

ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATURE

SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting
Thursday, July 1, 2004 - 10:30 a.m.
Senate Hearing Room 1

Members Present:

Senator Thayer Verschoor, Cochair
Alice Bustillo
Rani Collins

Representative Linda Gray, Cochair
Representative Debbie McCune Davis
Detective Stan Morrow

Members Absent:

Senator Harry Mitchell
Dr. Fred DePrez

William Udall
Richard Fimbres

Staff:

Dallas Gold, Senate Education Committee Analyst

Chairman Verschoor called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m., and attendance was noted. Introduction of the Committee members took place.

Representative Gray announced Detective Stan Morrow is retiring this year from the Mesa Police Department and a new officer will replace him on this Committee. She commended Detective Morrow for his dedication and work for the past ten years since inception of the Committee.

Funding Update

Rani Collins, Arizona Department of Education (ADE), presented an overview of the School Safety Program (Program) fiscal year (FY) 2005 budget (Attachment A). She also provided data for the Award Process for FY 2005 (Attachment B). She indicated that currently there is a carryover of funds to cover officers' salaries, but consideration needs to be given as to what to do for future years. She said ADE's Finance Division will be meeting with the Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) to review the Program and determine how much money will be needed to sustain the Program.

In response to Representative Gray regarding the application renewal process and events on campus, Ms. Collins explained ADE reviews the incidents and Program requirements. She said the only time sites are removed from the Program is when there is continuing non-compliance. With respect to the Program evaluation, Ms. Collins stated that during the past year a survey was conducted with students regarding a review of the officers on campus. She said several evaluations have occurred within the past few years and the major concern revolves around the goals and objectives of the Program. In response to Representative Gray regarding costs for the officers in the

Program, Ms. Collins commented that the schedule for officers varies on campus and could include a 12-month schedule. However, if there is not a viable schedule on campus, the officers would return to the Police Department for the two summer months and ADE would not pay for that portion of the salaries.

In response to Senator Verschoor regarding the item listed on "Attachment A" under Clearinghouse in the FY 2005 budget, Ms. Collins explained the purpose of Clearinghouse and the payment of \$138,370. She said the Clearinghouse was established into law as part of the school safety appropriation and provides a position for an individual from ADE who conducts safety plans, emergency responses, and other events on campus. The budgeted amount for the Clearinghouse also provides funds for a resource library, and a Statewide survey on school safety.

In response to Senator Verschoor regarding the amount of \$143,623 budgeted for FY 2005 under ADE Administration, Ms. Collins stated that according to law, ADE may take 1% of the total amount budgeted for administration. Ms. Collins said that amount pays for her position and another position for administering the Program.

Jean Ajamie, Director of School Safety and Prevention, ADE, further clarified the distinction between the Clearinghouse and other administrative costs. She commented that the Clearinghouse position serves the entire State and the public at large and not specifically the Program, whereas Ms. Collins administers the Program. Ms. Ajamie noted that a portion of her time, a portion of the grant processor's time, and other miscellaneous expenses are also charged to the administration of the Program. She explained that while the Clearinghouse serves all 1,800 schools throughout the State as provided through SB1559 that passed several years ago, the School Safety Administration Program specifically serves 300 schools under the requirements of the Program. She noted that federal funds are also used to fund other positions with school safety and prevention that serve the State at large regarding violence and drug prevention.

In response to Senator Verschoor, Ms. Ajamie explained that the library resource is a multi-faceted Clearinghouse that taps into existing systems. She said one such system is the Arizona Bar Foundation, which includes resources on the Internet. She noted that another system includes a contract with the Pima County Superintendent's Office to provide resources for southern Arizona.

In response to Senator Verschoor, Ms. Collins explained the various officer positions, their requirements and responsibilities, funding and site coverage (Attachment C).

In response to Representative Gray, Ms. Collins explained the variances in officer salaries and benefits in the districts. She said it is important to note that some officer positions cover a 12-month period, while others may only cover a 10-month period. Mr. Fimbres suggested including that information for future reports. Ms. Collins responded she has that data available at her office for anyone interested.

Ms. Collins responded to Mr. Fimbres' inquiry regarding Gila Bend and Glendale Elementary not being involved in the Program. She said that Gila Bend opted out of the

Program because of difficulty in obtaining an officer. Glendale Elementary is under a federal grant through the Glendale Police Department; therefore, Glendale dropped out of the Program.

Representative McCune Davis said she would be interested in knowing the number of students that are impacted by the Program. Ms. Collins responded she would be happy to provide that information, and indicated that ADE is seeing increasing numbers of students and growth in a number of districts since originally applying for the Program. She also mentioned, as noted on Attachment C, that approval for funding in some of the districts is contingent upon meeting training and other application requirements.

Senator Verschoor expressed concern with funding the total amount for a district if officers are only working a portion of the year. He questioned whether appropriating the full amount would create an incentive for districts to withhold training to use the excess funds for other purposes. Ms. Collins responded the contract between the police agency and the district is a delicate issue, and to not pay those salaries would jeopardize the Program. She emphasized that all parties involved have an ongoing dialogue and are working hard to meet the necessary requirements.

Ms. Bustillo clarified that even though training requirements are pending, the officers continue to work with other funding sources covering the salaries until the monies are appropriated. Ms. Collins explained that any funds appropriated to the districts that are not invoiced from the police agency would need to be returned to ADE.

Consideration of Recommendations from ADE's Renewal Application Review

- a. Compliant applicants**
- b. Other applications pending ADE's approval**

Representative Gray moved the Committee adopt the Department of Education's recommendations for renewal applications for compliant applicants. The motion CARRIED by voice vote.

Representative Gray moved the Committee adopt the Department of Education's recommendation for additional applications, pending the Department's approval. The motion CARRIED by voice vote.

Overview of the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education and Consideration of Contract

Jeff Schrade, representing the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education (Foundation), provided an overview of the Foundation and distributed handouts (Attachments D, E, and F). He commented that the Foundation provides certain key items as part of its contract. The Foundation provides training to all school safety officers in the Program with 39 different trainings being provided this year. The trainings are appropriate to grade level, and approximately 20 officers are in attendance at each training. In addition, officers are given education curriculum and materials that can be taken back to the classroom. Mr. Schrade stated that the Foundation uses more than 28 experienced officers, teachers and other educators as faculty for the trainings.

The Foundation also draws on national experts from various organizations to train officers.

Mr. Schrade remarked that the Legal Services and Education Library (LRE) is an entity of the Foundation, which provides expertise and materials to interested parties. He commended the Committee for bringing this Program to Arizona, and for making the Program effective for so many students in the State.

In response to Senator Verschoor, Mr. Schrade said the \$388,950 includes the training of officers by the Foundation as part of its contract.

In response to Representative Gray, Ms. Collins explained that the training through the Foundation is free to the officers.

Representative Gray moved the Committee approve the contract with the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education. The motion CARRIED by voice vote.

Public Testimony

Senator Verschoor indicated there are no requests to speak that have been submitted by the public. He thanked everyone for attending, and commended Detective Morrow for his contributions of service.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy DeMichele
Committee Secretary

(Tapes and attachments on file in the Secretary of the Senate's Office/Resource Center, Room 115.)