Community Violence Task Force Meeting Notes

January 31, 2019

9-11am

Pavillion 4th Floor Conference Room

Call-in number:  1-877-273-4202

Conference Room ID:  653793591 followed by #

1 - Introductions/12.20.19 Minutes Review

On the phone: Andrew Lang, Bob Mello (?), Amanda Crispel, Danielle Lindley, Victor Hinojosa, Rebecca Bell, David Baker

In Person: Dan Barkhuff, Bill Bohynak, Rob Evans, Matt Valerio, Catherine Simonson, Mourning Fox, Amy Guidice, David Rubinstein, Michael Manley

No comments on minutes

2 - Review the Executive Order ([link](https://governor.vermont.gov/sites/scott/files/documents/EO%2003-18%20-%20Governor’s%20Community%20Violence%20Prevention%20Task%20Force%20FINAL.pdf))

The group reviewed the charges of the EO to ensure all were discussed adequately. Notes as follows:

1. “Assess high-quality primary research, including evidence-based Vermont data to the extent it is available regarding the underlying causes of violent behavior in communities.  At the request of the House of Representatives by way of Resolution, this review will also consider the connection between excessive video game playing and the propensity to engage in gun violence;”

The gaming component has been discussed in the Prevention subcommittee but needs elaboration in the narrative of the report. Amanda notes that she will create a google folder with more supporting information. She also discussed a recent Dartmouth study that describes a link between aggressive behavior and gaming but no studies have found a link between gaming and gun violence. Dr Bell mentioned the AAP recommendation of children having reduced or no exposure to virtual violence. Also mentioned a link between aggression but not gun violence. There is a stronger link between violence in the home and community violence and this leads into the ACEs. **TASK**: Amanda will draft a recommendation for the TF to consider to re: education on gaming.

1. “Identify best practices for schools and communities to prevent violent behavior including, but not limited to, identifying warning signs and how to report them, recommending ways to improve prevention and reporting of bullying and harassment and closing the operational gaps among the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Mental Health, the Agency of Education, law enforcement and our schools;”

The Prevention subcommittee feels there is still work to do to connect DCF and Mental Health. Catherine described how critical incidents are reported up to Department leadership but there needs to be a process to integrate/share information between agencies. Fox brought up the work of the Interagency Planning Director at DMH. The group feels we’ve identified gaps and need to make recommendation for work on an integrated reporting structure. Andrew mentioned a big part of this is the perception of data sharing (legal and security framework). Need to define and clarify what is permissible under HIPAA and FERPA. **TASK**: Andrew will draft a recommendation for the TF to consider.

1. “Identify opportunities to strengthen existing support systems to ensure every school and community has a local rapid reaction/early intervention team involving educators, mental health/social service professionals and law enforcement when concerning behavioral issues are identified;”

The group felt this was covered well in the recommendations.

1. “Review opportunities for expanding school safety prevention and preparedness capacity in the Agency of Education and the Department of Public Safety and supporting the work of the Vermont School Safety Center;”

The group felt this was covered well in the recommendations.

1. “Evaluate the adequacy of protections for individuals (students and adults) reporting threats, including consideration of shield laws;”

The group agreed that we need more information on this item. **TASK**: Dan/Fox to get more clarification from the Governor’s Office.

1. “Explore the feasibility of stronger open source intelligence gathering by the Vermont Intelligence Center and the cybersecurity center with Norwich University once established; and”

The group discussed the presentation by Social Sentinel and the potential recommendation that “Vermont should request bids from social media monitoring companies in order to review public posts on social media and screen for leakage of impending incidents. “. **TASK**: Rob will address the Vermont resources listed in the charge as part of the recommendation.

1. “Review existing State health, mental health, education and criminal laws, regulations, policies, and programs and propose appropriate legislative changes, including changes to eliminate redundancy and break down barriers faced by communities and schools in coordinating action with State government.”

The group discussed the similarities between this charge and charge #2. Do we need to address the barriers in more detail or educate on capacity? There are recommendations on capacity and the new recommendations that come out of charge #2 will apply here as well.

