

**Canton School Committee**  
Safety Workshop Minutes  
Thursday, July 13, 2023

- A.** Chair O'Halloran called for a motion to convene the Thursday, July 13th, 2023 School Committee Safety Workshop at 7:22 pm. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Kristian Merenda seconded. Vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as:

Kendall O'Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Kimberly McCourt	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea
5 yeas	0 nays

**Attendees:** Kendall O'Halloran  
Maureen Moran  
Laura Arboleda  
Kimberly McCourt  
Kristian Merenda  
Derek Folan  
Stephen Marshall

**Guests:** Helena Rafferty, Canton Chief of Police  
Ensley Cotard, SRO, CHS  
Eric Kaskovitch, SRO, Elementary

Superintendent Folan welcomed members of CPS, thanking them for their partnership and support of CPS and invited them to join School Committee members in an open discussion on safety issues as well as an exchange of ideas for things to come.

Chief Rafferty opened with CPD accomplishments in 2022-23, highlighting a successful active shooter drill, and requested a line item in the budget to run an active assailant drill every year. Chief Rafferty's wish list also included two additional CPD positions-School Resource Officers—one for each of the elementary schools explaining that collaboration, connection, and hands-on interaction is crucial for students who may be struggling for any reason. Citing summer camps as an example, she hopes to make SRO's year round positions to continue connections throughout the entire year. Chief Rafferty also reminded the group of the relationships between SRO's and students. SRO's follow the MOU and **do not** discipline.

Chief Rafferty introduced new employees:

1. Isabelle Nolin, Substance Use Coordinator for Canton. Ms. Nolin works hand in hand with SRO's and is researching vapor reactors in restrooms as she feels vaping must be addressed.
2. Kira Maguire—crisis counselor and part of the negotiation team, who is also available to teachers.

Her wish list continued with:

3. A request for portable crisis communication tools.
4. A plan for Traffic management.
5. Assistance in devising a plan (particularly at the Luce and CHS) to keep all school property (including tracks and tennis courts), walkways, and connecting paths clear of outside pedestrians, including dogs. School property should be inaccessible for the duration of the school day. Procedures need to be in place in addition to notifications and signage to help the SRO's enforce policies. Chief Rafferty would also like all staff to be on alert and know what to do when someone tries to walk through the properties. This plan ought to include elements to help the community understand the purpose of these changes and manage a perceived sense of loss. A School Committee member suggested forwarding a notice at the beginning of the school year reminding the community that school properties are closed during school hours. This letter might be best coming from Superintendent Folan and/or Police Chief Rafferty.
6. More training drills within each building as students are asking for more. Once a year Active Assailant Active Shooter Hostile Response training is mandated by the state. CPS trained in April of 2023. Chief Rafferty would like it more often. The suggestion was to hold training drills 20 days after the school year starts, and another as the students return from the holidays.
7. Institute "**Chief's Chats**" for teachers/ administrators of each building to help build a sense of safety. The Chief would make herself available once a month for informal conversations.
8. Determine modes of communications before anything happens or for what happens after an event, or simply to make schools safer after an investigation.
9. Chief Rafferty would like to join School Committee meetings twice a year as a way for the community to voice new concerns, threats, or ideas, and to be sure previous decisions are being followed through on.
10. CPD would like live access to all cameras in the district. CHS has that capability; however, there was concern over privacy issues.
11. CPD needs funds to locate more security hardware in any place where the public might gain entrance. Sensors for doors are essential to the safety of school. School staff must be sentient of closing and securing doors behind them upon entry or exit.
12. Chief Rafferty voiced concern about Policy issues and protocols—ie; Who's monitoring the cameras and procedures. Each of the SRO's have gone through their schools and written what they need to be confident of safety in their schools.

13. A better credentialing system for allowing access to buildings. Access should be granted at one or two entry points only. Multiple access points might be possible as long as there is an attendant or sensors at each access point. Funds will be required for this software. Mr. Marshall suggested devising an overarching plan with a strategy for a phased-in approach.

The group discussed ACTION ORIENTED plans:

1. Addressing teacher's concerns about behavior in halls and bathrooms with the help of the SRO's. Since SRO's work to collaborate with the students and help de-escalate situations, students often prefer to speak to SRO's. SRO's then follow-up with administration.
2. Building safety—including:
  - a. "padding" entries;
  - b. active shooter kits for every classroom; door stoppers, tourniquets, rope, etc.;
  - c. pass codes for each individual entering the building-not holding doors for the next person;
  - d. Students-IDs should be mandatory to scan in for entrance to any building;
  - e. SRO's spoke of their biggest concerns-teachers, substitute teachers, outside guests, visitors who do not have passes, but need to be in the building.

Focus turned to "What do we need to do immediately? What's the plan right now?"

Suggestions from the CPD included:

1. Minimize entry points to avoid camera blind spots;
1. Secure an ID system;
2. Unify blocks in classrooms so teachers don't have to use a key;
3. Have **inside** Push button locks for all classrooms. Remove all keys.
4. Teach about barricading, but also teach that escape is not always the most feasible answer-particularly for elementary students.
5. Cordon off perimeters of school buildings; communicate to the public and ask for their commitment to making campuses safer. Align this communication with the beginning of the school year.
6. Walks through campuses and buildings to identify spaces needing updated hardware;
7. Principals should have CPD radios;
8. More training drills within each building-20 days after the school year starts and one when students return from holidays;
9. Once a month "**Chief's Chats**" for teachers/administrators of each building to help build a sense of safety;
10. Train Building Administrators on alternative roles that might be required of them when there is an event;
11. After action reviews from the CPS;

12. Care for the students and staff. offer information and empathy; engage parents and guardians. Ask them to be straightforward when talking with their children/family members;
  - a. Be sure the community is familiar with the anonymous tip line;
  - b. If it seems off, it probably is-report it!
  - c. Engage members of the staff who are not in regular training-ie-office staff, custodians, food service workers-how often are they trained? What do they know?
  - d. Educate children about social media posts that may be considered dangerous, bullying, racism, etc. Partner with Wellness to get into the classroom to educate students and teachers;
  - e. Set consequences (CHS);
  - f. Involve parents–Let CPD come to school for any parental concerns/discipline/mental health, etc;
  - g. “Fish where the fish are”–host CPD events within school events–eg-Orientation, Parent-Teacher conferences; sports events;
13. Be proactive with bussing issues.
  - a. Perhaps add bus monitors? How does the district address these issues?
  - b. Ask families to accept guidelines and rules at the beginning of the school year.

Chair O’Halloran adjourned the Safety Workshop at 9:03 pm.