



Superintendent's Task Force on School Safety

Executive Summary

Purpose and Charge

The Superintendent's Task Force on School Safety was established to conduct a comprehensive review of safety, security, preparedness, student well-being, and emergency response practices across the Parma City School District. The Task Force brings together district leaders, staff, families, community members, law enforcement and first responders, and other key stakeholders to examine current practices, identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, and develop actionable recommendations that further strengthen safe and supportive learning environments for students and staff.

The work of the Task Force is grounded in the understanding that school safety extends beyond physical security. Effective school safety requires an integrated approach that addresses prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, student mental health and well-being, school climate, communication, facilities, and strong partnerships with public safety agencies and the broader community.

Task Force Process

The Task Force began its work on May 19, 2026, at Normandy High School. The initial meeting established the purpose and expectations for the Task Force and included guidance from school safety expert Dr. Ken Trump regarding contemporary school safety practices and the importance of approaching safety through a comprehensive and balanced framework.

Following the initial meeting, members were organized into five study areas:

1. Physical Security and Facility Safety
2. Emergency Operations and Crisis Response
3. Mental Health Supports and Threat Assessment
4. Communication Systems and Family Engagement
5. Student Behavior Supports and School Climate



Expert Observations and Initial Considerations

As part of the Task Force process, Dr. Trump observed subcommittee discussions and provided initial observations, recommendations, and questions for further consideration. His review reinforced an important principle for the Task Force: effective emergency preparedness cannot be measured solely by the existence of written plans. Plans must be practical, understood by those expected to carry them out, regularly reviewed, communicated appropriately, coordinated with first responders, and tested against realistic circumstances. Several themes emerged from Dr. Trump's observations of the Emergency Operations and Crisis Response Protocols Subcommittee.

Reunification and Evacuation Planning

The District should continue strengthening evacuation and parent-student reunification protocols, with particular attention to what occurs after students and staff arrive at an evacuation or reunification location.

Planning should clearly distinguish between on-campus or nearby rallying points and off-campus walking-distance evacuation and reunification sites. Building administrators and safety teams should become familiar with designated locations and develop operational procedures addressing access, student and staff accountability, communications, student medications, food and water, restroom needs, parent/guardian intake, student release procedures, traffic management, and staff responsibilities.

Dr. Trump further recommended moving this planning from paper to practice. Once plans are sufficiently developed, faculty and support staff should become familiar with designated evacuation sites and walk through the procedures that would be expected during an actual emergency. This process should also identify accommodations that may be necessary for students or staff with disabilities, mobility limitations, medical needs, or other circumstances requiring additional support.

Student and Staff Preparedness

Student participation in the Task Force reinforced the value of including student perspectives in emergency planning. Student input specifically identified the importance of considering students with disabilities and specialized classroom environments during evacuation planning.

Additional consideration should also be given to staff preparedness for student health and medical emergencies, including appropriate levels of First Aid, CPR, and related emergency response training. The District should continue using realistic "what if" scenarios that require staff to think through the decisions and options they may face during different emergencies rather than relying exclusively on memorization of written procedures.

Emergency Communication

Communication is consistently identified as a significant issue in after-action reviews of school emergencies. The Task Force should therefore continue examining communication from multiple perspectives. Staff members need to understand their responsibilities during emergencies. Students should receive age-appropriate information about what they are expected to do during different types of incidents without unnecessarily disclosing security-sensitive portions of emergency plans. Emergency planning should also be coordinated with police, fire, EMS, and other first responders so that responding agencies understand District procedures and can assess whether plans are operationally realistic.

Transportation and Large-Scale Evacuation

Emergency planning must also anticipate circumstances in which remaining on campus or using a nearby evacuation site is not possible. Future planning should include coordination among District transportation leaders, principals, District administrators, and public safety partners regarding the logistics of evacuating an entire school by bus during the school day. Questions for continued examination include the time necessary to mobilize sufficient transportation, where students and staff would be transported, expectations for drivers, communication procedures, and whether transportation response procedures have been appropriately exercised or tested.

Emergency Operations Plans: From Compliance to Practice

The District has written emergency operations plans; however, the Task Force's review should extend beyond whether plans satisfy statutory requirements. The more significant questions are whether the plans are practical, accessible, understood, and usable during an actual emergency.

Continued review and consideration:

- Who needs to know which portions of the plans?
- How are administrators, teachers, and support staff trained?
- How would necessary information be accessed during an emergency?
- Can essential procedures be simplified for frontline staff?
- Are emergency plans actively used to guide training and preparedness?
- Have police, fire, EMS, and other first responders participated in reviewing the plans?
- Do first responders believe the procedures are realistic and operationally sound?
- The goal should be to ensure that emergency plans function as active preparedness tools rather than documents maintained primarily for compliance purposes.

Independent Review and Continuous Evaluation

Dr. Trump also raised the question of when the District's security and emergency preparedness systems were last independently reviewed beyond internal District processes. As the Task Force develops its final recommendations, consideration should be given to establishing an appropriate cycle for independent review of security practices, emergency operations plans, protocols, training, and preparedness.

