

Oregon Task Force on School Safety

as established by House Bill 4087 during
the 77th Oregon Legislative Assembly

Report to the Oregon State Legislature

Fall 2015

Oregon Task Force on School Safety

Members



CHAIR

Sheriff Craig Roberts
Clackamas County Sheriff's Office,
Oregon State Sheriffs' Association

VICE-CHAIR

Superintendent Richard Evans
Oregon State Police

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Senator Betsy Johnson
Senate District 16

Representative Jeff Barker
House District 28

Lindsey Capps
Education Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

Heidi Moawad
Public Safety Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

Matt Utterback
Superintendent, North Clackamas Schools,
Confederation of Oregon School
Administrators

Peggy Holstedt
Director of Policy Services,
Oregon School Boards Association

Susan Graves

Safety Coordinator, Lincoln County
School District
Oregon School Employees Association

Ted Kunze

Division Chief, Molalla Fire District
Oregon Fire Chiefs Association

Chief Geoff Spalding

Beaverton Police Department
Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police

Dave Novotney, Ph.D.

Superintendent, Willamette Education
Service District
Oregon Association of Education Service
Districts

Eriks Gabliks

Director, Oregon Department of Public Safety
Standards and Training

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For more information on the Oregon Task Force on School Safety
visit the Task Force website at

www.oregon.gov/osp/Pages/Task-Force-on-School-Safety.aspx

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Executive Summary

History and Mission — House Bill 4087 (2014)

School violence has become all too common in our state and throughout the nation. Recent school attacks have created uncertainty about the safety and security of our schools. In 2014, to address this concern, the Oregon State Legislature enacted House Bill 4087, establishing the **Oregon Task Force on School Safety**, bringing together representatives from police, fire, school administration, teachers, school boards and service districts, along with the Governor's education and public safety policy advisors, and legislators. With these key stakeholders at the table the Task Force began its work on accomplishing the three objectives set forth in HB 4087:

- Develop a request for proposal to create a database of floorplans for all schools within the state, accessible to authorized users via the Internet.
- Examine models of existing education and training programs for law-enforcement officials, other first responders and school employees in the areas of school safety and incident response.
- Examine models for existing protocols for school safety and incident response and consider whether standardized statewide school safety and incident response protocols would be appropriate.

What We Learned

The Oregon Task Force on School Safety began meeting in August 2014. Within the first four months of convening, there were 10 shooting incidents at schools in the United States — in Florida, Indiana, Kentucky, Georgia, Washington, Oklahoma and Oregon, at Rosemary Anderson High in Portland. This does not include the shooting at Reynolds High in Troutdale, Oregon in June 2014. Incidents since then include the October 2015 tragedy at Umpqua Community College, which resulted in 10 dead (including the shooter). It is clear that the need for consistent, statewide school safety measures has reached a critical level.

Toward that goal, the Task Force has worked diligently to identify resources and develop recommendations to strengthen school safety.

Over the past year, we heard from a variety of sources on all aspects of school safety. During its meetings, the Task Force:

- Heard briefings regarding school facility mapping systems from Washington State, and heard separately from the Homeland Security Information Network.
- Identified the need for standard language between first responders and schools to improve communication during an emergency.
- Identified the importance of local law enforcement and schools coming together to co-develop, train, and practice emergency response measures.
- Examined emergency response lessons learned from critical incidents at Clackamas Town Center and Reynolds High School.
- Considered Lincoln and Hood River counties' existing successful emergency response models, developed collaboratively between school districts and local first responders — and learned that these models had a local champion in both law enforcement and education to drive the development and success of their systems.
- Recommended school safety information sources that could be used readily by any school — regardless of funding — as a guide and starting place for learning more about how to prepare for and respond to school emergencies. (*See Appendix A.*)
- Investigated Oregon's former tip line, and considered several presentations from successful regional and national tip lines, which led the task force to strongly recommend the reinstatement of a statewide anonymous tip line.
- Examined Oregon's Salem-Keizer threat assessment model for students in crisis and identified local existing multi-disciplinary resources to aid schools in addressing threats.