**Other comments, questions and discussion:**

**Q**: Procedurally, how is this report being written?

**A**: The chairs will divide up the work and ask for input. Subcommittees will elaborate on their recommendations once approved. A draft template of the report will be posted to the Google drive once available. **TASK**: Amy to post draft template.

**Discussion**: Law surrounding attempted crimes. Current law vs penal code. Task force to consider a recommendation to explore changes or clarification on the criminal code. Possibly explore recent work by legislators. Also address concerns on how to integrate individuals back into the community once there are no criminal charges but may need mental health evaluation. More education on accessing resources (ex. If there are no criminal charges, person can be taken to hospital for a mental health evaluation. If they refuse, they can be taken into protective custody while a warrant (court order) is obtained). Rob followed up with Maxine and the following language as been added to the list of recommendations for consideration: “It is recommended that the Legislature consider modifying the current law on criminal attempt, as most recently set forth in State v. Sawyer, by adopting some form of Section 5.01 of the Model Penal Code, making it clear that a person is guilty of attempting to commit an offense, such as a mass shooting or bombing, if the person intends to commit the offense, makes specific plans to do it, does not abandon those plans, purposely gathers together materials that are needed to commit the offense, and the presence of those materials would serve no lawful purpose.”

**Discussion**: Rob mentioned the traumatizing effects of over-publicizing attempts of violence.

3 - Discuss Root Causes

We know that people that engage in violent acts feel marginalized, angry, not heard or cared for, and tend to have few relationships and connections. How to connect with them? School are doing great work at connecting to students but those in the community need work. **TASK**: Fox will draft narrative surrounding (lack of) root causes. Amanda mentions the anger in the gaming culture. Danielle suggests turning the question of what makes kids at risk to one of how we build resiliency – include the 5 protective factors in the report. - Enhancing parental resilience, providing an array of social connections, providing parents concrete support in times of need, facilitating knowledge of parenting and child development, supporting healthy social & emotional development in young children. Address risk factors as a lack of sense of belonging or connection and how do we support kids and families (affordable accessible childcare and development of after school programs).

4 - Discuss “Consensus” as it pertains to recommendations within the report

Majority rules. If there is disagreement, a memo or alternate report can be submitted. The group decided to begin going through the recommendations and address disagreement as it arises.

5 - Review Recommendations

Notes noted on the CVPT Recommendations EO Links spreadsheet on the Google Drive <[here](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1uANeHriyJWdW--23qMlc5XFN3k99FAfXJv2dPvvEp_s/edit#gid=1034145843)>. As the group discussed the recommendation, they will be combined and clarified as well as determined to be included in the report. Many recommendations as listed require further detail (what is already in place, what research supports, etc). Subcommittees associated with the recommendation will provide the detail via email and Amy will add it to the spreadsheet. Some of the detail requested is listed below but all accepted recommendations need more clarification/context.

1. Yes – **TASK**: Rob/Prevention - add detail re: current process and addition of one options-based drill.
2. Yes – **TASK**: Rob/Prevention – add detail re: current process and emphasis on making drills trauma-informed.
3. Yes – consolidated redundant item #54
4. Yes – **TASK**: Rob/Prevention - add detail re: current process
5. Yes – **TASK**: Rob/Prevention - add detail re: current process
6. Yes – consolidated redundant item #12
7. Yes – consolidated redundant item #48

Next meeting – start at #8

6 - Discuss Timeline

With the work remaining, the group will meet at least two more times, March 7th and 28th. David will send out meeting invites once the space is reserved.

7 - Public Engagement

The group has only met in Montpelier. While meeting have had call-in capabilities, the number was not always shared on the calendar. Discussion regarding whether we need to meet elsewhere in the state. **TASK**: Dan/Fox to clarify with the Governor’s office.

10:50 – 10:55 Public Comment

None. No members of the public in attendance.

10:55 – 11:00 Next Steps, Adjourn

Meeting Resources:

[Executive Order](https://governor.vermont.gov/sites/scott/files/documents/EO%2003-18%20-%20Governor’s%20Community%20Violence%20Prevention%20Task%20Force%20FINAL.pdf)

[Task Force Webpage](http://cvptaskforce.vermont.gov/)

[Google Drive](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1pECvKwIa5KuqmFBNgdf9CBkl2W9SrCdo)