NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ATTORNEYS GENERAL

TASK FORCE ON SCHOOL AND CAMPUS SAFETY

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Report and Recommendations

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ATTORNEYS GENERAL

TASK FORCE ON SCHOOL AND CAMPUS SAFETY

Co-Chairs
Colorado Attorney General John Suthers
Rhode Island Attorney General Patrick Lynch

Task Force Members

Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard
Arkansas Attorney General Dustin McDaniel
Georgia Attorney General Thurbert Baker
Guam Attorney General Alicia Limtiaco
Idaho Attorney General Lawrence Wasden
Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan
Kansas Attorney General Paul Morrison
Kentucky Attorney General Gregory Stumbo
Louisiana Attorney General Charles Foti, Jr.
Maryland Attorney General Douglas Gansler
Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley
Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood
Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning
Nevada Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto
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Pennsylvania Attorney General Tom Corbett
Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott
Utah Attorney General Mark Shurtleff
Washington Attorney General Rob McKenna
West Virginia Attorney General Darrell McGraw
Wisconsin Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen

Edited By:
Nick Alexander, NAAG Criminal Law Counsel

With Special Thanks To:
Jacqueline Fernandez, NAAG Criminal Law Clerk
Marland Holloway, NAAG Criminal Law Project Assistant

TASK FORCE ON SCHOOL AND CAMPUS SAFETY

Attorney General John Suthers

Attorney General Patrick Lynch

As co-chairs of the Task Force on School and Campus Safety formed by the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG), we are pleased to present a report and recommendations for your consideration. With assistance from nationally recognized experts in the field of school and campus security, the Task Force examined a number of issues that have again been thrust upon the public consciousness as a result of the recent tragedy on the campus of Virginia Tech and incidents of violence at schools across the country.

We are mindful that many jurisdictions are examining these issues and have formed task forces, issued reports, and proposed or implemented changes that best serve the particular needs of their communities. In many instances, state Attorneys General have led or actively participated in these efforts and the NAAG Task Force applauds these efforts.

The goal of this report is to stimulate dialogue among policy makers, educators, administrators, law enforcement professionals and others as they examine school and campus safety issues. By design, the report is not intended to be a comprehensive examination of any particular issue. It is our hope that the report will be used as a springboard for discussion among all stakeholders who seek to ensure a safe learning environment. A sampling of more detailed examinations of specific legal and policy issues can be found in the Resources section at the end of the report.

On behalf of the Task Force, we thank you for being engaged in this important local and national discussion. We hope you will find our report and recommendations of assistance to you.

John W. Suthers

John Suthers
Attorney General
State of Colorado

Patrick C. Lynch

Patrick Lynch
Attorney General
State of Rhode Island

INTRODUCTION

In 1999, the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) created a Task Force on Youth Violence and School Safety. In May of 1999, just weeks after the tragic incident at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, NAAG held a summit in Jackson, Mississippi, hosted by former Mississippi Attorney General and then NAAG President Michael Moore, to focus on reducing youth violence and making schools safer. In the fall of 1999, the Task Force issued its *Report and Recommendations to the States* based on information gathered at the summit. The document made recommendations regarding early childhood development, after school programs, volunteer mentoring programs, mechanisms for students to anonymously report threats, partnerships between schools and law enforcement, and the need for every school to design a safety and crisis management plan. The information in the 1999 report remains relevant and informative.

There have been numerous instances of school-related violence, including on college campuses, in the United States since 1999.[1] In April of this year, the worst incidence of violence at an American educational institution occurred at Virginia Tech University, resulting in the death of 33 people, including the gunman. The tragic event at Virginia Tech, and several other incidents preceding it, has brought focus to specific prevention issues including threat assessment, dealing with the mentally ill, and information sharing. It has also brought focus to a number of response-related issues including the preparation, revision and exercise of emergency plans and the implementation of crisis communications systems.

Shortly after the Virginia Tech incident, the President of NAAG, Georgia Attorney General Thurbert Baker, determined to establish an ad hoc Task Force on School and Campus Safety (Task Force) to consider what had transpired since the issuance of the previous NAAG report in 1999, including the incident at Virginia Tech, and issue a report making updated recommendations regarding the prevention of, and response to, violence in schools and on college campuses. To carry out its mission, the Task Force, chaired by Colorado Attorney General John Suthers and Rhode Island Attorney General Patrick Lynch, has reviewed numerous documents and conducted four (4) national telephone conferences during which it heard testimony from twelve (12) experts on school and campus safety.[2] By design, the expert testimony was focused primarily on the issues referenced above.

