INTERIM REPORT
School Safety & Security

Focusing on High Schools

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Introduction

In spring 2017, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) launched a comprehensive review of MCPS protocols, practices, and infrastructure related to the critical imperative of maintaining safe, orderly learning environments for all students. The review is being spearheaded by the MCPS Department of School Safety and Security (DSSS), working in collaboration with school administrators and the Office of School Support and Improvement. The review has benefitted greatly from input and insights from two consulting experts, Mr. James Kelly and Mr. William Modzeleski, who are leaders in the field of school security and safety. Both consultants participated in a number of school site visits and feedback sessions with school and central office staff. For 23 years, Mr. Kelly was chief of police for the school district of Palm Beach County, Florida, and Mr. Modzeleski served for more than 40 years in the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education in an array of leadership positions, including as associate assistant deputy secretary of the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools. Biographies of both consultants are included in the back of this publication.

As part of the comprehensive security review, MCPS is examining security procedures already in place to determine the appropriate next steps for individual schools and systemwide. The review began with MCPS's 25 high schools, and this interim report summarizes systemwide findings. After review of the middle- and elementary-school levels this coming school year, some or all of these findings will be adapted to the middle- and elementary-school levels in summer and fall 2017.

The overall findings reflect that there is a robust security system in MCPS schools that includes thousands of cameras in schools, hundreds of school security personnel, engaged teachers and administrators, and partnerships with other government agencies such as the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, the Montgomery County Recreation Department, and the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office. In addition, there are a number of concrete steps that MCPS can take to enhance this security infrastructure to ensure that students and staff remain safe and secure. Many of these additional enhancements already are under way, through use of funds made available at the conclusion of Fiscal Year 2017.

Yet, it is critical to emphasize that these security infrastructure enhancements, while necessary, are not sufficient. School safety cannot be achieved merely by adding more cameras or more security staff. It is equally important to foster a culture and climate that incorporates safety into daily operations at every school. Research clearly shows that safe schools are built on a foundation—consistent with MCPS's core values of equity, relationships, and respect—that ensures all students have positive relationships with at least one responsible adult; all students, faculty, and staff are treated with respect; the diversity of MCPS school communities is fully embraced; and all students' families and the broader community are fully engaged in supporting student success.

This interim report provides an initial set of recommendations focusing on MCPS high schools. These recommendations are grouped into the following seven key priority areas:

1. **Data-driven accountability for school safety and positive school culture as a system priority across MCPS.**
2. **Effective allocation, utilization, and management of school security personnel and other staff.**
3. **Technology infrastructure, including security cameras, and their use.**
4. **Facility enhancements to restrict or limit access to more isolated areas of school buildings and grounds.**
5. **Procedures and practices for supporting positive student behavior throughout the school day.**
6. **Systemwide prevention and early intervention programs.**
7. **Collaboration with law enforcement and other partner agencies.**

In all of these areas, it is important to emphasize that progress will depend upon broad-based input and feedback from students, staff, and other stakeholders.

OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT STATE OF MCPS SAFETY AND SECURITY

The information below provides context on current key elements of MCPS's security staffing, incidents, and technology in a district that currently serves more than 160,000 students in 205 schools. This overview is not comprehensive, but it summarizes some key indicators of safety and security operations and initiatives.

Security Staffing Allocations

School-based Security Staff	222	Security staff in schools includes team leaders in each MCPS high school, as well as 120 security assistants at the high-school level and 73 at the middle-school level.
Central Office Security Staff	10	Staff in the MCPS DSSS design, develop, and conduct safety and security training programs for security staff, school-based administrators, and other school and facility-based staff. DSSS is responsible for developing overall school-system emergency response protocols and working in partnership with public safety agencies to mitigate emergency scenarios that affect the school system. Staff provide security support, coordination, and monitoring for all existing schools and facilities.
Electronic Detection Staff	7	Staff monitor perimeter intrusion, motion detectors, glass breakage, refrigeration, boiler, and power-outage alarms at all MCPS schools and facilities after hours and on weekends and holidays.
TOTAL	239	

Security Training and Emergency Preparedness

All school-based security staff participate in biannual trainings each year (August and January), as well as annual first aid/CPR/AED training. High school team leaders participate in six additional trainings each year. At the school level, each team is required to complete emergency training by the end of 2017. Security staff also play key roles in various drills, including six emergency preparedness drills and 10 fire drills that are required at each school. They develop emergency management plans at the school and district levels. Central office security staff also develop and monitor the school-based emergency plans and work with school-based on-site emergency teams. They review and assess the readiness of all staff to react in emergency situations.

