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Commission Against Gun Violence Proposed Recommendations

1 August 2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mayor Sylvester Turner established the Commission Against Gun Violence on May 23, 2018 following the tragedies in Parkland, Florida and Santa Fe, Texas, and in recognition of the wider gun violence epidemic tearing across our nation. The Mayor charged the Commission with submitting an initial set of recommendations for review prior to the school year beginning, no later than August 1, 2018. This first set of recommendations was to focus, primarily, on school safety issues. The proposals contained within this document are in accordance with that charge and follow substantial research conducted by the various sub-committees, as well as public testimony and comment.

The Chair divided the Commission into seven sub-committees: School Safety; Students Sub-Committee; Community Safety; Firearms Safety and Access; Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; Community-Based Prevention, Intervention, and Reintegration; and, Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue. These sub-committees cross-coordinated to gather, review, and submit initial recommendations in the following areas:

1. School Safety
2. Firearms Safety and Access
3. Community Safety
4. Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

The recommendations offered here, for the most part, address primary and secondary prevention of gun violence in schools. Many of these recommendations are, however, relevant across the entire community and extend beyond the classroom.

The Commission would like to thank the local universities, independent school districts, law enforcement officials, faith-based organizations, student and parent outreach groups, concerned gun owners and dealers, and other community organizations who offered their testimony and feedback to the Commissioners.

Haley Carter, Commission Chair

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Rev. William Lawson

Rabbi Samuel Karff

Archbishop Joseph Fiorenza

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Andrew Yoo

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Marcel McClinton

Dan Snare

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Abdul Haleem Muhammad, PhD

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School Safety

Community Safety

Student Sub-Committee

Firearms Safety & Access

Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault

Community-Based Prevention, Intervention, & Reintegration

Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue

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SCHOOL SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

Arming Teachers Programs & Policies

Brief summary of recommendation: Arming teachers is not a viable proposition.

Although the principle of arming teachers is not necessarily a bad proposal, the issue that comes into play, and renders the proposal inadequate and dangerous, is the training time and continuing education required to be sufficiently skilled to use a firearm in a high-stress situation. The current requirements proposed by the State do not come close to satisfying this need.

The lack of training not only puts the students at risk, but the armed teachers as well. Law enforcement and first responders entering buildings where an active shooter situation is taking place have expressed concerns over the difficulty of recognizing who with a gun is “friendly” in those situations.

The proposition of arming teachers is not popular on many educational campuses. For example, Rice University recently held a vote in which current students, alumni, parents, staff, and others participated. Overwhelmingly, all groups voted “no” to allowing teachers to carry guns (98%).

If teachers want to be armed, which, based on surveys done, they do not, then rigorous training and continuing education training must be implemented. Law enforcement and security professionals can provide recommended standards for this.

There are, however, some volunteer Marshall programs with are run on a volunteer basis of hiring Security Resource Officers or retired veterans – however, we believe that arming teachers is not a viable option.

Submitting Sub-Committee: School Safety

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Andrew Yoo

Potentially impacted City departments: HISD Police, HPD and other law enforcement

Statutory reference (if applicable): N/A

Potential partners: law enforcement, private security companies, military specialists, parents, teachers, students

Potential opposition: state officials, parents

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): N/A

Anonymous Reporting Apps

Brief summary of recommendation: Create a reporting process for teachers and school personnel that addresses active shooter and other emergency situations on a school campus and assists students in anonymous reporting via mobile phone or laptop. Multiple options for mobile applications are available for implementation and we recommend that the City review and select one for investment and implementation in coordination with HISD.

Submitting Sub-Committee: School Safety

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Andrew Yoo

Potentially impacted City departments: Houston Independent School District, Great Houston are School Districts, HPD, HPD HISD

Statutory reference (if applicable):

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data:

Rave Reporting App - Rave Guardian helps to lower the barrier to communicate through easy-to-send text messages and discreet anonymous tips. Users currently communicate this way and now they can instantly connect to report an incident or request help. Texts and tips are routed based on categories you define and only the designated team will receive the geo-tagged texts or tips in real time, allowing them to respond instantly with two-way messaging. You never have to worry about the wrong department or person viewing or sharing sensitive information. Rave Guardian virtually escorts users with a few clicks of a button. They choose to have their peers or security monitor their walk, ensuring they get to their destination safely. If a problem arises, security is immediately notified and can view the user's location and key profile information. If a situation escalates at any time, an emergency call is just one click away for the user. Not every alert requires you to notify your entire community. If a user is traveling abroad or near a disaster, such as an active shooter, terrorist attack, localized weather threats or other regional hazards, you can identify those specific users and send them a targeted notification through the Rave Alert Mass Notification System. Once they're identified, you can communicate with them through two-way messaging to determine their status and develop action plans for a coordinated response. If messaging data is down or at maximum capacity, users will still receive push notifications over Wi-Fi.

See Something, Say Something – The Say Something Anonymous Reporting System allows school districts to enable students and adults to submit secure and anonymous

safety concerns to help identify and intervene upon at-risk individuals before they hurt themselves or others. Users can report observed threats, behaviors, actions and harassment like bullying or a student talking about planning an attack. Easily accessible and free.

Classroom Connect Report It App – Offer an anonymous reporting process for students. Addresses active shooter and other emergency situations on a school campus. is a powerful and simple to use smartphone platform that helps students, staff and visitors instantly engage with school officials and security partners, all from a *single app*. Whether it be bullying, social media observations, security threats or suspicious activity concerns, **Report It** alerts the right people **anonymously** and **confidentially**

<https://www.ravemobilesafety.com/panic-button>

https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/anonymous_reporting_system

<https://www.saysomething.net>

<https://reportit.com/reportit-solutions/classroom-connect/>

Potential partners: HISD, HISD PD, HPD

Potential opposition: Opposition from appropriations of school funds.

Estimated financial impact (if applicable):

Rave Reporting App -Approximate- \$1,500-1,900 per school in the district, the more schools enrolled, less the cost. An individual school is \$3,500. Unlimited users.

See Something Say Something App – Free online resource

Report It App – Free download

Digital Sandbox/Fusion Center

Brief summary of recommendation: Houston Police Department in conjunction with Fusion Centers from the state and federal government share information amongst each other. Command Centers, Mobile Data Terminals, and Field Applications can receive instant information about infrastructure of schools as they approach a hostile situation. We recommend that all schools in Houston Independent School District participate in this program by providing CAD drawings and digital blueprints to the Digital Sandbox.