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[1] *See* Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, Major U.S. School Shootings since Columbine, http://www.bradycampaign.org/xshare/pdf/school-shootings.pdf (last visited on August 12, 2007); Infoplease, A Time Line of Recent Worldwide School Shootings, http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0777958.html (last visited on August 12, 2007); Associated Press Newswire, Some Fatal U.S. School Shootings, October 3, 2006.

[2] The first conference call, held on June 11, 2007, featured Dr. John Nicoletti of Nicoletti-Flater Associates and Doris Settles from the University of Kentucky. On July 5, 2007, Professor Peter Swire of the Ohio State University, Steven McDonald of the Rhode Island School of Design and Bob Dobek from the office of U.S. Representative Carolyn McCarthy presented information to the Task Force. The next call, held on July 17, 2007, featured presentations from Steven Healy of Princeton University and Christopher G. Blake, both from the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators and Kenneth S. Trump of National School Safety and Security Services. The final call, held on July 31, 2007, featured presentations by Mr. Trump, Jonathan Bernstein of Bernstein Crisis Management, Ronald Ellis of the Illinois Terrorism Task Force and

This report is a summary of the pertinent information gathered by the Task Force and it includes specific recommendations to educators, administrators, law enforcement, mental health providers and public policy makers. The Task Force is extremely grateful to all the experts that participated in our information gathering. The Task Force recognizes that a number of the recommendations are particular to either school or campus safety concerns. While it is clear that the two environments pose distinct security issues and face unique challenges in meeting safety needs, this report addresses topics which have broad relevance to both school and campus safety efforts. Further, the Task Force is mindful that the appropriate response to a security issue in one environment may be impractical in another, or that the ability of an educational institution to effectively implement one or more of the recommended strategies may be affected by factors including, but not limited to, student demographics, campus size and available resources.

It should be emphasized that this report and its recommendations should be viewed simply as a starting point for greater public discussion about the important public safety issues identified. Attorneys General, as the chief law enforcement officials in their respective jurisdictions, are committed to doing whatever is necessary to make our nation's schools and campuses as safe as possible.

PREVENTING VIOLENCE AT AMERICA'S SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Threat Assessment

In virtually all the incidents of school and campus violence that have occurred in America thus far, the perpetrator or perpetrators have been what experts have identified as "avengers," people who are responding to a real or perceived injustice and seeking vengeance.[3] Most of the perpetrators have been "malevolent insiders," students or school personnel known by the school or other students.[4] In rare instances the perpetrator has been a "malevolent outsider," unknown to the school community.[5]

While the perpetrators do not fit any definitive profile, research indicates that there are numerous aspects of the various incidents that seem to recur, particularly in the case of "insiders," which can be informative in examining how we assess possible threats to schools and campuses.[6] An analysis of school shooting incidents prepared by the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education indicates that in almost every incident involving an "insider" there were warning signs of the impending violence and frequently

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Illinois State Department of Education's Safe Schools program, Vicky Stormo from the University of Washington at Seattle and Alison Kiss from Security on Campus, Inc.

[3] Presentation by Dr. John Nicoletti to the Task Force on June 11, 2007. The concept of the "classroom avenger" was detailed by James P. McGee and Caren R. BeBernardo in their article, *The Classroom Avenger,* published in the FORENSIC EXAMINER, Vol. 8, Numbers 5 and 6, May-June 1999 (focused on elementary and secondary school violence). *See also* John Nicoletti and Sally Spencer-Thomas, *Violence Goes to School* (2002).

[4] *Id.*

[5] *Id.*

[6] *See generally* Bryan VosseKuil, et al., *The Final Report and Finding of the Safe Schools Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States* U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education (2002).

other persons were aware of the perpetrator's intentions.[7] The warning signs may include verbal threats, written threats, suicidal behavior, disturbing writings, self-produced videos and/or internet communications. The difficulty, of course, is in identifying and properly dealing with truly troubled individuals who pose a threat to the school community or themselves as opposed to those who simply display unconventional or neurotic behavior.