Collaboration with Partner Agencies

The Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), along with local police departments, assigns sworn police officers (school resource officers or SROs) to MCPS high schools. MCPD also responds to incidents at elementary and middle schools in the geographic cluster. In 2015, MCPS undertook a collaborative effort with MCPD and the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office to update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the School Resource Officer Program and Other Law Enforcement Responses to School-Based Incidents, available at *www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/*

departments/security/SRO-Memorandum-2015.pdf. The MOU defines specific duties and responsibilities of SROs and establishes protocols for exchanging information and addressing matters of concern cooperatively "with the goal of maintaining and enhancing a safe and secure learning environment for students, staff, and the MCPS school community within Montgomery County, Maryland." MCPS, MCPD, and the other law enforcement agencies that executed the MOU all agreed that "The vast majority of student misconduct is best addressed through classroom and in-school strategies that maintain a positive learning environment and afford students opportunities to learn from their mistakes, correct any harm that results from their behavior, and restore relationships that are disrupted by their conduct." The parties also agreed to "work together to promote safe, inclusive, and positive learning environments and exercise discretion and judgment in responding to MCPS school-based incidents." In addition, MCPD, along with Child Welfare Services (also known as Child Protective Services) in the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, and the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office assisted MCPS in a comprehensive overhaul of its protocols and procedures for recognizing, reporting, and ultimately preventing child abuse and neglect. More information on the SRO program and other partnerships with county agencies is provided in the discussion of recommendation #7.

Technology

DSSS staff facilitate the design and installation of all security systems, including access control systems, visitor management systems, and digital surveillance systems.

- Currently, MCPS has more than 5,500 cameras in the interiors and exteriors at all secondary schools. On average, high schools have more than 100 cameras and middle schools average 70 to 80 cameras per school.

- All elementary and secondary schools are equipped with Access Control Systems (ACS), which include a camera at entrances. These cameras allow individuals monitoring inside the school to view the visitor before allowing access to the school.

- MCPS has cameras monitoring the interiors of 800 buses, and this number is increasing through a contract with a private vendor.

Security Data

As summarized in a 2016 report by the Montgomery County Office of Legislative Oversight, juvenile arrests throughout Montgomery County have decreased in recent years, as have intakes at the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS), referrals to the county's juvenile justice diversion programs, and the number of juvenile delinquency cases adjudicated by the Circuit Court. (Montgomery County, Office of Legislative Oversight, The School-to-Prison Pipeline in Montgomery County (March 1, 2016), available at *www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/ Files/2016%20Reports/School%20to%20Prison%20 Pipeline%20with%20CAO%20Response%2020166. pdf.*) With respect to arrests on school property, during the 2016–2017 school year, 355 arrests on school property were recorded.

In addition, MCPS's rate of suspensions and expulsions also have declined in recent years and is at one of the lowest rates in the state, as part of our work to promote fairness and equity through clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences in addressing student misbehavior, and to ensure that students learn from their mistakes and make appropriate amends when their behavior affects others.

Restorative Justice, MCPS Health Curriculum, and Prevention and Intervention Initiatives

Building on MCPS's longstanding commitment to equity, we are working to embed restorative practices and restorative justice as part of the schools' culture, climate, and expectations. Restorative practices are processes that proactively build healthy relationships and create a sense of, and commitment to, community in order to prevent and address conflict and wrongdoing. Restorative justice allows students, who may have committed harm, to take full responsibility for their behavior by addressing the individual(s) affected by the behavior and being a part of the decision making around consequences. Beginning in 2015–2016, MCPS has been working with an expanding cohort of pilot schools by providing training and building capacity to support the implementation of restorative justice strategies. The initial cohort of schools trained in these strategies included nine middle schools and two high schools. Six schools have been added since that time, with another nine schools scheduled to be trained in October 2017. Plans to continue to expand this work are under way. It is our belief (and research demonstrates) that when practiced with fidelity, restorative justice as a mindset and restorative practices reduce recidivism among students and provide a safe and healthy community in which staff and students thrive.