Recommendations:

Creating safer schools is a collaborative effort dependent on strong partnerships with school leadership, first responders, mental-health professionals and the community. While school safety resources vary regionally, the Task Force strongly believes the recommendations will provide consistency across the state.

The Task Force identified several critical areas for improving safety in Oregon Schools:

- **Establish and fund a statewide tip line** — with text, call and web-based options — allowing students, families and others to report information about potential threats.
- **Establish and fund a statewide threat assessment system** to identify, evaluate and support students who present a potential risk for violence and self-harm.
- **Fund and develop a statewide school floorplan database** to store facility information for Oregon Schools to enhance the readiness of first responders.
- **Establish standardized terminology** for emergency response and drills for all Oregon schools.

In more detail:

Establish and fund a statewide tip line. Oregon needs a resource where students and others can anonymously report information about potential threats, including bullying, self-harm and other concerns. Youth oriented tip lines that allow multiple reporting options are successful in Colorado and Michigan.

Establish and fund a statewide threat assessment system. The Task Force learned that prevention is a critical component of school safety, and looked at ways to integrate local resources so that experts can intervene in the lives of troubled youths before they cause harm. Research shows that a student who commits an act of violence or intends to harm him- or herself has usually told someone before carrying out the plan. Threat assessment systems offer early intervention strategies that can provide students with the opportunity to get the assistance and support they need.

Fund and develop a statewide school floorplan database. State police and education staff met with local school superintendents and emergency responders from Portland, Salem, Seaside, Astoria, Pendleton, Bend, and Roseburg during January 2015 to determine 31 different features and benefits needed for a web-accessible statewide database for school floorplans. (See *Appendix B.*)

Establish standardized terminology. Common terminology among school districts and first responders is critical for effective, streamlined communication during emergency response. The Task Force adopted four standard emergency management terms and definitions, and recommends that all Oregon schools be required by statute to use defined standard terminology to ensure uniformity throughout the state:

- **Lockdown** — Quickly secure all school staff, students, and visitors in rooms away from immediate danger.
- **Lockout** — School's exterior doors are locked. Used in a potentially dangerous situation outside of a school.
- **Shelter in Place** — Take immediate shelter where you are and isolate your inside environment from the outside environment.
- **Evacuate** — Remove from a place of danger to a safer place.

Next Steps

The Task Force aims to support all Oregon schools by continuing to identify available resources, systems and tools to empower schools to strengthen their emergency plans and implement an early detection threat assessment system. We believe that the combination of these two measures, combined with a statewide tip line, will significantly help to provide safer environments in which our children can learn and succeed.

Oregon must prioritize funding to help make these school safety recommendations a reality. While this plan addresses K-12 schools, we recognize that there is a need for more work to be done to enhance safety in our higher education institutions. School safety is continuing to evolve, and as it does, it will be important to refine our efforts and identify areas of improvement. For that reason the Task Force will recommend to the 2016 Oregon Legislature that its research continue beyond the Task Force's currently scheduled sunset in 2017.

A copy of the full Task Force report can be found online here:

<http://www.oregon.gov/osp/Pages/Task-Force-on-School-Safety.aspx>

Letter

from Task Force Chairs

Members of the Legislature,

Since August 2014, the **Oregon Task Force on School Safety** has examined strategies to more effectively respond to school violence. While the Task Force initially focused on standardizing emergency operations between first responders and schools in active-shooter situations, we quickly realized that prevention is the first component of school safety.

In considering aspects of school safety, the Task Force heard presentations from experts on standard emergency response protocols, threat assessments, database management, floorplan mapping and tip lines, among other fields. That information directed the Task Force to focus on the following four specific recommendations as a starting point to improve the safety of Oregon schools: Establish a statewide tip line; create a statewide school-based Threat assessment system; develop a statewide school floorplan database; and require defined standard terminology for school emergency management and drills across Oregon.