Bullying was recognized as an important issue in examining school violence. Research has shown that a majority of perpetrators felt bullied, threatened, or otherwise persecuted by others prior to the attack.[8] The growth in the use of technology and social networking sites by younger Americans has fueled a fear among professionals that cyber bullying will become the means most often utilized to harass, threaten or otherwise cause distress.[9] And while certainly more prevalent in the elementary and secondary school setting, issues related to bullying or intimidation are increasingly relevant in other, non-traditional settings. The Task Force recognizes that educators, parents, law enforcement and other stakeholders in school safety should remain vigilant in addressing bullying, including cyber bullying.[10]

After hearing from experts and reviewing a number of sources, the Task Force is convinced that schools and colleges cannot rely on unilateral threat assessment by teachers and other school personnel, but rather need to establish a system whereby all disturbing behavior by persons at the school or on the campus is reported to a "vortex" comprised of a central individual or team of individuals with expertise and training in threat assessment. This vortex has the responsibility to assess the incident(s) and information and carry out the appropriate response. This vortex will likely be different in an elementary, secondary, or post-secondary educational setting. The need for a threat assessment coordinator or taking a multidisciplinary approach to threat assessment has been highlighted by law enforcement before.[11] All relevant stakeholders, such as students, parents, faculty, etc., should be made aware of the existence of a specialized individual or team to which concerns may be reported.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. All schools and colleges should establish a system whereby disturbing behavior is reported to an individual or team of individuals with expertise and training that can

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[7] *Id. At 25-26*

[8] *See e.g. Id.* at 21 (citations omitted). "In several cases, individual attackers had experienced bullying and harassment that was long-standing and severe. In some of these cases the experience of being bullied seemed to have a significant impact on the attacker and appeared to have been a factor in his decision to mount an attack at the school. In one case, most of the attacker's schoolmates described the attacker as 'the kid everyone teased.' In witness statements from that incident, schoolmates alleged that nearly every child in the school had at some point thrown the attacker against a locker, tripped him in the hall, held his head under water in the pool or thrown things at him. Several schoolmates had noted that the attacker seemed more annoyed by, and less tolerant of, the teasing than usual in the days preceding the attack."

[9] Presentation by Doris Settles to the Task Force on June 11, 2007.

[10] For a summary on the prevalence of cyber bullying, *see* Amanda Lenhart, *Cyber Bullying and Teens*, Pew Internet and American Life Project (June 2007) at http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/216/report_display.asp.

[11] *See e.g.* MARY ELLEN O'TOOLE, FED. BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, THE SCHOOL SHOOTER: A THREAT ASSESSMENT PERSPECTIVE 21 (2000).

assess the information received and take action, when appropriate, including referring students or school personnel for assistance, receiving information back from those evaluating the referred person, and/or making recommendations to administrators concerning continued enrollment, continued employment, or other issues. Students, parents, faculty and other community stakeholders should be made aware of the reporting mechanism.

2. States should continue to implement and expand efforts to prevent bullying, including cyber bullying.

Referral and Information Sharing

Once an individual is determined to be a potential threat to school or campus safety by the individual or multi-disciplinary team responsible for threat assessment, the individual must be referred for appropriate intervention and the school or campus must be provided sufficient information to make appropriate decisions about continued enrollment and other issues related to safety.[12] The Task Force identified referral and information sharing regarding mentally ill individuals as one of the biggest problems currently facing schools and colleges.

While expert testimony to the Task Force differed somewhat as to the extent that federal laws, like the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)[13] and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)[14], actually impede the appropriate flow of information from schools to mental health providers and back to schools, it was recognized that there exists significant misunderstanding about the scope and application of these federal laws. This misunderstanding is limiting the transfer of critical information with the potential to impact school and campus safety. Experts suggested that targeted revisions of the federal laws specifically related to information sharing in the educational environment would likely be effective in helping to clarify the ability to share necessary information.