Submitting Sub-Committee: School Safety

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Andrew Yoo

Potentially impacted City departments: HPD, HISD Police, COH Homeland Security, First Responders

Statutory reference (if applicable):

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: Fusion centers operate as state and major urban area focal points for the receipt, analysis, gathering, and sharing of threat-related information between federal; state, local, and private sector partners. Information sharing hubs that provide resources, expertise, and information to support terrorism and crime prevention, as well as public safety efforts across multiple disciplines. Owned and operated by state and local authorities. All maintain consistent staffing levels to provide ongoing information sharing coordination and support. Fusion centers can provide situational awareness to Emergency Operation Centers on emerging or potential threats so that they may be appropriately informed and prepared for activation.

If school districts wish to share blueprint infrastructures of their schools this information can be uploaded into the Sand Box that will distribute this information to emergency responders and personnel that are arriving upon a scene of disturbance. The Sand Box is a cloud mechanism that allows information sharing instantly.

Potential partners: Law enforcement, school administrators, City of Houston, First Responders, Crime Stoppers, Command Centers

Potential opposition: School boards in regard to their privacy

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): To be finalized for remaining HISD campuses not yet on the program. City contact is Jack Griffin.

Micro Drones use for Community, Schools, and Church Safety

Brief summary of recommendation: The use of Micro Drones to take photos of school building churches and malls, and other designated venues to support law enforcement and enhance community safety. With advancements in technology and a decrease in the cost of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), unmanned aircraft have become more common in communities and as tools of law enforcement. While “drones” can be useful for agencies as eyes in the sky in active shooter cases, at crime scenes, and during SWAT operations,

drones can run through hallways and clear them; can view via phone or with goggles; can be used for trainings (video playback), save time and can cover more ground quickly. We recommend that Houston Independent School District schools invest in micro-drones for use and employment on their campuses.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Community Safety

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Cornelius C. Blackshear

Potentially impacted City departments: Administration, Houston and Community Development, HPD, HFD, HCSO

Statutory reference (if applicable): NA

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine’s Unmanned Aircraft Systems advisory group met regularly from November 2016 to June 2017 and consulted with Ohio law enforcement agencies to develop a model law enforcement policy for the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS); create recommendations on best practices and protocols that agencies can consider when creating UAS policies; and look at advanced training courses that focus on the practical uses of UAS. UAS, commonly referred to as “drones,” can be used by law enforcement for a number of investigative purposes, such as crime scene and traffic accident investigations, missing persons cases, SWAT operations, and active shooter incidents. The use of UAS for law enforcement purposes, however, is relatively new and has prompted privacy and safety concerns among citizens.

<https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Files/Publications-Files/Publications-for-Law-Enforcement/Advisory-Group-on-Unmanned-Aircraft-Systems-Final>

14 Recommendations for Drone use by law enforcement.

<https://www.firerescue1.com/fire-products/drones/press-releases/376048017-Leading-drone-training-company-announces-public-safety-grant-program-featuring-100-000-in-training-scholarships/>

The number of public safety agencies using drones has increased by approximately 82 percent in the last year, with at least 910 state and local police, fire and public safety departments having acquired unmanned aerial systems in recent years.

That data comes from a May report from the Center for the Study of the Drone at Bard College in an update to its April 2017 database on public safety agencies with drones.

Other key findings include:

- Law enforcement agencies make up two-thirds (599) of the public safety agencies with drones.
- Twenty-eight states have at least one statewide public safety agency with drones, up from 17 states in the previous estimate.
- DJI is by far the most popular drone manufacturer, with 523 agencies using various DJI models.
- Agencies have on average three drones per department.
- The average cost of acquiring one or more drones is \$18,117, and funding sources include donations, grants and seized or forfeited funds in addition to budgeted monies.
- The majority of agencies that operate drones did not previously possess their own manned aerial capability.

<https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Texas-Department-of-Public-Safety-launches-new-12617706.php>

<https://unmanned-aerial.com/ohio-advisory-group-14-recommendations-drone-use-law-enforcement>

School safety plan for drone use

<http://www.dispatch.com/news/20180620/dewine-offering-drone-photos-of-schools-for-safety-plans>

Drone use in Public Safety

<https://www.thedroneu.com/blog/drones-can-used-public-safety/>

<https://www.simulyze.com/blog/the-impact-of-drones-on-the-future-of-public-safety>

Potential partners: <https://www.droneworksstudios.com/>

<http://www.droneshouston.com/>

<https://www.southerndronesolutions.com/>

Houston Police Department, Houston Fire Department, Sheriff's Department, Local School Districts, Churches.

Potential opposition: Privacy concerns, Cost Concerns

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): Estimated \$1,000.00 per micro-drone

Police Presence on Campus

Brief summary of recommendation: We recommend that each school campus in HISD have one police officer on campus at all times. Statistics show that whenever an active shooter is confronted with law enforcement one of three things will occur: the shooter will kill him/herself; the shooter will give up; or the shooter will be shot by law enforcement ending the event. The average police response time to an active shooter event nationwide is between 3-5 minutes under the best of circumstances. The responding officer may then take an addition 1-2 minutes to locate the shooter, making the true response time an approximate 5-7 minutes. If there is already a campus officer on site, response time can be reduced to 1-2 minutes because the officer is already there and knows the layout of the facility. The lesson of Santa Fe is that even one officer responding quickly can make a difference in saving lives.

Submitting Sub-Committee: School Safety

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Andrew Yoo

Potentially impacted City departments: This will not impact COH resources, but will impact the relevant Independent School Districts.

Statutory reference (if applicable): None

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: N/A

Potential partners: Area ISD Police Chiefs

Potential opposition: The Governor's Office tends to favor the School Marshal program, i.e., arming faculty and staff members, who have limited tactical and legal training. Also, they may not be in the correct mindset whenever something happens unexpectedly.

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): The cost of an ISD Officer is approximately the cost of an additional teacher or counselor, providing that there is already an existing ISD police department in place. If there is no ISD police department and there are no plans to establish one, the best route is to contract with a local law enforcement agency to provide one on a contractual basis.

Improving Infrastructure and Design of Security Measures on Campus

Brief summary of recommendation: We need “active shooter” building codes, the same way a building must pass a fire code. All main entrances should be fortified with bullet resistant glass and remote or card access locking doors. Buildings should be designed not only for functionality of the learning process, but also for the protection of its occupants. Many modern designs utilize glass for “walls” and this is totally unacceptable when it comes to securing a classroom. All safe-haven rooms must have doors that lock from the inside. Solid wood doors or metal doors are best. Ideally all campuses would have an “active shooter” alarm system that alerts police and locks down all rooms remotely (single button lockdown capability). Ideally all campuses would have “shot-spotter” technology that alerts dispatch of shots fired on campus, gives video feed to dispatch and even gives the type of weapon being used.

Metal detectors are not a reasonable solution in addressing school security and hardening infrastructure unless they are part of a much wider, highly coordinated system of improved infrastructure and involvement with local police presence. Metal detectors, alone, would create new issues for law-enforcement and school administrators and is not conducive to creating a supportive educational environment for Texas’ children. Metal detectors are not only expensive hardware, but require 2-3 operators per site, creating a drain on law enforcement resources and increasing the total cost of ownership.

