a correctional institution.

- **Risk Assessment Policy:** The district should consider the addition of a Risk Assessment Policy
- **Mutual Link:** The Committee spoke of how police interact with the district security systems. We spoke of an integrated drill where the district provides support via cameras to find a perpetrator in the building. It was noted that some districts use an application called [Mutual Link](#) which provides for interoperability of communications systems between schools and law enforcement.
- **Additional School Resource Officers:** The committee spent some time talking about adding more SRO's to our schools. Mr. Lolkema noted that the above mentioned [Comprehensive School Safety Package](#) included language that speaks to new aid packages that may become available to schools to help provide funding for such measures. This topic was debated for a short period of time, and it was agreed that further conversations would need to take place. It was also noted that the EDC committee will be providing a recommendation to the addition of security staff members after school to our schools.
- **Mental Health:** It was questioned if whether the District believes we have enough support staff to address mental health issues in our schools. The committee agreed that this is an important avenue to pursue to ensure that students who may wish to do harm to themselves or others are able to be identified and provided with the necessary support to help them cope with these thoughts or feelings.
- **Thoughts from Junior High Students:** Dr. Shuchat shared with the committee the feedback he received from his student body when asked what they felt our schools needed to have. The list he provided was as follows:
  - More SRO's
  - Additional Lockdown Drills
  - Alert buttons for all staff members
  - Practice for when there is an active shooter both inside and outside
  - Practice what to do when a student is stuck in the hallways during a lockdown drill
  - No Backpacks: Utilize chromebooks for every class and instructional activity so that backpacks would not be required.
  - Identify hiding places in schools
  - Posters with emergency contact #s and other information listed
  - Practice using rescue windows
  - More supplies in our emergency buckets
  - Ladders to get out 2<sup>nd</sup> floor rescue windows
  - What to do when a rescue window is jammed
- **Substitute Training:** What training do our substitutes receive, how will they know how to effectively respond in an emergency?