We recognize that resources available to enhance school safety vary from district to district. Even so, partnerships with school leadership, first responders, mental health professionals and other community resources are available to most. Bringing these professional disciplines together within school districts to talk about prevention and planning is a critical component of school safety. Research shows that a student who goes on to commit violence has often told someone of his or her intent to harm. If we can intervene with a multi-disciplinary team of professionals before harm is committed, lives will be saved. Prevention is a critical part of overall school safety.

We know when a child does not feel safe at school or at home, that child will suffer academically and socially. It is incumbent on us to do everything in our power to use best practices to help reduce the chance of school violence and to identify and support children in crisis. This report is not intended to be exhaustive, but a starting point to set the stage for what is possible, so that every student has a chance to succeed and feel safe.

Oregon is a great place to go to school. It is our collective responsibility to strengthen school safety. The Task Force thanks you for your leadership in establishing this important work group. We value your continued support in implementing these recommendations.



Superintendent Rich Evans
Oregon State Police



Clackamas County Sheriff Craig Roberts
Oregon State Sheriffs' Association

Introduction

Asking the Critical Questions



Physical and psychological safety are critical to a child's ability to learn in school. Most Oregon students will complete their education without being touched by peer-on-peer violence. However, school-related violence has nevertheless become an all too common issue faced by the education community. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that:

In a nationwide survey of high-school students, about 6% reported not going to school on one or more days in the 30 days preceding the survey because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to and from school. (CDC, 2010)

The FBI reports that 39 active shooter incidents occurred in education environments nationwide between 2000 and 2013, resulting in 117 individuals killed and 120 wounded. The FBI also reports that school based attacks are occurring with increasing frequency — and account for some of the highest death tolls among all active shooter incidents during the 2000-13 time period. (FBI, 2013)

Although these incidents are rare compared to other types of violence students face in and outside of school, recent school attacks (across the nation and in Oregon) have created uncertainty about the safety and security of our schools.

Increased national attention on school violence has prompted educators, law enforcement officials, mental health professionals, legislators, parents and many others to press for answers to two central questions:

Could we have known that these attacks were being planned?

And, if so, what could we have done to prevent those attacks from occurring?



Oregon Schools by the numbers

1,240

Total number of K-12 schools
(2015-16)

570,857

Total number of students (2015-16)

3,066

Total number of school buildings
(2009-10)

75,912,120

Total school-building
gross square footage (2009-10)

75,610

Average school-building
square footage (2009-10)

Sources:
Oregon School Directory 2015-16
Innovation Partnership 2009-10 report

In 2014, the Oregon State Legislature passed House Bill 4087, establishing the **Oregon Task Force on School Safety**. The Task Force was charged with strengthening safety in Oregon schools by taking on the following assignments:

- **Develop a request for proposal to create a database of floorplans for all schools** within the state, accessible to authorized users via the Internet. Include rules governing the database.
- **Examine models of existing education and training programs** for law enforcement officials, other first responders and school employees in the areas of school safety and incident response.
- **Examine models for existing protocols for school safety and incident response** and consider whether standardized statewide school safety and incident-response protocols would be appropriate.

This report offers a summary of the accomplishments of the Oregon Task Force on School Safety. The report seeks to identify areas that may help reduce risk and improve the response to threats and hazards.

Each day, Oregon's 1,240 K-12 schools are entrusted to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for over 570,000 students. Creating and maintaining safe schools is an ongoing process — one that takes collaboration, careful planning, and critical support. Relationships, respect and connection between adults and students form the core of this process. The Oregon Task Force on School Safety report is designed to jump-start the conversation about enhancing safety in our schools.

Task Force Focus

Identifying Critical Areas for Action



The Oregon Task Force on School Safety began meeting in August 2014, and heard from experts in many areas related to school safety. The Task Force then identified several critical areas for improving safety in Oregon schools:



1. Develop a statewide school floorplan database so police and fire personnel can access floorplans before responding to life-threatening events at schools, potentially decreasing response time and improving safety for first responders, educators and students.