In addition to the high cost of implementation, metal detectors can create significant waiting times for students trying to get into school, and long processing lines that can go outside and sometimes wrap around buildings. The long lines create a *new* target for would-be attackers. Law enforcement cannot protect students waiting in long lines outside of a secured area.

Submitting Sub-Committee: School Safety / Community Based Prevention, Intervention, Reintegration

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Andrew Yoo

Potentially impacted City departments: This will not impact COH resources, but will impact the relevant Independent School Districts.

Statutory reference (if applicable): Possible COH Ordinance of requiring all campuses to “meet code” for active shooter deterrence/resilience.

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: We spoke with architects, law enforcement officials, local school security experts and students.

Potential partners: Architects, contractors, law enforcement, students

Potential opposition: Educators who don't see the value in target hardening; budgetary constraints, parents, elected officials, school administrators

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): Unknown; retrofitting should be the cheapest alternative. There are a number of after-market solutions available.

Mentorship In-School Program

Brief summary of recommendation: We recommend that a program be established in which community members and parents can volunteer to mentor a student for the school year at least once a week. Mentorship efforts from the broader community help students who go through academic, behavioral, or domestic issues find another adult figure in their life to alleviate their problems and help focus on future goals. Having effective social-engagement with students who are referred to by teachers, counselors, or even parents can help contribute productive dialogue between mentors and mentees, leading to more successful academic performance, disciplined behavior, and overall better individual choices. Social mentorship weaved in the education process can potentially help students who are suffering through a mental illness be given the right guidance and preventive measures of violence through a practical method. This in turn, can be a long-term approach to reducing the amount of violence as a whole in schools as well as recognizing potential triggers in an individual who may be in need of proper aid.

Submitting Sub-Committee: School Safety

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Andrew Yoo

Potentially impacted City departments: Department of Neighborhoods

Statutory reference (if applicable): H.R.2952 Foster Youth Mentoring Act of 2017

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data:

<https://www.cfid.net/en/community-involvement/community-engagement/mentor/>

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, businesses

Potential opposition: Parents who refuse to let their child be mentored

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): Volunteer Service by Mentors

Violence Prevention Curriculum

Brief summary of recommendation: Students are not generally exposed to the symptoms of potential violence triggers and general knowledge of how to report, prevent, or intervene accordingly in a situation of violence. We recommend that workshops or an In-School Curriculum be developed and taught to students who may be at high-risk of violence. Teachers and Counselors trained by existing programs focused on violence-prevention strategies will help students be equipped with a basic foundation on how to act. This in turn, will allow “see something, say something” to be more frequented and students themselves taking the right steps to prevent violence in their own social circles as much as possible through proper education and training.

Submitting Sub-Committee: School Safety / Community Based Prevention, Intervention, Reintegration

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Andrew Yoo

Potentially impacted City departments: Library & Health Department

Statutory reference (if applicable): H.R.2757

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: N/A

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, National Center for Violence Prevention in Center for Disease Control

Potential opposition: Perpetrators of violence

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): School bond resources

FBI BAU Pre-Attack Behaviors

Brief summary of recommendation: “*A STUDY OF THE PRE-ATTACK BEHAVIORS OF ACTIVE SHOOTERS IN THE UNITED STATES BETWEEN 2000 AND 2013*” is a report by the FBI Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU) describing how in the weeks to months before an attack, many active shooters engage in behaviors that may signal impending violence. While many of these behaviors are intentionally concealed, others are observable and – if recognized and reported - may lead to a disruption prior to the attack. We recommend all faculty, administrative staff, counselors and others who

work in schools (K-12) read this 27-page report to familiarize themselves with identifiable behaviors of students and others in need of intervention.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: David Persse, MD

Potentially impacted City departments: None

Statutory reference (if applicable): None

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: N/A

Potential partners: School Districts

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): Cost of distributing hard or electronic copies of the report, and monitoring to ensure compliance with directive to read the document.

Mental and Behavioral Health Resources

Brief summary of recommendation: In conjunction with reading the FBI BAU report, we recommend that more resources be made available to students and staff to appropriately respond to suspicious or concerning behaviors that result in resolution of the inciting factors, not enhancing the stressors on the individual. These resources should be available for persons to benefit from on their own and not limited to referrals due to suspicion only. Additionally, a culture needs to be established within the school environment that supports persons asking for help as well as ensuring confidentiality of the identities of those who ask for help.

Submitting Sub-Committee: School Safety / Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue, Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: David Persse, MD

Potentially impacted City departments: HISD

Statutory reference (if applicable): N/A

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: • For corroboration of this critical point, among other sources, see the Department of Justice publication shared with the full committee, “A Study of the Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters in the United States between 2000 and 2018.” (June 2018).

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs

Potential opposition: Perpetrators of violence

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): School bond resources

Coordinated Quarterly Meetings with School Safety Stakeholders

Brief summary of recommendation: We recommend that the City of Houston hold coordinated discussions where stakeholders from every facet and spectrum of the school safety and gun violence debate can come together in a quarterly meeting to discuss positive changes that can be made in order to ensure our kids are safe in schools. Law Enforcement, ISDs, and other community entities need a forum where information sharing can occur directly and effectively between them.

Submitting Sub-Committee: School Safety

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Andrew Yoo

Potentially impacted City departments: Scheduling and Resources

Statutory reference (if applicable):

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data:

<https://www.finance.nsw.gov.au/ict/sites/default/files/resources/Fact%20Sheet%20-%20Benefits%20of%20Information%20Sharing.pdf>

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, Law Enforcement, Elected officials, Gun rights advocates, March for our Lives, etc

Potential opposition: Finance Department

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): Fees for the City of Houston to garner a working space for a quarterly meeting.

Stop the Bleed Campaign

Brief summary of recommendation: Launched in October of 2015 by the White House, in conjunction with the American College of Surgeons, FEMA, HHS, and the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences; *Stop the Bleed* is a national awareness campaign and call-to-action. Stop the Bleed is intended to cultivate grassroots efforts that encourage bystanders to become trained, equipped, and empowered to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives. The training consists of the appropriate and correct application of bleeding control techniques including the use of tourniquets. We recommend that this training be provided to all staff within HISD.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: David Persse, MD

Potentially impacted City departments: None

Statutory reference (if applicable): None

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: [Insert here]

Potential partners: Southeast Texas Regional Advisory Council, Local Trauma Centers

Potential opposition: School Districts

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): Cost of Stop the Bleed kit prices range from \$75 to \$300 depending on how many supplies are included in each kit.