MCPS's restorative justice work supports the development of the MCPS Student Code of Conduct, which seeks to strike the right balance between the critical imperative of maintaining safe, orderly learning environments and our commitment to providing age-appropriate disciplinary responses that support personal growth and align with our core purpose—to increase learning and prepare all students to thrive. The MCPS Student Code of Conduct is aligned with revisions to the Maryland Code of Federal Regulations on student discipline, issued by the Maryland State Department of Education, as well as federal guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice on student discipline, school resource officers, and the use of restraints in schools.

These efforts regarding student discipline also are consistent with prevention and early-intervention initiatives, as well as the MCPS comprehensive health curriculum. Especially at the high-school level, the MCPS comprehensive health curriculum includes a number of safety- and security-related units, which are supplemented by numerous other districtwide and school programs related, either directly or indirectly, to school safety and students' social and emotional well-being. Another districtwide initiative is the partnership between MCPS and Common Sense Media to provide students with the resources and information they need to behave safely and responsibly with technology and social media. The Digital Citizenship Education program was offered in all middle schools last year and will extend to students in elementary and high schools over the next three years. The curriculum covers issues such as privacy, cyberbullying, and Internet safety.

SECURITY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS–PRIORITY AREAS

Data-driven accountability for school safety and positive school culture as a system priority across MCPS

In order for schools to not only be safe but also to remain safe, the concept of school safety needs to be embedded and prioritized in a wide range of programs, policies, and practices. Given the many competing priorities that schools have, if safety is not emphasized frequently as a priority, both verbally and in writing, schools may not regularly engage in the activities needed to monitor and ensure school safety. Further, responsibility for school safety cannot be restricted to any one particular group of individuals. Everyone in the MCPS community—from the superintendent of schools to classroom teachers and building service workers, as well as students, their families, and other community stakeholders—needs to embrace school safety as an issue that they have a role in addressing.

To this end, all MCPS employees should be held accountable for contributing to a positive school climate for our students. Accountability requires robust systems for reporting, tracking, and analyzing data on school safety, as well as a commitment to reporting that data to school communities and the public on a regular basis. Further, an ineffective data collection system can lead to an ineffective use of resources for policy or program decisions or an inaccurate perception of both the strengths and challenges of our school security systems.

In collecting data, perspectives from students and staff also are critical. In a fall 2014 Gallup survey, 75 percent of all students reported that they strongly agreed or agreed with the statement: "I feel safe at school." For more information, see *www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/gallup*. See also Community Foundation, Connecting Youth to Opportunity: How Black and African American Youth Perspectives Can Inform a Blueprint for Improving Opportunity in Montgomery County, Maryland (October 2015), *http://worksourcemontgomery.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CYO-African-American-Youth.pdf*; Community Foundation, Connecting Youth to Opportunity: How Latino Youth Perspectives Can Inform a Blueprint for Improving Opportunity in Montgomery County, Maryland (June 2014), *http://worksourcemontgomery.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CYO-Latino-Youth.pdf*. But these results varied by school, and systemwide surveys of students have not been compiled in the past two years, although student perceptual data will be collected again as part of one of the new initiatives funded in MCPS's FY 2017 budget.

Recommendation #1:

1.1 Make school safety and school climate as high a priority as academic performance by including safety metrics in the accountability framework for the district, as well as all schools and departments, and ensuring that this metric is taken into account in evaluations of MCPS employees.

1.2 Develop a year-round communications campaign to promote school safety and positive school climate.

1.3 Support systemwide implementation of MCPS's new online incident management system for the 2017–2018 school year by doing the following:
- Establishing clear guidance for using the system, including clarified definitions as to what is reported, when, and who reports the information.
- Providing training for principals, security team leaders, and all other staff required to use the new system.
- Holding staff users of the online incident management system accountable for using the system effectively.
- Using data from the system to guide the development of new programs and training related to safety and security, as well as prevention and early intervention.