2. Standardize terminology for school emergency management and drills so that no matter where you live in the state, your school is following a similar protocol.



3. Establish a statewide tip line where students, parents, and others can anonymously report information on potential threats. The tip line can also serve as an avenue for youth seeking help for self-harm and other issues.



4. Create a statewide threat assessment system to provide a consistent, structured approach to identify, evaluate and support students who present a potential threat to themselves or others.

These critical areas are explored in more detail on the following pages.



1. Statewide School Floorplan Database



One of the top priorities of the Oregon Task Force on School Safety is developing a **statewide database of school floorplans**, accessible to public safety officials via the Internet.

The Task Force designated a **Database Subcommittee** to examine the value and viability of a web-accessible school floorplan database to store facility information for Oregon schools. The statewide floorplan database will assist first responders in knowing the layout of a building before entering it during an emergency and improving communication between police, fire, medical and school staff.

The Subcommittee hired a contractor to help interview educators and emergency responders statewide, establish solution parameters as indicated by the local respondents, field a Request for Information (RFI), and evaluate vendor responses. A series of five two-hour

interview panels was held with Salem-Portland, Astoria-Seaside, Pendleton, Bend, and Roseburg school superintendents and emergency response teams to ensure the Subcommittee had an accurate representation of a solution no matter what the geographical challenges might be. These panel interviews validated the initial hypothesis that a web-accessible school floorplan database would improve emergency response and communication.

The results of the RFI were presented to the Task Force on April 28, 2015. There was statewide consensus that a web-accessible database of school floorplans, including not only school buildings but also facilities on the school campus, would offer significant value in school safety.

The Task Force is currently evaluating options and costs for a school database system in Oregon before making a formal request for funding.



2. Standardized Terminology



The Oregon Task Force on School Safety determined that **common terminology among school districts and first responders** is critical for effective, streamlined communication during emergency response.

The Task Force adopted the following terminology to be used during incidents throughout Oregon:

'Lockdown'

Quickly secure all school staff, students, and visitors in rooms away from immediate danger.

'Lockout'

School's exterior doors are locked. Used in a potentially dangerous situation outside of a school. "Lockout" is a term that may be used in combination with "lockdown."

'Shelter in Place'

Take immediate shelter where you are and isolate your inside environment from the outside environment.

'Evacuate'

Remove from a place of danger to a safer place.



3. Statewide Tip Line



There are several key components for a successful tip line, including:

- Effective marketing of the tip line;
- A robust system for quickly processing and distributing tips;
- Excellent call counseling experience to make the most of each tip; and
- Established relationships with school systems and law enforcement throughout the state.

While some acts of violence are random, in many school shootings the shooter has told someone of his or her plans. **A statewide tip line** with voice, text and web-based options would allow students to anonymously share information about potential threats.

The Oregon Task Force on School Safety designated a **Tip Line Subcommittee** to initiate a Request for Proposal (RFP). The Oregon State Police, with the assistance of the Subcommittee, is in the process of hiring an independent contractor to write a business case and assist with the RFP.

A statewide tip line that includes voice, text and web-based tips will allow concerned persons to anonymously share information about potential threats. The information will be evaluated and shared with school officials and law enforcement when threats to student safety are reported.

The tip line would handle all types of reports — including bullying, violence, threats of violence, suicide, and other concerns.

The Oregon State Police has created an aggressive timeline in order to complete the RFP as well as identify a vendor solution by early 2016. Information will be gathered and presented in Oregon's 2016 Legislative Session.



4. Threat Assessment

Comprehensive threat assessment systems provide communities with an effective, evidence based process to address and support students who present a potential risk of reactive or targeted violence.