FIREARMS SAFETY AND ACCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen the Current Texas Safe Firearm Storage Laws

Brief summary of recommendation: Twenty-seven states and the District of Columbia have laws addressing children's access to firearms. Texas first passed its law regarding safe storage of firearms around children, Texas Penal Code 46.13, in 1995.

Although Texas has a safe firearm storage law codified as Texas Penal Code 46.13, changes to this law may fill enforcement gaps and make it a more useful tool to law enforcement and for public safety. In the first twenty years of this law, more than 200 people were arrested for violating the law, but there were only 61 convictions⁴⁸.

Recommendation: To help ensure firearm safety, make three modifications to the Texas gun storage law:

1. Firearm storage law should be changed to include 17-year olds. Under current law, "child" means a person younger than 17 years of age. The murderer at Santa Fe high school was already 17, and thus his parents were not obligated to securely store their firearms under this law. Changing this definition to include persons under 18 years of age would enhance the safe storage requirements of the law. Oklahoma and fifteen other states already use the age of 18 for this requirement. This law could also be expanded to cover preventing access to firearms for children under 18-year olds who have been adjudicated as having engaged in delinquent conduct in the juvenile justice system, or have been convicted of crimes of violence as an adult.

2. Clarify "readily dischargeable" statutory definition. One barrier to prosecution may be the requirement that the firearm be "readily dischargeable" in order to create any criminal liability. This requires prosecutors to prove that the firearm was stored loaded with ammunition when it was accessed by the child. This requirement is difficult to prove, absent an admission by the parent or child. A better practice would be the elimination of the "readily dischargeable" requirement. This would require the secure storage of a firearm around children, whether it is loaded or not. This is also consistent with the best practice of storing a firearm separately from ammunition, as encouraged by the U.S. Concealed Carry Association and firearm manufacturers.

3. Increase the penalty level to a 3rd degree felony when access results in death or serious bodily injury. The penalties for a violation are currently low. Studies on the effectiveness of child access protection laws have demonstrated that the highest reductions in firearm fatalities are seen in states that provide for felony prosecution of violations. These penalties should be enhanced under certain situations to emphasize the danger that unauthorized possession of a firearm poses. Currently, if a child does not cause death or serious bodily injury with the firearm, it is only a Class C misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum of a \$500 fine. Even if the child causes death or serious bodily injury as a result of gaining access to the firearm, it is only a Class A misdemeanor,

punishable by up to a year in county jail. This penalty should be raised to the level of a 3rd degree felony when access results in death or serious bodily injury. Other possibilities include penalty enhancements if a firearm is subsequently brought to a school or if access is the result of knowing or reckless conduct by a parent, rather than simple criminal negligence.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Firearms Safety & Access / Community-Based Prevention, Intervention, and Reintegration

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Dan Snare

Potentially impacted City departments: Houston Police Department – Houston City Attorney

Statutory reference (if applicable): [Texas Penal Code 46.13](#)

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data:

“Texas rarely prosecutes people who fail to secure guns from children,” Austin American-Statesman, Ciara O’Rourke, March 27, 2015. Online at: https://www.mystatesman.com/news/crime--law/texas-rarely-prosecutes-people-who-fail-secure-guns-from-children/YtGFUXFp9hVLHojdq5FULL/?icmp=statesman_internallink_invitationbox_apr2013_statesmans_tubtomystatesmanpremium#0d1b3b98.3554830.735685

It does appear that 46.13 is used as a basis for civil liability more often than for direct prosecution. See *Perez v. Lopez*, 74 S.W.3d 60 (Tex. App. 8th Dist. 2002); <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/houston/article/Family-of-teen-killed-in-Santa-Fe-shooting-seeks-12942630.php>

This change would also bring 46.13 into better agreement with other sections of the Texas Penal Code. See *Harvey v. State*, 123 S.W.3d 623, 629-30 (Tex. Ct. App. 6th Dist. 2003) “In numerous other definitions, to be a ‘child’ or ‘minor,’ the individual simply must be under eighteen years of age.”

“‘Readily dischargeable firearm’ means a firearm that is loaded with ammunition, whether or not a round is in the chamber.” Texas Penal Code 46.13(a)(2).

<https://www.usconcealedcarry.com/properly-store-firearms/>

<http://www.waltherarms.com/walther-support/safety/#>

<http://www.nber.org/papers/w11613.pdf>

Potential partners: March for Our Lives, Moms Demand Action, Everytown for Gun Safety, Be Smart for Kids, Texas Gun Sense, and many other gun safety organizations.

Potential opposition: There may be opposition from some gun rights organizations and/or individuals. These recommendations, however, are made with input for responsible gun owners and members of the firearms community.

Estimated financial impact (if applicable):

It will require significantly increased and sustained enforcement, as well as prosecution, for these recommendations and these statutes to have an impact. This will ultimately have a potentially significant impact on enforcement and prosecution costs.

Modify Current Texas Safe Firearm Storage Law to Apply in all Settings

Brief summary of recommendation: The safe storage of firearms should be a legal responsibility of all gun owners to prevent and/or reduce the incidence of any unauthorized individual – regardless of age or relationship to the gun owner - accessing firearms that are not stored in gun safes, equipped with trigger locks, or stored in any other recognized safe manner as defined within the statute.

Changes to this statute should provide for exception to liability in cases of theft of firearms that were properly stored/secured within the definitions of safe storage within the statute.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Firearms Safety & Access

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Dan Snare

Potentially impacted City departments: Houston Police Department – Houston City Attorney

Statutory reference (if applicable): [Texas Penal Code 46.13](#)

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data:

Potential partners: March for Our Lives, Moms Demand Action, Everytown for Gun Safety, Be Smart for Kids, Texas Gun Sense, and many other gun safety organizations.

Potential opposition: There may be opposition from some gun rights organizations and/or individuals. These recommendations, however, are made with input for responsible gun owners and members of the firearms community.

Estimated financial impact (if applicable):

This will require significantly increased and sustained enforcement, as well as prosecution, for these recommendations and these statutes to have an impact. This will ultimately have a potentially significant impact on enforcement and prosecution costs.

Mandatory Reporting of Lost or Stolen Guns

Brief summary of recommendation: According to data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), from 2012 to 2015, nearly half a billion dollars' worth of guns were stolen from individuals nationwide, amounting to an estimated 1.2 million guns. A Harvard study estimated that only 63 percent of gun thefts get reported to law enforcement. This discrepancy in reporting significantly hinders law enforcement efforts to trace the source of guns used to commit crimes.

After mass shootings, attention tends to fall on gaps in background checks with many calling for universal background checks. Many criminals, however, are armed with firearms purchased through the black market where background checks would never apply.

A study on crime guns by NBC found that most stolen weapons are later found in the possession of a felon, a juvenile, or an individual otherwise prohibited under federal or state laws from possessing firearms.

