



88TH DISTRICT
STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 30014
LANSING, MI 48909-7514

MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

LUKE MEERMAN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

PHONE: (517) 373-1830
FAX: (517) 373-0292
Luke.Meerman@house.mi.gov
www.RepMeerman.com

The House School Safety Task Force was organized by Speaker Jason Wentworth following the Oxford High School shooting on November 30th, 2021. Building off the policy recommendations of the Michigan State Police's 2018 school safety task force, the bipartisan task force came together with the objective of furthering school safety and providing working solutions to support student mental health.

The bipartisan task force consists of four Republican legislators and four Democrat legislators. Republicans include Reps. Luke Meerman, Scott VanSingel, Pamela Homberger, and Gary Eisen. Democrats include Reps. Kelly Breen, Ranjeev Puri, Sara Cambensy, and Terry Sabo.

The eight legislators on the task force heard from numerous experts in education, building security, mental health, and law enforcement to identify areas where our schools and students need support. From the beginning, task force members worked to establish consensus on appropriation and policy objectives that will have an immediate effect on school safety.

The task force produced fourteen bill recommendations that are now before the Rules & Competitiveness Committee. These consensus items are straightforward pieces of public policy that were identified through discussion and consultation with experts invited to address the task force. This bill package addresses many facets of school safety ranging from updated requirements for active threat school safety drills and schools' response plans (HB 6319-20), to additional training for school resource officers (HB 6321-22, 6332).

One of the key areas of concern was encouraging students to speak up if they notice concerning behavior or actions of a classmate. Our state already has a vehicle for the transfer of information from a reporting student to authorities with the State Police. The OK2SAY program reminds students that they can speak up and that their concerns matter. Strengthening this program to allow for a more fluid transfer of information between a reporting student, State Police, as well as school officials and local law enforcement, is an objective we are addressing in HB 6327-29.

HB 6323 establishes two new ISD positions to center on school safety and student mental health. These positions will receive funding in the state budget so ISDs may employ a safety and security coordinator, as well as a mental health coordinator. By establishing statute for these positions, we can make sure our school districts receive the support they need to keep our schools safe. Additionally, HB 6326 establishes the School Safety and Mental Health Commission, which will promote ongoing discussion on best practices for school security.

As a task force, we worked to establish consensus and find real solutions to the issues impacting school safety. One area we as legislators cannot address is the critical role parents have in influencing the actions and lifestyle of their students. Parents are responsible for their student's upbringing and for establishing stability in their family. One thing we know about the tragedy at Oxford High last November is that the home lifestyle of the suspect played an enormous role in the events that transpired.

As government officials, there is only so much authority granted to us by voters and parents. We cannot be the driving force in a student's upbringing and we cannot expect government figures to intervene on parents behalf. When establishing the School Safety and Mental Health Commission, we wanted to ensure parental rights are promoted and protected, which is why a parent will always have a seat on the commission.

Groups We Heard From

- Michigan State Police (MSP) and MSP Office of School Safety
- Okay2Say
- Michigan Department of Education,
- Michigan Association of School Psychologists,
- Michigan School Counselor Association,
- Community Mental Health Association of Michigan,
- Oxford Public Schools,
- Safe Schools for Alex and Max Schachter
- SIGMA Threat Management
- Giffords Law
- K-12 Alliance
- Oakland County Superintendents
- Michigan Sheriffs Association,
- Elementary and Middle School Principals Association
- Michigan Legislative Black Caucus
- Sandy Hook Promise and Nicole Hockley
- Cass County Prosecutor
- Public Input

Bill Package before Rules

HB 6319 (Sabo): School drill updates. This bill adds more active shooter drills and ensures at least one includes local law enforcement involvement as well as one conducted between classes.

HB 6320 (Hornberger): Beginning in the 2024 school year, require schools to review and update their safety plans every three years in consultation with the ISD level safety coordinator.

HB 6321 (Eisen): Addresses required training for school resource officers and other staff.

HB 6322 (Cambensy): Focuses on training for school resource officers and staff with specific guidelines on threat assessment teams and police authority within the school environment.

HB 6323 (Breen): Requires two new ISD positions, to be funded in the budget, dedicated to school safety and mental health. Each ISD will receive funding for and hire one Safety and Security coordinator and one Mental Health coordinator. These new positions will serve as the point person for school safety plans, grant opportunities, mental health and security strategies, and other issues. They will act as the conduit between the state and school districts within the ISD. They will also facilitate communication and coordination across school districts in their region on these issues with the goal of better implementing best practices and making sure children with additional needs and/or pose security threats receive the appropriate resources.

HB 6324 (Puri): Creates uniform definitions statewide for school safety terms, such as lockdowns, to foster better communication during crisis events.

HB 6325 (Young): Addresses implementation of uniform definitions.

HB 6326 (Meerman): Creates School Safety and Mental Health Commission, repurposing the current School Safety Commission. This will be tasked to collaborate with and seek expertise from behavioral, physical, and mental health professionals, schools, and other organizations from across the state to identify and support at-risk students and to reduce youth suicides and strengthen the mental health of school-age children, adolescents, and their families in a comprehensive, statewide approach. They will also collaborate and interact with the ISD level positions created in House Bill 6323. This will likely include the reorganization of the current Commission on School Safety under a different authority and with the increased emphasis on mental health.

HB 6327 (Brann): Add the OK2Say contact information to school ID cards.

HB 6328 (Weiss): Expands on reporting definitions and standards for OK2Say.

HB 6329 (O'Malley): Require that reporting and tips that the OK2Say Program receives are passed on to the ISD coordinators as well as local law enforcement/public safety.

HB 6330 (Neeley): Requires compiling of tips and information received to be provided on a quarterly basis to the School Safety and Mental Health Commission.

HB 6331 (Lightner): Provides guidance on modern security measures when constructing new school buildings.

HB 6332 (VanSingel): Encourages more school resource officers in our schools to work with students and provides for certain liability concern.

Other Proposed Policy

HB 6020 (Kahle): establishes the Student Mental Health Apprenticeship Retention and Training (SMART) internship grant program and prescribes the conditions for administering the internship grant program. This bill passed the House on June 9, 2022, but still requires funding.

HB 6042 (Mueller): requires critical incident mapping in school safety plans to ensure first responders have the best information possible to respond to threats and incidents. The bill passed the House on June 7, 2022, and is pending in the Senate and requires funding.

HB 5701 (VanSingel): now Public Act 42 of 2022, updates the building to code to better allow the use of temporary door barricades during emergencies.

SSTF Budget Items

Sec. 31a. (7) (pg9) an amount not to exceed \$22,300,000.00 (SAF) + an amount not to exceed \$30,000,000.00 (federal) to support primary health care services provided to children and adolescents up to age 21.

3% of funds allocated must be made available for technical support and coordination services from a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving adolescent health centers that has a membership that includes federal qualified health centers, local health departments, hospital systems, and public school districts. This is a work project to continue support for primary health care services under Sec. 11

Sec. 31n. (1) and (6) (pg16) \$40,000,000.00 (federal) to ISDs for general mental health support services and general education of students

Sec. 31p. (1) (pg28) \$50,000,000.00 (federal) for MDE grants for districts and ISDs to adopt TRAILS

Sec. 97 (pg38) school infrastructure grants

Sec. 97b (1) (pg44) \$50,000,000.00 (SAF) to MSP for public school, district, and ISD grants for SROs

Sec. 97e (1) (pg50) \$2,000,000.00 (GF) for statewide school safety/mental health commission