State medical and privacy laws are perceived by some education officials at all levels as obstacles to effective information sharing. This perception, and the accompanying misunderstanding of federal requirements and the interrelation between federal and state law, is causing a lack of information sharing to be a reality. A recent report to the President by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General highlighted this issue and found that a "consistent theme and broad perception...was that this confusion and differing interpretations about state and federal privacy laws and regulations impede appropriate information sharing."[15]

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[12] The framework of what constitutes "sufficient information" to be made available, including the use or discontinuation of psychotropic medications, is a complex issue and while the Task Force recognizes the necessity of addressing these questions at the policy-making level, it is outside of the scope of this report.
[13] 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (2000).
[14] 42 U.S.C. § 1320(d) (2000).
[15] U.S. DEP'TS OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, EDUCATION, & JUSTICE, REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT ON ISSUES RAISED BY THE VIRGINIA TECH TRAGEDY 1-22 (2007).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Federal agencies should develop additional guidance that clarifies how information, including mental health information, can be shared legally under federal statutes such as HIPAA and FERPA. Such guidance should be disseminated to mental health, education, and law enforcement communities and adequate training provided.

2. Federal lawmakers should consider a separate exception to HIPAA and FERPA (as opposed to amending an existing exception) to provide for sharing of information with schools and colleges that goes beyond the current "imminent danger" exception and provide that educational institutions and their employees are not liable for good faith efforts to protect students, faculty or staff.

3. State lawmakers should examine their respective privacy and mental health laws and consider changes to address identified barriers, if any, to effective information sharing.

Prohibiting Persons Adjudicated as Mentally Ill From Purchasing Firearms

Under current federal law, any person adjudicated by a court as a danger to himself or others, whether or not he is institutionalized, can be prohibited from purchasing a firearm.[16] However, as of April 2007, only twenty-three (23) states provided any information to the National Instant Criminal Background System (NICS) on persons disqualified from possessing firearms for reasons related to mental health[17] and virtually none of the states are providing information concerning mental health adjudications that do not include in-patient treatment.[18]

The efficacy of NICS largely depends on state and federal agencies reporting the relevant records. The General Accounting Office reported in 2000 that approximately 2.7 million individuals had mental health records that would have disqualified them from purchasing firearms had the records been submitted to NICS.[19] To be maximally effective in keeping firearms out of the hands of those persons prohibited by federal law from purchasing these weapons, including those prohibited by virtue of a disqualifying mental health history, all states need to understand the full scope of existing law and make all

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[16] Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act of 1993, Pub. L. No. 103-159, 107 Stat. 1536 (codified as amended at 18 U.S.C. §§ 921, 922 (1993)). 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(4) applies this prohibition to an individual "who has been adjudicated as a mental defective or who has been committed to a mental institution". The definition of "adjudicated as a mental defective" includes a person who is found by a court or other authority to be a danger to himself or others, unable to manage his own affairs, insane in a criminal case, incompetent to stand trial, or not guilty by lack of mental responsibility. "Committed to a mental institution" includes an involuntary commitment by a court or other authority, but does not include a voluntary admission. 27 C.F.R. § 478.11 (2006).

[17] REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT, *supra*, Note 15, at 10.

[18] *See generally*, U.S. DEP'T OF JUSTICE, BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, SURVEY OF STATE PROCEDURES RELATED TO FIREARM SALES 2005 (2006),

[19] U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE, GUN CONTROL: OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE NATIONAL INSTANT CRIMINAL BACKROUND CHECK SYSTEM 59 (2000). The estimation of 2.7 million was determined by the Office of Technology Assessment in concert with the Bureau of Justice Statistics in a report issued in 1991. OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT, AUTOMATED RECORD CHECKS OF FIREARM PURCHASERS: ISSUE AND OPTIONS, OTA-TCT-497, at 44 (1991).

appropriate information available to NICS, thereby closing the gap between the number of records which should be reported and those actually reported.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The U. S. Department of Justice should reiterate to all appropriate parties the scope and requirements of federal firearms laws and provide clear guidance on all federal firearms prohibitions, including those pertaining to mental health adjudications.

2. States should consider modifying or changing state laws as necessary to insure that all information that is relevant to federal firearms prohibitions can in fact be provided by the state to NICS.