1.4 Convene regular meetings of senior staff focused on monitoring security data, coordinating responses to critical incidents, addressing issues that arise in the implementation of strategies related to security and school climate, and reviewing lessons learned to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

1.5 Implement annual systemwide surveys of school climate for students and staff at every school and incorporate feedback into school safety and school climate planning. Use students in the design of the surveys and prevention/intervention programming.

1.6 Develop a "School Climate" dashboard to provide an online monitoring tool for school climate data, as well as critical safety data, including arrests, bullying and harassment, gang incidents, truancy and chronic absenteeism, and school discipline.

Effective allocation, utilization, management, and training of school security personnel and other staff

Together with school administrators, MCPS security staff—including security team leaders and security assistants—form the backbone of safety and security in MCPS high schools. Every day, security staff take actions that respond to critical incidents affecting hundreds of students. Their proactive efforts, and especially the strong relationships that they develop with students and other members of the school community, serve to prevent additional incidents from occurring.

Based on the review, more systemic protocols should be implemented to ensure that MCPS recruits, hires, and retains the highest-quality personnel in the mission-critical positions of security team leaders and security assistants. In recruitment efforts, MCPS needs to do more to attract security staff that can effectively serve our increasingly diverse school communities, focusing in particular on recruiting additional female and bilingual staff and candidates who have experience addressing emerging issues such as social media and cyberbullying. In addition, more consistency across the district is needed as there is significant variation among schools in terms of training, job assignments and responsibilities, and accountability for school-based security staff.

More attention also needs to be devoted to consistency in security practices and protocols across schools. Currently, DSSS plays a supportive and facilitative role, but is not involved in supervision of school-based security; that remains the responsibility of each school principal. There are advantages to this approach: the principal is closest to school-level issues and is better able to engage in on-the-ground problem solving, and the principal is accountable for the welfare and safety of the entire school. However, this approach also has disadvantages: it often is difficult to quickly make personnel changes or mobilize resources to respond to specific issues or events, and there may be inconsistencies in the assessment of the security assistants' work across schools.

Therefore, it is vital to develop protocols to enhance the role of DSSS in promoting consistency across the district. The external consultants strongly urge MCPS to use a centralized approach to supervising school-based security team members, from the hiring process to the evaluation itself. MCPS will evaluate this centralized reporting structure, as well as consider a "dashed-line" reporting structure, in which principals would retain day-to-day oversight but DSSS staff would play a key role in recruiting, staffing, hiring, and training, and they would provide input into the evaluations of school-based security staff. This approach also would help to increase consistency in job duties across schools as central office security staff would be better positioned to direct activities across schools, in accordance with systemwide expectations for security teams. While some duties may vary from one school to another, it is important to have similar functions, responsibilities, and operations among the various high schools. This consistency will facilitate overall countywide security goals and objectives, ensure that the district is aware of all incidents on school campuses, and establish priority functions and job duties for security personnel. For example, current practices vary regarding school security staff monitoring in-school suspensions or in-school detentions; these activities distract from other security needs and are more appropriate for paraeducators or other nonsecurity staff.

Recommendation #2:

2.1 Enhance the role of DSSS in ensuring consistency in allocation, utilization, management, and training of security staff by (a) assigning the department primary responsibility and accountability for recruiting, screening, and training a high-quality and effective security staff throughout the district, in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources and Development and (b) providing DSSS with meaningful input into evaluations, staffing allocation of security staff, and overall system budgeting for security, while retaining principals' roles in the day-to-day oversight of security staff in their schools. Additionally, further study the issue of school-based security reporting structures over the 2017–2018 school year and consider if changes are needed.

2.2 Bolster recruitment efforts to enhance the diversity of MCPS security staff to serve increasingly diverse school communities and address emerging issues such as social media and cyberbullying.

2.3 Establish more robust screening criteria for hiring security staff to assess all security staff members' capability to engage in mission-critical tasks.

2.4 Establish a "basic" training program for all new MCPS security staff hires prior to placement in schools, as well as centrally administered, systemwide in-service training sessions throughout the year on key topics, as determined by DSSS, including de-escalation skills, conflict resolution/mediation, reasonable use of force, emergency preparedness, crime trends, and gang prevention.