The FBI has identified "a number of potential school shootings that were prevented because students reported a threat to authorities that was investigated and determined to be serious. Based on these observations, the FBI and Secret Service both recommended that schools adopt a threat assessment approach to prevent targeted acts of violence." (*O'Toole, 2000; Vossekui, 2002*)

Threat assessment continues to be one of the most effective ways school districts, law enforcement and mental health professionals can reduce the likelihood of an active shooter situation in a school environment.

The student threat assessment model is an investigative, fact and community based analytical approach that requires a team to work collaboratively.

The threat assessment protocol follows a leveled approach, based on the severity of the threat, and determines appropriate interventions and supervision:

- **Level 1 Assessment** is a school based assessment that determines the nature of the threat, the context of the risk and school based resources for addressing the threat.
- **Level 2 Assessment** is a community based assessment completed through a collaborative effort by a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary team. A Level 2 Assessment occurs when a school-based team requests assistance, due to a perceived high risk, a need for further investigation or a lack of resources. The assessment team will assist in management and intervention planning and ensure there is a safety plan in place.

Threat assessment is a proven method of early intervention that can help prevent acts of violence in the school environment. While some acts of violence are random in nature, studies show most active shooters pre-plan their acts of violence and have told their plans to someone within their peer group.

The Oregon School Safety Task Force is evaluating recommendations to form a regional statewide threat assessment system.

The proposed system will help Oregon schools:

- **Train key school staff in Level 1 Assessment** — which utilizes a school based threat assessment process of students or situations of concern.
- **Support the development and training of school and community based threat assessment teams.**
- **Provide trained multi-disciplinary threat assessment teams to schools needing support in conducting Level 2 Assessments.**

Next Steps



It will take a collective commitment and ongoing funding to implement these important school safety strategies. The Oregon Task Force on School Safety recommends the following:

1. Establish and fund a statewide tip line with voice, text and web-based options, allowing students, families and others to report information about potential threats. The information will be evaluated and shared with school officials and law enforcement when threats to student safety are reported. The tip line would handle all types of tips, including bullying, violence, threats of violence and suicide, among other concerns.

2. Establish and fund a statewide threat assessment system to identify, evaluate and support students who present a potential threat to themselves or others.

3. Fund and develop a statewide school floorplan database to store facility information for Oregon schools. The database will assist first responders in knowing the layout of a building before entering it during an emergency and improve communication between police, fire and school personnel.

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APPENDIX A

Recommended School Resources



The Oregon Task Force on School Safety learned about several resources and websites to help with training and information about school safety. These websites cover emergency-management resources available for first responders, schools, and community organizations. These recommendations are not a mandate, but a resource guide to serve as a starting place for learning more about how to prepare for and respond to school emergencies. The Task Force approved and adopted the following resources and websites:

Emergency Management Institute – FEMA

training.fema.gov/emi

Energetic Materials Research and Testing Center

emrtc.nmt.edu

Guide for Developing High Quality School Emergency Operations Plans

rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS_k-12_Guide_508.pdf

I Love U Guys Foundation

iloveguys.org

Do the Drill — Office of State Fire Marshal

www.oregon.gov/osp/SFM/docs/yfpi/do_the_drill_2011.pdf

Oregon Dept. of Education

www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=372

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools

rems.ed.gov

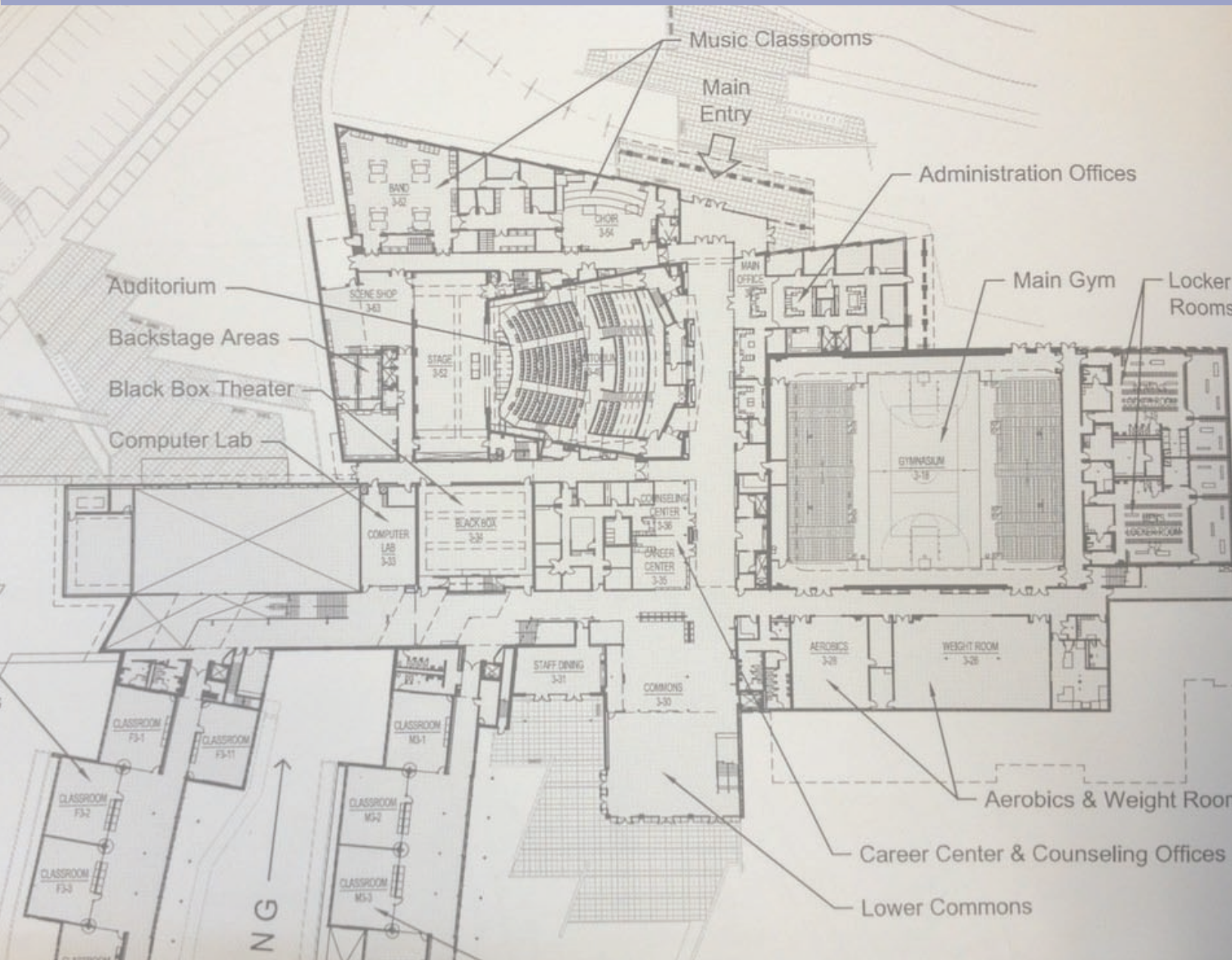
Rural Consortium Training Center

www.ruraltraining.org

APPENDIX B

School Floorplan Database Needs Analysis

Presented at the Feb. 5, 2015 Task Force meeting





HB 4087 Task Force on School Safety

Needs Analysis

Executive Summary

This document describes the features and benefits identified by local school safety personnel for the utility of a web-accessible statewide database for school floor plans and related facilities information as ordered by HB 4087. The findings established a list of 31 features needed to support the four responses that schools have to emergencies: “seal everyone in the school, seal everyone out of the school, evacuate the area, and provide emergency shelter.”

Needs Analysis Methodology

State police and education staff met with local schools superintendents, their designees, and emergency responders (“customers”) from Portland, Salem, Seaside, Astoria, Pendleton, Bend, and Roseburg during January 2015. In five two-hour sessions, customers identified benefits they expected, and features that would be needed. State presenters described HB 4087 walked through a draft list of features to start discussion. The following table lists validated features proposed or approved by the regional representatives.