Providing Anonymous Means for Students to Report Possible Threats to Public Safety

The 1999 report of the NAAG Task Force on Youth Violence and School Safety recommended that states develop a mechanism for students to anonymously report possible threats to school safety and we believe the experience of the intervening years support reiterating that recommendation in this report. Because students at all levels fear that teachers, administrators or parents may not keep their identities confidential, they will frequently decide to not divulge information about dangerous behavior on the part of other students. This should be addressed through the development of a reasonable and anonymous method of reporting potential threats to school or campus safety. Programs currently in place, particularly twenty-four hour telephone hotlines, have been quite successful, with student possession of weapons being the primary threat anonymously reported. The effective programs have trained professional adults following up on the information reported and have educational outreach programs to make students aware of the hotline. The success of such programs indicates that they should be conducted nationwide.

RECOMMENDATION:

States should develop and promote an effective system whereby students can anonymously report threats or dangerous behavior to school and campus authorities, as well as to law enforcement. The system should include educational outreach and effective follow-up by trained professionals.

PREPARING FOR AND RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE AT SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Preparing, Updating and Practicing Emergency Plans

In the aftermath of the Columbine tragedy in 1999, thirty-eight (38) states have mandated that K-12 schools or school districts prepare emergency management plans while schools in many of the remaining states have voluntarily adopted such plans.[20]

[20] Statement of Cornelia M. Ashby, Director of the Education, Workforce and Income Security division of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) before the House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, May, 17, 2007. The testimony was presented by way of a GAO report entitled EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: STATUS of SCHOOL DISTRICTS' PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS.

In addition to these state laws, most states also provide funding and other resources to school districts for emergency preparedness and response – 11 of the 49 jurisdictions (including the District of Columbia) responding to a recent survey reported providing state funding to school districts for this purpose. In addition, 47 states reported providing guidance and 37 states reported providing training to school districts.

Several of the state laws identify a broad range of specific emergencies that schools or districts are required to address in their plans. They include, but are not limited to: school shooting scenarios, intruder/hostage situations, bomb or bomb threats, terrorism, various natural disasters, radiological attack, anthrax and pandemic diseases. Good emergency management plans typically include the conduct of a comprehensive internal security assessment at least annually and an external professional assessment every three to five years. They also include regular training for administrators, teachers, and support staff and orientation training for new employees.

But the testimony of experts to our Task Force and the recent report to Congress by the Governmental Accounting Office[21], indicate that too many emergency management plans have become stale and outdated in the past several years, and that most schools are not conducting regular exercises to test their plans or revise them as necessary. Further, the majority of school districts that have emergency management plans are not involving community partners, including law enforcement, in developing, practicing and updating their plans.[22] This type of planning can be complicated by the fact that many schools are used as venues for non-educational activities that do not directly involve the school administration or the educational mission.[23] While the Task Force recognizes that schools are vital components of the community and serve as important community centers and civic spaces, school administrators should remain vigilant in assessing potential dangers that may result from opening up the school environment to risks posed by malevolent outsiders, especially when the primary population of the school is present.

The Task Force is convinced that safety plans are essential for colleges and universities as well, while at the same time recognizing that such plans at the post-secondary level are significantly different than those at elementary and secondary schools. While the development of effective safety plans for post-secondary institutions may involve the consideration of many factors unique to that environment (such as student demographics and mobility, on-campus housing, campus size and distribution over a large number of buildings, etc.), the development, practice and revision of such plans is a crucial component of addressing campus security issues.

While the particular contours of school and campus safety issues will vary depending on factors such as size (both in terms of geography and student/faculty population), location (urban vs. rural) and other variables, multi-hazard emergency planning is not a recent development. In fact each jurisdiction is already under the

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[21] *Id.*
[22] *Id. See also, generally,* Presentation by Kenneth Trump to the Task Force on July 17, 2007.
[23] Presentation by Kenneth Trump to the Task Force on July 17, 2007.

obligation to comply with Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5, "Management of Domestic Incidents" (HSPD 5), which requires states, territories, tribal entities, and local jurisdictions to adopt the National Incident Management System (NIMS) in order to strengthen our nation's prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Finally, expert testimony indicated that the reporting of crimes on college campuses under federal law[24], and the reporting of violent incidents at schools under various state laws, is inconsistent and inaccurate and does not promote true accountability on the part of schools and colleges in terms of their dealing with public safety issues.[25]

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. States should consider requiring that all schools and colleges, as a condition of receiving state funding, create, maintain, and update emergency management plans. These schools and colleges should be required to conduct exercises, to include lockdown drills if appropriate, no less than annually and the state should establish audit mechanisms to ensure compliance with these requirements. Such exercises should involve students, faculty, staff, first responders, and other community stakeholders.