2.5 Provide enhanced security training for principals, administrators, and other school staff who are expected to intervene in situations where students are confrontational.

2.6 Revise MCPS guidelines for allocating security staff among schools to take into account data on safety and security, in addition to the size of the student population and ensure flexibility in assignment and reassignment of security personnel based on school and district needs.

2.7 Bring stakeholders together to agree on roles and responsibilities for security staff and revise job descriptions to promote consistency in key task assignments as well as guidance for nonsecurity-related tasks that should not be assigned to security staff, such as monitoring in-school suspensions.

2.8 Add staff resources within DSSS to coordinate security training and provide specific expertise (e.g., gangs, cyberbullying).

2.9 Establish a plan for mobilizing school security staff to supplement school-based resources, as necessary, in response to critical incidents and to address vacancies due to absences or other personnel reasons by creating processes for reallocating school security staff on a temporary basis among schools to respond to crises.

2.10 Create a uniform incident-reporting system with consecutive case numbers to be used by all security personnel to document incidents that they handle.

PRIORITY AREA 3 — Technology infrastructure, including security cameras, and their use

This past spring, funding was approved to accelerate efforts to upgrade and enhance school security technology. A significant portion of the funding approved will support needed upgrades to communication infrastructure for schools and school buses. School administrators, as well as public safety partners, have long identified that reliable and quick communication between staff in schools, among schools, on school buses, and with public safety responders is critical, and that our current infrastructure does not provide consistent or reliable service in many areas. This funding will support radio tower infrastructure upgrades to increase communication signal strength and reliability, as well as upgraded digital radios for secondary school administrators and school buses.

MCPS also is investing in additional security cameras in schools, in response to school requests for the installation of additional cameras to cover perceived "hot spots" and areas not currently covered, such as stairwells and areas outside the schools and portables. It should be noted, however, that there is little evidence nationwide or within MCPS to show that cameras alone are effective in preventing or deterring criminal or other inappropriate behaviors. Moreover, cameras and other physical security devices have limitations that often are not considered when designing a school safety strategy.

Because it is not conceivable for MCPS to install cameras to cover every square inch of a school building, MCPS should develop a strategy for investing in camera technology, which should include consideration of evidence-based research as to the effective use of cameras; alternatives such as mirrors; establishment of priorities (not all requests are equal); and selection criteria (who gets cameras and why). As part of the strategy, there needs to be an adequate budget to maintain, replace, and upgrade cameras and software as needed. The strategy also should include a cost benefit analysis, balancing the cost of additional cameras with the cost of additional prevention and intervention services, such as enhancing card access system and visitor screening systems. DSSS should lead the development of this strategy, in consultation with other school- and central-office staff, as well as key stakeholders. Once the strategy has been developed, DSSS should play a central role in evaluating requests for technology investments to ensure strategic alignment.

Recommendation #3:

3.1 Develop a systemwide strategy for prioritization, placement, maintenance, upgrades, and most-effective use of security cameras and other technology in schools, led by DSSS.

Facility enhancements to restrict or limit access to more isolated areas of school buildings and grounds

MCPS also is using additional identified funding, as well as other resources, to support a number of steps at high schools across the district to enhance the physical security of schools. The review identified considerable variation in school design that presents certain safety challenges. Some high schools have entrances that open into a main hallway, thus making it difficult to monitor building access, while other facilities steer visitors to the main office. One school required the placement of a full-time security staff person to monitor the front door. While improvements in physical design of buildings could be costly, many improvements can be implemented with relatively minor expenditures, for example, construction of walls and placement of doors. In addition, responses to work orders on priority security maintenance issues need to be accelerated.

The Department of Facilities Management is addressing specific school requests to enhance the security of more remote hallways, alcoves, doors, stairways, etc. This may include replacement of old doors and/or hardware that no longer function in a way that will guarantee no entry when the door is closed and locked. For example, portables present challenges for schools in that the doors to school (from the portables)

may be kept open so that students in portables can come and go (for change of class and for access to restrooms). Another important consideration, although costly, is mechanisms to keep classroom doors secure from the inside in the event of a crisis situation. Going forward, DSSS should play a collaborative role with the Department of Facilities Management in evaluating requests for security-related facility improvements or maintenance requests to ensure strategic alignment.