Feature	Benefit to Customer
System solution with school details enables any emergency responder in any building-level or community-level emergency to get your facility's details	Saves time for fire, medical, and police responders searching for entrances, exits, shut-off valves, and other key information--as fast as the web can deliver it
Web access via multiple electronic methods	Common access to common information, not dependent on one particular platform. Reduces response time in emergency. Enables information sharing among emergency responders
Visual information, such as maps, floor plans, diagrams, and plans about your facility can be stored by you and retrieved by emergency responders and others	Helps emergency responders assess the magnitude of damage, plan the tactical response, interpret the scene at the school, and navigate to people needing help

School Floorplan Database Needs Analysis

Feature	Benefit to Customer
Visual information about your facility can be stored and retrieved by emergency responders or other authorized users	Shows the actual spaces and clearances for your facility. Helps you and others direct evacuations or moves, clarifies live descriptions of where problems or aid can be found
Standard and easily understood naming conventions define the data	Enables you to retrieve information by a tag
Indexing enables ability to assign tags for data retrieval according to emergency respondent's specific need and location	Enables you to assign a tag for information that you need in real-time, enables sorting by another attribute than file type or document name
Visual information about your facility can be stored and retrieved by emergency responders and others	Supports rapid understanding of facility navigation and possibility of using a picture as a common tactical planning aid
Database contains all school safety plans based upon with standardized data as defined by a template	Ensures all safety plans are navigable and understandable by anyone that uses the system solution
Database contains all school safety plans	Ensures that all safety plans and protocols for a given school facility can be found online in one place
Database contains all the options for approved school safety plans	Schools that do not have plans and protocols in place can choose a pre-approved plan for facility-wide emergency plans
The system solution shall contain all the templates for school safety plans	You can find and use the template for the safety plans you need to file
High availability, redundancy, and disaster recovery	Even if some components or communication paths are down due to weather or other conditions, web-enabled access makes it unlikely that all paths will go down at once
Off-the-shelf system or enhancement to existing systems, or application development to assure a standard platform configured for school safety needs	Standard application programming interfaces to web services simplify setup and configuration
Standard training is available right out of the box and options are also available	Minimal training time; training doesn't require additional expense by the school and can be done on-the-job
User interface will help novice users and enable shortcuts as novices become expert users	Easy-to-use system doesn't require training before use. Novices can get routine updates done without books and classes and discover only those features they're authorized to use
Role-based security	Only people with need-to-know can access specific information. Solution accommodates whatever structure government takes in a given locality and supports multiple roles. Absorbs routine, frequently needed, or critical data, enabling school safety staff to focus on problems requiring personal attention and discretionary judgment
The system solution shall include data-driven triggers when a plan reaches its expiration date	You'll get notifications when a plan is about to expire
Affordable	<i>Handled in introduction: local schools are not expected to pay for this as an unfunded mandate.</i>
Ability to manage updates to the system solution	Technical updates for maintenance can be scheduled well in advance
Ability to manage updates to the data in the system solution	Facility updates—new construction and other changes—can be made when you want them. A statewide content management system enables consistency in the data and opportunity to review rate of change in the data, enabling a statewide profiling of school safety efforts
User-configurable options	You can see the information you are most likely to need
Ability to shut down all or part of the system	If compromised, you don't have to shut down all of the system, only the affected sections
Ability to block access by a specific device	If a user's device is lost or stolen, it cannot be used to access the system as a trusted device—part of a multi-layered security model
Solution can be adopted in stages or all-at-once	Enables progressive buildout as users are ready and funds are available