2. Schools, colleges and law enforcement agencies receiving state grants to prepare and implement emergency management plans should be required to include all community partners in planning and training done pursuant to the grant.

3. School and campus safety, security and emergency planning and training should be adequately funded. Schools and colleges should be a priority for the receipt of state emergency preparedness grants and federal grants through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of Justice.

4. Schools and colleges should be included in all-hazards training, including anti-terrorism training, which focuses on particular vulnerabilities to educational environments, such as the use of school buses, events that attract large crowds, etc.

5. All jurisdictions should examine their compliance with HSPD 5 and their adoption of NIMS to leverage resources used for such compliance in addressing school and campus safety issues.

6. Both the federal government and the states should have crime and violence reporting requirements for schools and colleges that promote accuracy, full disclosure and accountability. Mechanisms by which compliance with such reporting requirements are monitored, such as under the federal Clery Act, should be strengthened.

7. Campus public safety departments should meet the highest standards possible, including accreditation and training by appropriate organizations where feasible.

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[24] Primarily under the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, part of the Campus Security Act, Pub. L. No. 101-452, 1990 (codified as amended at 18 U.S.C. § 1092(f)).
[25] Presentation by Alison Kiss to the Task Force on July 31, 2007.

Upgrading Crisis Communication Systems for College Campuses

The tragedy at Virginia Tech evidenced the need for effective crisis communications on college campuses, whereby students and campus personnel can be timely advised of any actual threat to their safety. Given current technology and the reality that most students now carry mobile communication devices on their person, colleges can implement multi-modal means of communication ranging from low tech systems (such as loud speakers), to high tech delivery mechanisms (including text messaging and web-based incident command systems).[26] In order to take advantage of the technology available, and to ensure communications are properly received, campus administrators must ensure that the contact information for students, faculty and staff is kept current on at least an annual basis.

The crisis communications infrastructure must be bolstered to be able to accommodate the influx of communications in the aftermath of an incident and subsequent notification by the campus. Related to this idea of infrastructure sufficiency is recognition that redundancy of crisis communications systems is a critical component of implementing an effective strategy to manage crisis communications. If local communication systems are damaged or otherwise non-operational, there should be the availability of back-up communication systems significantly removed from the campus.

Again it appears that while most colleges have emergency communication plans in place, they do not regularly test and upgrade such plans or actively include students and faculty in exercises implementing the plans.[27] College administrators must overcome any faculty, staff or student resistance to conducting meaningful exercises. These exercises do not necessarily have to shut down the school or campus. The ability to use "functional exercises" to practice specific components of a response to an incident afford planners a myriad of exercise options - from those which would have little to no impact on the operation of the educational environment to full scale practice of a major event involving the participation of students, faculty, first responders and other community stakeholders.[28]

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Colleges should conduct vulnerability audits to identify flaws in existing communication systems, including testing the adequacy of existing system capacities.

2. Colleges should implement a multi-point, redundant communication system that leverages existing technology and provides information to the largest number of people possible. The system must be adequate to quickly reach a "tipping point" of students, faculty and other personnel. That means that enough people in enough places are alerted to assure that virtually everyone on campus will be aware of the emergency in a very short period of time. Colleges should ensure that mechanisms are in place to update contact information for students, faculty and staff on at least an annual basis.

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[26] Presentation by Jonathan Bernstein to the Task Force on July 31, 2007.
[27] *Id. See also, generally,* Presentation by Ron Ellis to the Task Force on July 31, 2007.
[28] *Id.*

3. Colleges should conduct necessary training, test and practice emergency management plans, including crisis communication plans, and involve all aspects of the campus community and local law enforcement in regular exercises. Colleges should establish a crisis communication team which is separate from, but coordinates with, emergency responders.