It should be noted that, as much as facility improvements can enhance security when they are well constructed, such improvements alone cannot and should not replace ongoing collaboration among school administrators, teachers, staff, and students to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment in every school. When school staff work together with students to build relationships based on fairness and trust, there is little that will happen on a school campus without prior warning to school staff. Part of the effort going forward must be to continue to emphasize to students that when they see something threatening, such as bullying behavior or someone with a weapon, they should say something.

Recommendation #4:

4.1 Develop an expedited process for the Department of Facilities Management, in collaboration with DSSS, to identify, investigate, and respond appropriately to facility issues that present security concerns.

4.2 Develop strategies to structure or configure entrances to high schools to direct all visitors to the main office upon initial entry to the school.

4.3 Continue to examine best practices for security-related facility improvements to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

4.4 Ensure that classroom doors can be secured from the inside in new school construction and renovations; begin retrofitting classroom doors in existing facilities, budget permitting, so that all classrooms can be locked from the inside.

Procedures and practices for supporting positive student behavior throughout the school day

Across MCPS, effective classroom management and creating a positive classroom culture is a priority as teachers and other school staff implement a continuum of behavior interventions designed to maintain a positive environment conducive to learning and support academic achievement. Creating a positive school culture and responding appropriately to student behavior must be an equally important priority outside the classroom, especially during lunch periods, when students transition between classes, and when they use bathrooms and other enclosed spaces that are not as frequently visited. While every high school has rules about when students can leave a class and what students need to do outside of the classroom (for the most part, this involves having a hall pass), these practices must be consistently enforced. Further, while every school encourages teachers to stand outside their classrooms during transitions between class periods, principals admitted that not all (for a variety of reasons) actually do stand outside the door to monitor the movement of students.

Another issue faced by all high schools visited involves the lunch period. Every school spends approximately six hours of every school day working to promote positive student behavior, largely with success. However, supervision is reduced considerably during the lunch period. Rules vary from school to school, but most MCPS high schools permit students to travel throughout the school (with some limitations) during lunch. In a few high schools, there are open lunch policies, as permitted by Board Policy JEF and MCPS Regulation JEF-RA, and students (seniors in some schools and everyone in other schools) are permitted to eat off campus. While there is a rationale for this approach, it creates a period of time (usually between 50–60 minutes) when supervision lessens somewhat, thereby leaving the school/students more vulnerable to inappropriate and unacceptable behaviors.

Recommendation #5:

5.1 Establish systemwide standards and protocols for supporting positive student behaviors and creating a positive school culture outside the classroom, including requirements for teachers, administrators, and other staff to supervise hallways at the beginning and end of the school day, during lunch, during transitions between class periods, as well as around bathrooms and spaces in buildings that are less frequently trafficked.

5.2 Develop systemwide guidelines and strategies for supporting positive student behaviors and increasing adult supervision during lunch, particularly in those schools where there is a single lunch period for the entire school.

5.3 Require students who leave campus for open lunch to use the same procedures for re-entering the building as are employed at the beginning of the school day. This same approach also should be used for staff.

Systemwide prevention and early intervention programs

In June 2017, the Board of Education revised Policy ACA, *Nondiscrimination, Equity, and Cultural Proficiency,* to strengthen our commitment to equity, cultural competency, and nondiscrimination. As an outgrowth of that work, MCPS is implementing professional development in cultural proficiency in all schools as well as systemwide compliance training for all school staff, including a focus on student-to-student sexual harassment and ensuring that schools are free of bullying, harassment, and intimidation. This compliance training expands on the successful redesign of staff training on recognizing, reporting, and preventing child abuse and neglect. More robust compliance training also is being developed under the direction of the new Compliance Unit in the Office of School Support and Improvement, which will serve to more effectively monitor ongoing vigilance to promote equity and combat bullying, harassment, and child abuse and neglect.