Stolen guns pose a significant risk to community safety. Whether stolen from a gun store or an individual gun owner, these guns often head straight into the illegal underground gun market, where they are sold, traded, and used to facilitate violent crimes. Between January 2010 and December 2015, 9,736 guns that were recovered by police in connection with a crime and traced by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) had been reported stolen or lost from gun stores. The Austin Police Department alone received more than 4,600 reports of lost or stolen guns between 2010 and 2015. Over that same period in Austin, lost and stolen guns were recovered in connection to at least 600 criminal offenses, including more than 60 robberies, assaults, and murders.

Recommendation: To aid law enforcement, require gun owners to report when their firearms are lost or stolen within 10 days.

Chapter 46 of the Texas Penal Code already covers rights, limitations, and responsibilities of firearm ownership. A new statute within Chapter 46 could require that any stolen firearm be reported to the county sheriff within 10 days of when the owner becomes aware or should become aware of their theft, and a violation of that requirement be a Class C misdemeanor. The county sheriff would then be required to report the

relevant information to the Texas Department of Public Safety for entry into NCIC. It would also be possible to incentivize this reporting by making a report generated under the statute sufficient for an insurance claim and to limit the owner's liability if the gun is subsequently used in the commission of a crime.

Twelve states require firearm owners to report the loss or theft of a firearm. Michigan law (Code 28.430, Sec. 10) requires, a person to report the theft of a firearm to the local police agency within five days after they know it is stolen, and a violation of the requirement is punishable by up to a \$500 fine. As stolen firearms are already entered NCIC on a voluntary basis, no new infrastructure is necessary.

Reporting stolen firearms makes it easier for law enforcement to identify firearms in the possession of people who may engage in criminal activity, to accurately perform forensic analysis and tracing of firearms recovered at crime scenes, and to reunite recovered firearms with their rightful owner. Texas law already recognizes the serious consequences that stolen firearms pose to community safety. Under Texas Penal Code 31.03(e)(4)(C), theft of a firearm is a felony, punishable by up to 2 years in state jail and a \$10,000 fine. Although this penalty is available, law enforcement does not know that a firearm is stolen unless it is reported by its legal owner.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Firearms Safety & Access

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Dan Snare

Potentially impacted City departments: Houston Police Department – Houston City Attorney

Statutory reference (if applicable): [Texas Penal Code 46.13](#)

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data:

Uniform Crime Reporting Program Data: Property Stolen and Recovered. FBI. 2012-2017.

“Only 11 States Require Gun Owners to Report Stolen Weapons to Police,” Max Siegelbaum, The Trace, November 20, 2017. Online at:
<https://www.thetrace.org/2017/11/stolen-guns-reporting-requirements/>

“Gun Theft From Legal Owners Is on the Rise, Quietly Fueling Violent Crime Across America,” Brian Freskos, NBC, November 20, 2017. Online at:

<https://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/national-international/Gun-Theft-From-Legal-Owners-Is-On-The-Rise-458307963.html>

FFL Theft/Loss Reports Matching Firearms Subsequently Recovered and Traced. ATF. 2010-2015.

Potential partners: March for Our Lives, Moms Demand Action, Everytown for Gun Safety, Be Smart for Kids, Texas Gun Sense, and many other gun safety organizations.

Potential opposition: There may be opposition from some gun rights organizations and/or individuals. These recommendations, however, are made with input for responsible gun owners and members of the firearms community.

Estimated financial impact (if applicable):

This will require significantly increased and sustained enforcement, as well as prosecution, for these recommendations and these statutes to have an impact. This will ultimately have a potentially significant impact on enforcement and prosecution costs.

Safe Firearm Storage Education Awareness Campaign

Brief summary of recommendation: Making a firearm accessible to a child is a Class C misdemeanor and can be enhanced to a Class A, if the child discharges the firearm and causes death or serious bodily injury to himself or another person yet many gun owners are not aware of this. We believe that incidences of children bringing firearms to school and harming themselves or others with a firearm will decrease with an education and safe firearm storage campaign using existing resources.

We recommend that all schools and school districts implement a comprehensive and ongoing education program. There are many existing tools currently available including the Everytown's Be SMART program and the NRA's Eddie Eagle program.

We further recommend that the City identify and implement a similar community wide awareness coordinated through an inter-agency council comprised of representatives of the departments/agencies listed below and possibly others.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Firearms Safety & Access

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Dan Snare

Potentially impacted City departments: Houston Office of Emergency Management, Emergency Medical Services, Houston Fire Department, Houston Health Department, Housing and Community Development Department, Department of Neighborhoods, Houston Parks and Recreation, Houston Police Department, Houston Public Library

Statutory reference (if applicable): [Texas Penal Code 46.13](#)

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data:

- According to the Harris County Institute of Forensic Science statistics, guns are the second leading cause of accidental death for children in Harris County. Of the 1,074 minors who died in Harris County from 2011 to 2014, about 1 in 8 was killed by a gun, according to the data.¹
- According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, there were a total of 3492 trauma hospitalizations with an injury due to firearm in 2014. The hospital charges for firearm injuries ranged from \$54 – \$5,618,050 per hospitalization. 770 (22%) of those injuries were unintentional.²
- Texas’ State Department of Health Services has shown that death by firearm was the leading cause of suicide in both Texas and the United States in 2014. The rate of firearm suicide was 6.75 per 100,000 in Texas vs. 6.37 per 100,000 in the United States.³ Though guns are not the most common method by which people attempt suicide, they are the most lethal. About 85 percent of suicide attempts with a firearm end in death.⁴

Potential partners: Baptist Ministers Association, Central South District of the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, Episcopal Diocese of Texas, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Galveston–Houston, Ministers Against Crime, Greater Houston Partnership, Houston Area School Districts, Harris County Department of Education, Harris County District Attorney’s Office, Harris County Attorney’s Office, Harris County Commissioner’s Court, Harris County Constables, Harris County Sherriff, Harris County Criminal Courts, Harris County Family and Youth Services, Harris County Fire Marshal’s Office, Harris County Health, Harris County Health Education, Harris County Housing Resource Center, Harris County Juvenile Probation Department, Harris County Juvenile Probation Education Services, Harris County Public Library, Harris County Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service, Houston METRO, 4H, TranStar, Texas Department of Public Safety, Houston Area Women’s Center, Houston Area Urban League, Houston LULAC, Houston NAACP, United Way, Anti-Defamation League, Action CDC, American Leadership Forum (Houston), League of Women Voters of Texas Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

Potential opposition: National Rifle Association, Open Carry Texas, Texas State Rifle Association

¹ George, C. (2016, January 22). Guns now No. 2 cause of accidental child death in county *Houston Chronicle*. Retrieved from <http://www.chron.com>

² Texas Department of State Health Services Texas EMS and Trauma Registries Hospital Data Request

³ Texas Department of Health 2014 Suicide Data Briefs

⁴ Drexler, Madeline. “Guns and suicide: The hidden toll” *Harvard School of Public Health News*, Spring 2013

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): To be determined. The Commission, however, recommends that adequate funding be allocated by the Houston City Council to support a robust and ongoing campaign.