School Floorplan Database Needs Analysis

Feature	Benefit to Customer
Solution supports communications outreach to external stakeholders	Media messages and parent outreach help control panic, focus attention, and constrain irresponsible reporting and social media-driven dynamics
Solution enables possibility of reduced insurance premium from PACE	Efforts to reduce risk to life and property with enhanced safety enable reassessment of risk and less stress on school budgets
Local autonomy balanced by domain consistency	Local people remain in charge of their schools, and have opportunities to learn, review, and adopt each other's best practices as they see fit.
Subject-matter experts in school safety can share information without having to personally tell or train others	Reduces or eliminates single point of failure for data, especially in understaffed areas or rural districts
Supports more variety, comprehensiveness, consistency, and usage of safety training and drills	Enables support and accountability for schools that do not have all four types of emergency response drills in place. Reinforces protocol consistency, so transfers and substitute teachers and other staff have a common operating knowledge of what to do in an emergency
Enables hardcopy or download of information to mobile devices	Enables immediate personal access of information for emergency responder if it appears that communications connections may be lost
Solution accommodates school safety-related data for all possible emergencies, not just one or two	Solution provides data for decision support throughout the life cycle of the emergency

Top-of-Mind: the Six Most Obvious Needs

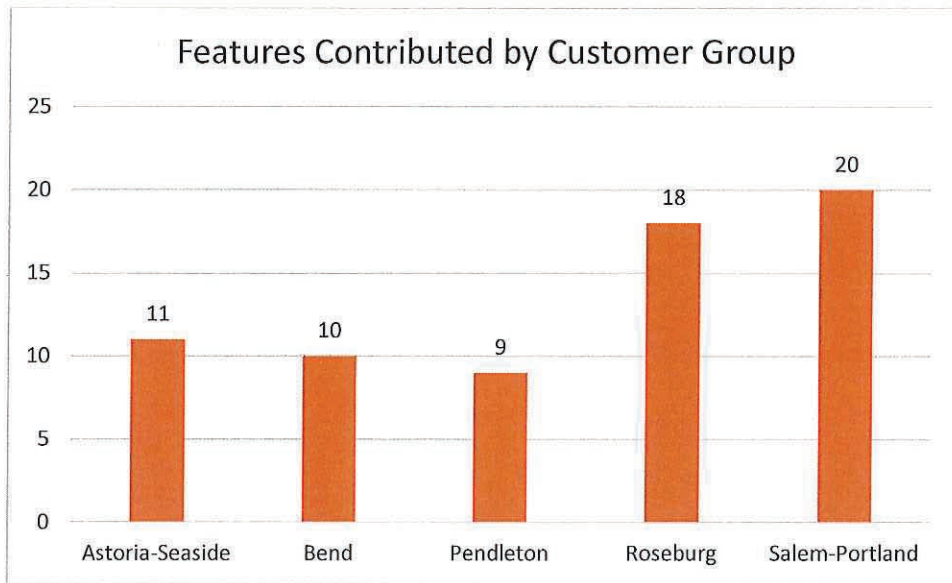
The following features were universally top-of-mind, meaning that at least four of five meetings introduced them or discussed them. This behavior shows these elements are top-of-mind, although it does not suggest priority or significance as much as “obviousness.”

- Standard and easily understood naming conventions define the data
- Standard training is available right out of the box and [training] options are also available
- Database contains all the options for approved school safety plans
- Role-based security
- Ability to manage updates to the system solution (technical infrastructure)
- Ability to manage updates to the data in the system solution (local content updates)

Customer-Driven Data: Customer Contributions are a Significant Percentage of the Features List

Customer influence on the feature list reflected population density, with the most features being introduced or commented on by the densest regional populations. The following chart shows the number of features explicitly proposed or discussed as a priority by each regional group. While there is significant overlap, it cannot be said that the two largest groups include all the features discussed by the smaller groups.

School Floorplan Database Needs Analysis



For this reason, we do not conclude that the number of features can be reduced. No one wanted to drop any feature, because the associated benefits were meaningful to the customers. Needs were different enough among the regions that the group of 31 features identified in this document appear to be comprehensive without being redundant.