CONCLUSION

The issue of school and campus safety is one of enormous importance to the nation as a whole and to each and every community within it. Attorneys General, who often serve as the leader within their respective jurisdictions on public safety matters, are deeply concerned with the ability of students to learn in an environment that is secure as possible from the threat of violence. Each tragic event refocuses attention on the need to bolster the ability of our educational institutions to prevent and respond to these horrific occurrences. The issues are not new. Instead, they are once again brought to the forefront of our collective consciousness as we attempt to learn and adapt to threats both from within and without. This Task Force report is brief and concise by design. Neither the report nor the recommendations set forth in it are intended to comprehensively address all issues related to school and campus safety. Rather, the purpose of the report is to update and complement a previous NAAG Task Force Report issued in 1999 and to address a few specific issues related to the prevention of and response to violence in schools and on college campuses. These issues, involving threat assessment, information sharing, preparing and implementing emergency plans and crisis communications, were readily identifiable in the aftermath of the tragedy at Virginia Tech and other school-related incidents that have occurred since 1999. The objective of the NAAG Task Force on School and Campus Safety and this report is to promote meaningful discussion among school administrators, educators, law enforcement professionals, public policy makers and mental health professionals as to how schools and colleges can be made as safe as reasonably possible without unduly interfering with their educational mission. The States' Attorneys General look forward to an ongoing discussion on the topics addressed.

RESOURCES

The following is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of school and campus safety resources – rather, it is designed to be a starting point for those looking to examine some of the key issues involved.

Reports & Publications

Colorado School Violence Prevention and Student Discipline Manual
Colorado State Attorney General
http://www.ago.state.co.us

Cyber Bullying and Teens
Amanda Lehart
Pew Internet and American Life Project (June 2007)
http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/216/report_display.asp

Emergency Management: Status of School Districts' Planning and Preparedness
Cornelia M. Ashby
Statement by GAO to House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security
(May 17, 2007)
http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d07821t.pdf

The Final Report and Finding of the Safe Schools Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States
U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education (2002)
www.secretservice.gov/ntac/ssi_final_report.pdf

Gun Control: Options for Improving the National Instant Criminal Background Check System
Laurie E. Ekstrand
U.S. General Accounting Office (2000)
http://www.gao.gov/archive/2000/gg00163t.pdf

NSSC Review of School Safety Research
National School Safety Center
http://www.schoolsafety.us/pubfiles/school_crime_and_violence_statistics.pdf

Report of the Virginia Tech Review Panel
http://www.governor.virginia.gov/TempContent/techPanelReport.cfm

Report to the President on Issues Raised by the Virginia Tech Tragedy
U.S. Departments of Health & Human Services, Education, Justice (2007)
www.hhs.gov/vtreport.html

The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective
Mary Ellen O'Toole, PhD
Federal Bureau of Investigation (2000)
www.fbi.gov/publications/school/school2.pdf

Violence Goes to College
John Nicoletti & Sally Spencer-Thomas
Published November 2001, Charles C. Thomas Ltd.

Violence Goes to School
John Nicoletti & Sally Spencer-Thomas
Published January 2002, Solution Tree Publishers

Organizations

International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators
www.iaclea.org

National Association of College and University Attorneys
www.nacua.org

National Campaign to End School Violence
www.ribbonofpromise.org

National Education Association
www.nea.org/schoolsafety

National Parent Teacher Association
www.pta.org

National School Safety Center
www.schoolsafety.us

National School Safety and Security Services
www.schoolsecurity.org

National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center
www.safeyouth.org

School Violence Resource Center
University of Arkansas
www.svrc.net

Security on Campus, Inc.
http://www.securityoncampus.org

University of Kentucky Center for School Safety
http://www.kysafeschools.org

Youth Crime Watch
www.ycwa.org

Federal Resources
Department of Education
Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS)
http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs

Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/default.asp?Item=1588

National Institute of Justice
http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/topics/schools/technology.htm

Selected Federal Statutes
Brady Handgun Violence Protection Act of 1993
Pub. L. No. 103-159, 107 Stat. 1536 (Nov. 30, 1993), codified at 18 U.S.C. § 921 and 18 U.S.C. § 922
Act available:
http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/laws/majorlaw/h1025_en.htm

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
20 U.S.C. § 1232g (2000)
Outline available:
http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
42 U.S.C. § 1320(d) (2000)
Statute & Fact Sheets Available:
http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/

Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy & Campus Crime Statistics Act (1990)
Part of Campus Security Act, Pub. L. No. 101-452, 1990 (Codified as amended at 18 U.S.C. § 1092(f))
Handbook available:
http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/campus.html