COMMUNITY SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

Increased Media Coverage of City-Wide National Night Out Event

Brief summary of recommendation: The City of Houston should increase awareness of its city-wide National Night Out opportunity throughout Harris County. National Night Out is an awareness raising event that allows for neighbors and community members to get to know each other. The awareness event is implemented throughout the United States in various ways. An opportunity exists to also include a dialogue around preventing gun violence in our community at this event and the City of Houston should take advantage of it accordingly. A larger presence on social media with messaging around the prevention of gun violence in our communities would not be a costly option.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Community Safety

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Cornelius Blackshear

Potentially impacted City departments: Administration, Houston and Community Development, Parks and Recreation, Planning Development, Solid Waste Management, Office of Business Opportunity

Statutory reference (if applicable): National Night Out: Building Police and Community Partnerships To Prevent Crime by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, US Department of Justice; National Night Out www.natw.org

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: N/A

Potential partners: Community neighborhoods, Community Centers, mental health organizations, Independent School Districts, mental health organizations, local media.

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): Dependent upon how the City would like to re-allocate resources and the manner in which media coverage/marketing would take place.

Student, School Administration and Community Focus groups

Brief summary of recommendation: It is important to gather feedback from those who see or have experienced gun violence. Acquiring a perspective from students and community members allows decision makers the opportunity to analyze the data and make the best recommendations possible to impact gun violence in the city. In addition to the Quarterly School Safety Stakeholder meetings, we recommend that a program be established for students and other members of the community impacted by gun violence to provide feedback to school administrators and other interested stakeholders. This could be accomplished by providing an internship opportunity for those from the University of Houston School of Social Work to partner with Commission on Gun Violence and lead this effort.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Community- Based Prevention, Intervention and Reintegration

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: - Abdul Haleem Muhammad, PhD

Potentially impacted City departments: MAGO- Mayor's Anti- Gang Office, HPD

Statutory reference (if applicable):

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: N/A

Potential partners: MAGO, U of H, HISD, Juvenile Probation- HCJPD, Juvenile Parole- TJJD HISD Administrators

Potential opposition: Agencies who may be concerned with confidentiality issues for youth.

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): TBD- to consider; marketing, air time, add space, campaign materials (brochures etc.)

Reintegration of Juvenile and Adult Offenders

Brief summary of recommendation: We recommend an increase to the Mayor's Anti - Gang Office staff in order to provide case management services for gun or gang involved offenses, involving violence. Staff would be responsible for assisting those on probation access services such as; employment, tattoo removal, vocational trade, mentorship, and GED. These staff would also provide crisis response to victims of gun violence and street outreach to violent groups such as; gangs/clicks to reduce retaliatory gun violence. Through street level outreach workers will be responsible for contacting victims,

families, possible suspects or gangs/clicks to stop retaliation. MAGO staff currently provides similar services to juveniles and young adults for 20 years.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Community-Based Prevention, Intervention, and Reintegration

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: - Abdul Haleem Muhammad, PhD

Potentially impacted City departments: MAGO- Mayor's Anti- Gang Office, HPD

Statutory reference (if applicable):

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data:

National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention

<https://youth.gov/youth-topics/preventing-youth-violence/forum-communities/detroit/brief>

https://youth.gov/docs/NFYVP_Toolkit_LKP.pdf

<http://oaklandunite.org/blog/street-outreach/>

Potential partners: MAGO, Adult Probation, Juvenile Probation, TJJD, Workforce Solutions, Goodwill Industries, SER Jobs for Progress, local emergency rooms, Victims Compensation, Victim/ Witness Division.

Potential opposition: Perpetrators of Violence

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): salaries for city staff, other aspects could be done through collaboration with employment, law enforcement and criminal justice agencies.

Gun Violence Awareness Campaign

Brief summary of recommendation: A study published in June of 2017 in the American Journal of Pediatrics reports that on average, 19 U.S. children per day are killed by or receive emergency treatment for gunshot wounds, and that among injury-related deaths, firearms are the second leading cause behind car accidents for children aged 1-17. Important to provide information to deter these types of incidents with young people. Information involving prevention techniques, consequences for handling or

playing with guns and providing criminal justice penalties may help deter. This information can also include community members such as; parents and young adults. We recommend that the City of Houston explore options for a Gun Violence Awareness Campaign to be pushed throughout the Greater Houston Area.

Initiatives; Billboards, presentations for students and community, annual No Gun Violence poster contest, TV commercials, outreach events

Submitting Sub-Committee: Community-Based Prevention, Intervention, and Reintegration

Sub-Committee Chair contact information:- Abdul Haleem Muhammad, PhD

Potentially impacted City departments: MAGO- Mayor's Anti- Gang Office, HPD

Statutory reference (if applicable):

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: N/A

Potential partners: MAGO, HPD, Crime Stoppers, HISD Administrators, HISD PD

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): TBD - to consider; marketing, air time, add space, campaign materials.

United in Peace - Houston

Brief summary of recommendation: We recommend that the City of Houston develop and implement a strategic plan to establish a community-based violence reduction program covering schools and communities along the Scott Street corridor from I-45 to the north to Sims Bayou to the south. The goal is a seventy-five percent (75%) reduction in gun related homicides, aggravated assaults, and robberies over the next four years along the Scott Street corridor. The approach is to create community-wide behavioral change by integrating three (3) social-civic institutions: The Family, The Community, and The Law.

The strategic plan would have seven (7) essential elements:

1. Prevent Youth Involvement-School recruitment in Street Organization
2. Street Organization Conflict Intervention
3. Establishing safe zones for conflict resolution and training
4. Promote and Initiate Economic Development Projects
5. Rehabilitate Street Organization Members

6. Promote Peacemaking and Community Building Arts and Culture
7. Enhance Public Safety through Proper Community Engagement

The strategic plan related to addressing gang members/activity would have five (5) primary objectives:

1. Improve school safety and educational attainment
2. Improve employability of school graduates
3. Improve community health status through reduction in gun violence
4. Improve social - professional skills through creation of a sustaining support network
5. Conduct Community-based Gun Violence Prevention, Intervention, Security and Emergency Management training

Submitting Sub-Committee: Community-Based Prevention, Intervention, and Reintegration

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Abdul Haleem Muhammad, PhD

Potentially impacted City departments: Mayor’s Anti-Gang Task Force; Houston Police Department; Houston Fire Department; City Health Department

Statutory reference (if applicable): N/A

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data:

Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) - **Richmond, California**

<https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/271/Office-of-Neighborhood-Safety>

Newark Anti-Violence Coalition – **Newark, New Jersey**

<https://www.facebook.com/NewarkAntiViolenceCoalition>

Father Michael Pfleger, Priest, Anti-Violence Activist – **Chicago, Illinois**

<https://www.facebook.com/FrMichaelPfleger>

10,000 Fearless of the South – **Atlanta, Georgia**

<https://www.10000fearlessofthesouth.com>

The Peace Keepers - **Columbus, Ohio**

<http://thepeacekeepers.org/about-pk/meet-the-founder>

United in Peace Foundation - **Los Angeles, California**

<http://unitedinpeace.org>

Potential partners:

- City of Houston Office of the Mayor Sylvester Turner
- City of Houston District D Councilman Dwight Boykins
- United in Peace Houston
- Muhammad Mosque No.45

- ACTION CDC
- OG-1- Operation Outreach
- Justice or Else Local Organizing Committee
- 10,000 Fearless Houston, Texas
- No More Bloodshed Movement
- Village of Mothers
- Artist Respecting Communities
 - Project Forward
 - Black United Front
 - Queendom Come, Inc.
 - Ladies of Elegance – Worthing High School
 - Houston Police Department
 - Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church
 - Greater Grace Outreach Church
 - Harris County Constable May Walker, Precinct No. 7
 - OST-Almeda TIRZ No.7
 - Houston Southeast Management District
 - Super Neighborhood Council(s)
 - Civic Club(s)
 - Texas Southern University, Thurgood Marshall School of Law, Earl Call Institute
 - University of Houston
 - Houston Independent School District
 - Unity National Bank
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Center
 - SHAPE Community Center
 - Project Row House
 - Forward Times Newspaper
 - National Association of Black Social Workers
 - State Representative Garnet Coleman
 - State Representative Shawn Thierry
 - State Senator Borris Miles
 - Congresswoman Sheila Jackson-Lee
- Congressman Alexander Green
- Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis, Precinct No.1
- Harris County District Attorney Kim Og
- Harris County Sherriff Ed Gonzales
- Harris County Probation Department
- Criminal Defense Lawyers Association of Houston
- Child Protective Services
- Texas Alcohol and Beverage Commission
- Foundation for a Drug-Free World
- Houston Medical Center
- Workforce Solutions

- The Way to Happiness
- Labor Unions AFL-CIO
- Motorcycle Clubs
- SLAB Car Clubs
- Low Rider Clubs
- Veterans Groups
- Emancipation Economic Development Council
- Health Department, City of Houston
- Project Row House

Potential opposition: Career Criminals

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): \$800,000

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

CDC “Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child” Model

Brief summary of recommendation: We recommend that the City of Houston utilize the existing CDC “Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child” (WSCC) model to serve as the foundation for creating safe schools, an environment in which every stakeholder is welcome, safe, and supported. In other words, the WSCC model answers the question “What does a healthy school look like?” Revitalize PTOs across grade levels, including parents in trainings/workshops around creating safe and healthy schools, relationships, homes with specific contributions/tasks and time/commitment options (like “Safe Walks Home,” below).

Submitting Sub-Committee: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Sonia Corrales

Potentially impacted City departments: HISD

Statutory reference (if applicable): N/A

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: The CDC’s national WSCC initiative (<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/wsccl/>) illustrates how a complex primary prevention solution can operate and support creating and sustaining a safe school culture. In it, the school is a healthy, organic system connecting individuals, relationships, community and society and serving as a hub for academic learning, for social and emotional learning, for health learning, for support and resources, and for creative, social, activities and lifelong learning/skills training provided internally by the school and through community support and partnerships that expand the school’s potential as a dynamic, positive community strength.

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, Law Enforcement, Elected officials (specific partners to be identified at the time of program development and implementation) (specific partners to be identified at the time of program development and implementation)

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): TBD Considerations: cost of training, curriculum, technical assistance.

Community Stakeholder Conversations on Domestic Violence / Sexual Assault in Schools

Brief summary of recommendation: We recommend that in addition to the Quarterly School Safety Stakeholders meetings, the City of Houston facilitate conversations with all stakeholders (admin, faculty, students, parents/caregivers, PTOs, community residents, community partners, etc.) regarding domestic violence and sexual assault in order to identify safety concerns and gain “buy-in” to develop, invest in, and sustain solution(s).

Submitting Sub-Committee: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Sonia Corrales

Potentially impacted City departments: HISD

Statutory reference (if applicable): N/A

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: For national data on parent concerns, see 2017 University of Michigan Mott Poll @ https://mottpoll.org/sites/default/files/documents/082117_TopParentConcerns.pdf.

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, Law Enforcement, Elected officials (specific partners to be identified at the time of program development and implementation)

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): TBD Considerations: cost of school personnel, meeting materials, etc.

Review and Update of State Required “Dating Violence” Policies

Brief summary of recommendation: We recommend that the City of Houston mandate that each school review and update their state-required “dating violence” policy (see below “Background,” below for requirements) to ensure that it is trauma-informed, client centered and in compliance with Title IX. Share and explain the policy with all stakeholders on an annual basis, preferably in public forums where questions can be addressed. Community engagement should be encouraged in order to market the policy via signage/announcements/email blasts etc. Finally, implement the policy consistently, promptly, thoroughly and equitably. This recommendation includes teaching all stakeholders safe, active bystander practices along with an electronic reporting system.

School administrators and teachers should serve in the role of adult allies/influencers and trained students can serve as peer trainers.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Sonia Corrales

Potentially impacted City departments: HISD

Statutory reference (if applicable): HB 121 (signed May 2007)

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: Currently, state-wide, per HB 121 (signed May 2007), all schools are mandated to adopt and implement a dating violence policy which includes teen dating violence; sexual harassment; sexual violence; and bullying.

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, Law Enforcement, Elected officials. (specific partners to be identified at the time of program development and implementation)

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): N/A

Integrating Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) across all Classes (Pre-K through 12)

Brief summary of recommendation: We recommend that the City of Houston established a program for HISD to implement Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), trauma-informed Mindfulness Practices, and Restorative Justice Practices in all schools and include training for all school boards members, administrators, and educators; and provide support classes for parents/caregivers.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Sonia Corrales

Potentially impacted City departments: HISD

Statutory reference (if applicable): HB 121 (signed May 2007)

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: Globally and nationally and in Texas, there is a movement towards integrating Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) across all classes in all grades Pre-K through 12 along with Mindfulness Practices and Restorative Justice:

Investing in and implementing SEL into academic curricula is supported nationally through the National Commission on Social Emotional and Academic Development, accessible via The Aspen Institute <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/national-commission-on-social-emotional-and-academic-development/>.