Areas of Review: Subcommittee Structure

Physical Security and Facility Safety

The Task Force is reviewing building access, visitor management, doors and locking systems, surveillance and security technology, arrival and dismissal procedures, and other potential facility vulnerabilities. Recommendations will consider both immediate operational improvements and longer-term facility and technology investments.

Emergency Operations and Crisis Response

The review includes district and building emergency operations plans, emergency protocols, drills and exercises, staff responsibilities, reunification procedures, and the district's overall capacity to respond effectively and consistently during an emergency.

Mental Health Supports and Threat Assessment

The Task Force is examining student mental health supports, early identification and intervention practices, threat assessment procedures, referral systems, and coordination among administrators, counselors, psychologists, families, and community providers. Particular attention is being given to prevention and the identification of concerns before they escalate into crises.

Communication Systems and Family Engagement

The review considers communication with staff, students, families, and the community before, during, and following emergency situations. The Task Force is examining the effectiveness, consistency, timeliness, and clarity of district communication systems and opportunities to strengthen family and community understanding of school safety procedures.

Student Behavior Supports and School Climate

The Task Force recognizes that positive school climate and strong relationships are essential components of school safety. This area examines student behavior, discipline, bullying prevention, positive behavior supports, student belonging, student voice, relationships between students and adults, and strategies designed to identify and address concerns early.

Development of Recommendations

The work of the Task Force is designed to move beyond identifying concerns to developing practical and actionable recommendations. Each study group will consider recommendations within three general implementation categories:

Immediate Priorities — Actions that can reasonably be implemented quickly through changes in procedures, communication, training, or existing practices.

Short-Term Priorities — Actions that may require additional planning, coordination, professional development, staffing, or modest resource commitments.

Longer-Term Priorities — Recommendations that may require significant financial investment, facility improvements, technology enhancements, staffing changes, policy development, or multi-year implementation.

This approach will allow the District and Board of Education to distinguish between actions that can begin immediately and initiatives that will require additional planning and resources.

Districtwide Themes

While the Task Force's work is organized into five study areas, school safety is inherently interconnected. Recommendations emerging from one area may have implications for several others. The final review will therefore identify common themes and recommendations that extend across multiple areas.

Particular attention will be given to opportunities to strengthen consistency across buildings, staff training and preparedness, communication, prevention and early intervention, student and staff relationships, coordination with first responders, and accountability for implementation.

From Recommendations to Action

At the August 18, 2026 Task Force meeting, each study group presented its findings and proposed recommendations. The final recommendations are organized by study area and prioritized according to urgency, feasibility, potential impact, and resource requirements. These recommendations will form the basis of the presentation to the Parma City Schools Board of Education.

Implementation and Accountability

The completion of the Task Force's recommendations will represent an important milestone, but not the conclusion of the District's school safety work. Recommendations ultimately advanced by the District will need clearly identified responsibility, anticipated timelines, resource considerations, and mechanisms for monitoring implementation and effectiveness.

Where recommendations require significant financial investment or policy decisions, those items will be presented to the Board of Education for appropriate consideration and action.

The District should also periodically review progress on the recommendations and communicate that progress to the Board and school community, while appropriately protecting security-sensitive information.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

No single strategy, technology, program, or procedure can guarantee school safety. The strongest approach is a comprehensive system that continually evaluates risk, strengthens prevention, prepares people to respond effectively, supports students, maintains secure facilities, and builds trusted partnerships among schools, families, students, staff, law enforcement, first responders, and the community.

The Superintendent's Task Force on School Safety reflects Parma City Schools' commitment to that continuous improvement process. Its work is intended not simply to produce a report, but to provide a thoughtful and actionable roadmap for strengthening safety throughout the District.

The ultimate measure of this work will be the District's ability to translate recommendations into meaningful action while maintaining schools where students and staff are not only safe, but also feel safe, supported, connected, and prepared.

Sub Committee Recommendations

Physical Security and Facility Safety

- Ensure all exterior doors remain locked at all times.
- Install alarms on all exterior doors.
- Implement student identification (ID) requirements.
- Establish a formal student shadowing policy.
- New building structures.
- Update and expand security camera coverage.

Emergency Operations and Crisis Response

- Move from written plans to practiced operational readiness.
- Strengthen parent reunification communication.
- Test emergency communication systems with a clear timeline.
- Conduct scenario-based training.

Mental Health Supports and Threat Assessment

- Establish a permanent Student Wellness Team to monitor student wellness trends, evaluate supports and interventions, coordinate district-wide mental health and wellness initiatives, and create long-term goals and schedules for initiatives.

Communication Systems and Family Engagement

- Provide opportunities for family engagement in a community setting.
- Conduct focus groups to understand what type of communication families want.
- Establish uniform communication app(s) at the building level.

Student Behavior Supports and School Climate

- Provide a positive adult presence in hallways, lunch areas, and bathrooms by all teachers and staff.
- Design and implement a Freshman Day tradition where incoming freshmen walk their schedules, participate in games and activities to build connections, meet student leaders, and learn about different clubs.
- Implement a consistent approach across buildings that includes consistent discipline, restorative practices, and student supports.

Superintendent's Task Force on School Safety

Participants

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