In addition, MCPS, especially at the high-school level, has numerous programs related, either directly or indirectly, to school safety and students' social and emotional well-being. The programs vary considerably; however, there is no overarching, up-to-date inventory of these prevention programs. Some of the programs were developed by students, while others were developed by an outside entity and adopted by the school. While, in many cases, individual programs were initiated to address a particular issue or behavior, MCPS high schools would benefit from a more strategic approach to program development and implementation, coordinated by central office staff. While there needs to be flexibility in what programs a school may adopt, consistent with its context, programs that are not meeting a set of measureable objectives should not be supported.

Recommendation #6:

6.1 Conduct a systemwide inventory of all school-sponsored prevention and early intervention programs currently operated by individual high schools.

6.2 Develop a plan to assess the identified programs to ensure their efficacy, using a variety of metrics, including student feedback as well as benchmarking with best practices in other districts.

6.3 Create a systemwide approach to implement the most effective programs in high schools throughout the district.

PRIORITY AREA 7 — Collaboration with law enforcement and other partner agencies

Security and safety in MCPS depends, in part, on close relationships between the district and other agency partners, especially law enforcement. MCPS must prioritize these relationships on an ongoing basis and take steps to ensure that they are bolstering efforts appropriately to create safe and nurturing school environments.

One important partner is Montgomery County's Interagency Coordinating Board (ICB) for Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF), which oversees the use of space in school facilities outside of the school day and on weekends. While schools work tirelessly every school day to secure their campuses, once the school day ends, community users gain access to the building and security for events is not uniformly provided. In addition, not all schools have gates that can close off or restrict community use to part of the school. It is imperative that sponsors of larger events should be required to address security issues, and overall security after school hours should be considered as part of the agreements with entities making use of the school, as part of the agreement with CUPF.

Another key partner is MCPD. One important aspect of this partnership is the SRO program. While the SRO MOU appears to be working well overall, there are a number of implementation issues that warrant further work between MCPS and MCPD to improve the program operation and the ultimate goal of safety support for the schools. These issues include the following:

- SRO shift and work assignments to increase their availability during each school day
- SRO training and expectations for duties and activities in the schools
- Supervision and coordination of the SRO program within MCPD to facilitate consistent communication and program priorities

With respect to substantive areas that would warrant closer collaboration, gang-prevention efforts have risen to the forefront. These efforts deserve the same level of engagement as recent work with county partner agencies that resulted in an effective restructuring of child abuse reporting procedures.

Recommendation #7:

7.1   Work with the ICB to determine how best to provide appropriate security for functions held in schools and increase the use of mechanisms, such as gates, that can limit where those using a school after hours may venture.

7.2   Continue to work with MCPD to review, update, and improve key implementation issues of the SRO program and other collaborative efforts.

7.3   Establish a working group consisting of affected schools, local law enforcement, and community service providers to share information on gang activities and gang-prevention efforts.

BIOGRAPHIES OF SECURITY REVIEW CONSULTANTS

Mr. William Modzeleski

Mr. William "Bill" Modzeleski is currently a senior consultant with several groups specializing in school safety, threat assessment, and emergency management. Mr. Modzeleski recently retired after serving over 40 years at the Departments of Justice and Education. During his tenure at the Department of Education where he served as the Associate Assistant Deputy Secretary of the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, Mr. Modzeleski was instrumental in the development and implementation of numerous programs and studies related to school safety, emergency management, and violence prevention. These programs included: Safe Schools/Healthy Students Program (a multi-agency effort designed to approach violence prevention from a comprehensive perspective); Project SERV (a program designed to bring assistance to schools immediately after a crisis that affected teaching and learning); REMS program (a program designed to assist schools improve their emergency management plans); and a host of other programs designed to effect change in the manner in which schools deal with crime, violence and drug/alcohol use.

Mr. Modzeleski also played leadership roles in numerous studies related to school shootings, radicalization, and violent extremism. Mr. Modzeleski served as co-author with staff from U.S. Secret Service on the Safe School Initiative and co- author with staff from Secret Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigations on a study on Targeted Attacks at Institutions of Higher Education. After completion of the Safe School Initiative, Mr. Modzeleski co-authored a publication on forming threat assessment teams in schools. The publication was used as the basis for a training program for schools (Grades K–12) on the formation and operation of a threat assessment team. Mr. Modzeleski assisted the Homeland Security Studies and Analysis Institute in the design of studies related to terrorist incidents involving education targets, emergency management planning in international schools, recruitment and radicalization by international terrorist groups, and a review of school-aged youth involved in terrorist activities.