See also <https://casel.org/guide/>. CASEL evaluates the quality of SEL programs “with potential for broad dissemination to schools across the U.S.”

For international SEL adoption and implementation, see the U.K. Relationship and Sex Education compulsory program https://consult.education.gov.uk/life-skills/pshe-rse-call-for-evidence/supporting_documents/Sex%20and%20Relationships%20Education%20%20A%20call%20for%20evidence.pdf.

Restorative justice programs provide schools a way to lessen criminalizing school behaviors in ways that are trauma-and-developmentally informed, thus reducing the need for disciplinary alternative education programs /juvenile charges and incarceration.

For information on Restorative Justice Practices in Texas, see https://tea.texas.gov/Restorative_Discipline/. For information about the national Restorative Justice movement/practice, see The Institute for Restorative Justice and Restorative Dialogue (IRJ&RD), established in 2008 as part of the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work.

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, Law Enforcement, Elected officials (specific partners to be identified at the time of program development and implementation)

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): Cost of curriculum, program implementation, and technical assistance.

Promotion of SEL-In-Every-Class

Brief summary of recommendation: We recommend the promotion and support of SEL-in-every-class (Social and Emotional Learning) by school counselors/social workers/psychologists/trained nurses who work with students in order to hold conversations about mental health concerns and emotional states like anger, fear, depression, anxiety, academic issues, suicide, as well as family and relationship concerns. This model is fully supported by the Texas Education Agency in “A Model Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools Guide for Program Development Pre-K-12th Grade.”

Submitting Sub-Committee: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Sonia Corrales

Potentially impacted City departments: HISD

Statutory reference (if applicable): N/A

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: See https://tea.texas.gov/counseling_guidebook.html. See also Texas State Plan for Suicide Prevention: <https://dshs.texas.gov/mhsa/suicide/TexasStatePlanForSuicidePrevention.pdf>.

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, Law Enforcement, Elected officials (specific organizations identified at the time of program development and implementation)

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): Cost of curriculum, program implementation, and technical assistance.

Train Students to be Active Participants in Creating Safe School Culture

Brief summary of recommendation: Engage and train students to be active participants and leaders in creating a safe school culture. All students should be encouraged and motivated to serve as mentors for first-year/new transfer students, peer academic tutors, members of the Restorative Justice Peer Jury (a/k/a Youth/Teen/Student), and leaders of the school’s anti-violence programming such as Safe Active Bystander Intervention.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Sonia Corrales

Potentially impacted City departments: HISD

Statutory reference (if applicable): N/A

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: See https://tea.texas.gov/Restorative_Discipline/ , <https://www.nedrp.com/> and <https://www.texastribune.org/2018/05/29/texas-schools-restorative-justice-violence-suspensions/>.

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, Law Enforcement, Elected officials (specific organizations identified at the time of program development and implementation)

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): TBD Considerations: leadership program costs, etc.

Build and Sustain Vetted Community Partnerships

Brief summary of recommendation: Seek out, build and sustain Community Partnerships, vetted by Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC), to provide and enhance academic and SE learning and relationship building among all community stakeholders, including but not limited to social justice, health, law enforcement, job readiness. These community partners would engage students before, after and/or during school hours. Additionally, it should become a consistent policy that community partners may be invited into a school only if their program is reviewed and approved by the SHAC. The school district should provide a webpage of reviewed and approved programs so principals can make choices relevant to their school's specific needs.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Sonia Corrales

Potentially impacted City departments: HISD

Statutory reference (if applicable): N/A

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: N/A

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, Law Enforcement, Elected officials (specific organizations identified at the time of program development and implementation)

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): N/A

Expand METRO Police Driver and Rider Safety Programs

Brief summary of recommendation: Expand existing METRO Police driver and rider safety programs to include primary prevention options like the National Education Association's (NEA) "It Starts With Me" programs (see "Background," below) and with the "Safe Walk Home" programs (see "Background," below) and to train/include all METRO drivers (on HISD routes) as well as all HISD drivers. Note that training for student-riders and parents is included in the NEA programs.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Sonia Corrales

Potentially impacted City departments: HISD

Statutory reference (if applicable): N/A

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: The National Education Association (NEA) has a program called "It Starts With Me" that trains school bus drivers in methods of preventing and, if necessary, safely intervening on schools buses. Note that bullying on school buses accounts for about 10% of the bullying taking place in U.S. schools. See www.nea.org/home/63929/htm

Safe Walk Home – started in May 2018 by Houston Northside residents. The residents stand outside their home or walk the students in the northside area to and from school to ensure their safety.

The following METRO programs will ensure assistance from METRO Police and/or METRO Bus Operators:

- See Something Say Something – report suspicious persons or activity.
- MPD Connect App – the app can be downloaded through the app store. It allows live chatting with the METRO Police Dispatcher via text.
- Safe Haven program – allows the bus to be a place of safety when there is immediate danger.

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, Law Enforcement, Elected officials

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): N/A

Collaboration between HPD and HCSO Regarding Gun Surrender Protocols for Domestic Violence Offenders

Brief summary of recommendation: Develop a collaboration between the Houston Police Department and the Harris County Sheriff's Office to implement and sustain a greater Houston/Harris County Gun Surrender protocol for domestic violence offenders.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Sonia Corrales

Potentially impacted City departments: HPD, HSCO, **Statutory reference (if applicable):** N/A

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data: • This protocol will initiate out of the Harris County 280th Protective Order Court. The protocol will facilitate the surrender of firearms throughout the duration of family violence protective orders. The Harris County District Attorney's Office will work with law enforcement to enforce the current law, which makes it a Class A misdemeanor to possess a gun within five (5) years of a family violence conviction or from release from community supervision for a family violence offense. Currently, the Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council is seeking grant funding for this project. In the event grant funding is not provided, we are recommending that the City of Houston allocate resources to ensure that this gun surrender protocol can be developed, implemented, and sustained by the Houston Police Department, Harris County Sheriff's Office, and the Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council.

Potential partners: Independent School Districts, community-based non-profits, faith-based organizations, private educational programs, Law Enforcement, Elected officials; Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council; Domestic Violence Policy Workgroup

Potential opposition: Gun Lobby

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): Potential funding from Criminal Justice Division

Title of recommendation: Communicate Commission's recommendations to independent school district administrators, faculty and staff (including HISD police) by holding a one-day meeting/seminar

Brief summary of recommendation: Commission will facilitate a conversation with school administrators, faculty, staff including security, HISD police in order to communicate recommendations.

Submitting Sub-Committee: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Sub-Committee Chair contact information: Sonia Corrales

Potentially impacted City departments:

Statutory reference (if applicable): N/A

Background information, including potential legislative requirements, summary of supporting documentation, and method for obtaining research/data:

Potential partners:

Potential opposition: N/A

Estimated financial impact (if applicable): N/A