Mr. Modzeleski also led the Department of Education's efforts to assist schools after events disrupted teaching. These events ranged from Columbine to Virginia Tech, and from Hurricanes Rita and Katrina to the tornado in Joplin, Missouri, that destroyed several school buildings. Mr. Modzeleski led teams that responded to such incidents as the mass shooting at the Red Lake Indian Reservation, the bombing of the Murrah Federal Office Building, serial suicides at the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, and the shooting at Northern Illinois University. Mr. Modzeleski also led the Department of Education team that worked closely with staff from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on efforts to stem the spread of the H1N1 epidemic.

Mr. Modzeleski has written several articles on the issue of school safety and threat assessment. He has been instrumental in designing surveys and studies that provide information on crime and violence in schools, including the School Associated Violent Death Study. Mr. Modzeleski also served as a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Homeland Security Studies and Analysis Institute. Prior to his federal service, he served in the U.S. Army. He earned a Bronze Star for Meritorious Service for duties performed while in Vietnam. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Bridgeport (where he recently was named a distinguished alumnus) and a master's degree from C.W. Post College.

Mr. James P. Kelly, Esq.

Mr. James P. Kelly has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Florida Atlantic University and a juris doctor degree from Western New England University. He has been a member of the Florida Bar since 1985.

Mr. Kelly is a "practitioner" in the area of school safety. For 23 years, he served as the Chief of Police for the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC), Florida, which is the 11th largest school district in the nation (over 180,000 students who speak 152 languages and dialects). In this role, Mr. Kelly was responsible for the safety and security of students, employees, volunteers, and campus visitors, as well as the security of all district facilities.

Using a holistic approach to school safety, Mr. Kelly developed, implemented, and maintained a model school safety program. He used a combination of physical security, prevention/intervention/diversion programs, partnerships with other agencies, policies/procedures, and training (in the above areas) to accomplish the ultimate goal of providing a safe and nurturing educational environment.

Mr. Kelly, in collaboration with the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) provided regional training for all School Resource Officers (municipal and county law enforcement officers) and school administrators from the 67 counties in Florida. This training focused on the development of successful working relationships between school administrators and SROs that enhanced school safety. Further, Mr. Kelly provided statewide "Train the Trainer" training for Florida school districts. This training focused on the development of partnerships and the building of relationships with municipal and county agencies for the purpose of creating emergency preparedness plans that ensured consistent responses throughout a county. The concept was to have "One plan and One response" regardless of the number of municipal, county, and state agencies involved.

Some of Mr. Kelly's accomplishments include:

- Creation and development of a model School Police Department;

- Creation and implementation of the SDPBC "Prepared for Action" crisis management plan for all schools and facilities;

- Creation and operation of the Palm Beach County Youth Court which services all police departments and the State Attorney's office in Palm Beach County and diverts over 5,000 juvenile offenders from the criminal justice system each year. Most juvenile arrests are made in the community, not schools. This Youth Court enabled many juvenile offenders to stay in school and avoid the stigma of an arrest record;

- Creation of a Training Center for instructional and noninstructional employees regarding programs and skills contributing to a safe and nurturing educational environment from classroom management, to anti-bullying, to verbal de-escalation, to building trust with students, etc.;

- Creating and implementing standards for the design of new and renovated school facilities that incorporated, among other things, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) training for all architects bidding on school construction projects. Mr. Kelly was also able to accomplish the inclusion of intrusion alarms, cameras, card access, portable radios, and repeaters for radio communication into educational specifications for all new construction and renovation of district schools and facilities; and

- Creation of a training program for school administrators, teachers, and staff in SDPBC called VITAL (Violence Intervention Techniques and Language). There currently are over 6,000 administrators, teachers, and staff from all elementary and secondary schools that are trained in verbal de-escalation skills, nonaggressive restraint techniques, and the documentation of the use of said techniques as they respond daily to potential or actual aggressive/violent events on a campus. Every campus has at least one VITAL team of five members—high schools can have up to five or six teams—that also play a leadership role in the school's emergency preparedness plan.

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SCHOOLS

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