



## MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

# **2013 Annual Report to the Legislature:** Minnesota School Safety Center (MnSSC): Results achieved, budget appropriation, cooperation with Minnesota Department of Education (School Climate Center)

*In compliance with Minnesota Laws 2013, chap. 86, art. 1, sec. 12, subd. 2*

Compiled by:



Minnesota Department of Public Safety  
Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

In cooperation with:

Minnesota Department of  
Education

## **Legislative Background**

The Minnesota School Safety Center (MnSSC) was created in 2007 at the recommendation of the legislative advisory task force on school and staff emergency/all hazard preparedness. The center addressed many critical gaps between education and public safety in school emergency planning resources and training. Federal funding expired in 2011, and the center closed.

In May 2013, the Minnesota Legislature re-established MnSSC (Minnesota Laws 2013, [Chapter 86](#), article 1, section 12). The session law requires this report to the Legislature on the school safety center appropriation status: how the appropriation was spent, an assessment of the working relationship with the Department of Education (MDE) and the results achieved.

Although the session law re-establishing MnSSC directs it to coordinate significantly with the School Climate Center and School Climate Council, the legislation creating these organizations did not pass the Legislature, and so they do not exist. In their absence, MnSSC staff maintains a collaborative working relationship with MDE (specifically the safety, health and nutrition division director and the school climate specialist).

## **Governance Structure of the Minnesota School Safety Center**

The Department of Public Safety Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (DPS/HSEM) is the state coordinating agency for all-hazards emergency preparedness and provides administrative support to the MnSSC. The MnSSC operates in HSEM's Preparedness Branch.

The mission of HSEM is to help Minnesota prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from natural and human-caused disasters. The division's primary purpose is to build communities that are prepared to respond to emergencies and have the resilience to quickly recover from the effects of disaster.

## **Staffing — Organizational Structure, Roles and Responsibilities**

The MnSSC will maintain a core group of subject matter experts from HSEM and other state agencies as a decision-making workgroup to guide the MnSSC and its activities.

The MnSSC staff includes a school safety center director and three school safety specialists (a school emergency planning coordinator, safe-school assessment coordinator and school resource officer coordinator). These positions will enhance the integrated School Safety Center program by providing technical expertise, leadership and coordination to state and local emergency management, law enforcement, and school district officials. To ensure compliance with federal and state requirements for school safety preparedness, these positions initiate, develop, enhance, maintain and coordinate the programs of the School Safety Center by providing planning direction and interagency coordination. The team develops guidance materials, analyzes surveys and other data, and makes presentations to key school and emergency response audiences.

The MnSSC director began work in August 2013. The hiring process for the other three positions took approximately four months to complete. The MnSSC was fully staffed at the end of 2013.

## **Director Responsibilities**

- Leading the MnSSC, performing supervision and budget administration functions
- Reporting to the Legislature
- Serving as primary liaison to public safety agencies, school administration groups and school transportation companies
- Liaison to the DPS Office of Communications public information officer
- Developing a school emergency response/recovery team
- Developing a state response plan
- Coordinating with other state programs and agencies
- Presenting and training

## **Safe School Assessment Coordinator Responsibilities**

- Conducting safe-school assessments and training
- Facility self-assessment course and checklist
- Recovery planning and training
- Access and functional-needs planning
- Liaison to State Fire Marshal, State Patrol, and Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers
- Researching and analysis
- Compiling evidence-based best practices
- Developing and reviewing curriculum
- Presenting, training and planning

## **Emergency Planning Coordinator Responsibilities**

- Maintaining the Comprehensive School Safety Guide
- Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools training
- Updating Universal Procedures
- School exercises, drills and school procedures
- Supporting reunification planning
- Website coordinator
- Responding to constituent web inquiries
- Developing and reviewing curriculum
- Presenting, training and planning

## **School Resource Officer (SRO) Coordinator Responsibilities**

- Developing school resource officer curriculum
- Coordinating active shooter, emergency response, threat assessment and bomb threat classes
- Liaison to law enforcement agencies and school resource officers
- Developing and reviewing curriculum
- Presenting, training and planning

## 2013 Results Achieved

From August through December, several projects were undertaken:

- Established budget
- Hired staff
- Developed strategic plan
- Made presentations to educational groups and at conferences:
  - Minnesota Association of School Maintenance Supervisors Conference (MASMS)
  - State Fire Marshal Division School Inspectors – St. Cloud (Forrest Williams)
  - Emergency Preparedness Response Committee (EPRC) - state agency involvement in a school response team
  - Minnesota Symposium on Terrorism and Emergency Preparedness (M-STEP) – MnSSC re-establishment and overview
  - Northern Chapter MASMS - best practices in lockdown procedures and facility assessment – Brainerd
  - Macalaster College, Police in Schools Panel Discussion
  - HSEM staff - School Safety Center overview, roles, responsibilities
  - Communicated with stakeholders and media outlets

## Supporting Activities

<b>Contact</b>	<b>Activity/Request</b>
▪ Carleton County Sheriff's Department, Cloquet School Board	Emergency plan upgrade
▪ Cloquet School District Superintendent	Emergency crisis plan upgrade
▪ Todd County Sheriff's Office	Instructor materials
▪ City of St. Paul Emergency Management Division	Schools: charter, private
▪ Washington County Emergency Management	Planning resources
▪ Itasca County	Program request, student fingerprint/ID kits
▪ Minnesota Department of Education	Website content/addition talking points
▪ Information on Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC)/NetSMARTZ	Referral to BCA
▪ St. Paul Public Schools Emergency Management	Procedures, practices and policies
▪ Carver County Emergency Manager/Sheriff's Office	New principal plan review/upgrade
▪ Regional Program Coordinator	ICS lockdown protocols information
▪ Southeast Service Cooperative	School safety presentation request
▪ STRIDE Academy	Numbering windows/doors information
▪ St. Cloud Schools	Lockdown procedures

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<b>Contact</b>	<b>Activity/Request</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minneapolis Public Schools Emergency Management</li> </ul>	Lockdown best practices committee start-up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DPS Fire Marshal Division</li> </ul>	Parental access to lockdown drill information and dates clarification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ St. Paul Public Schools Emergency Management</li> </ul>	Playground safety information request
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Becker schools and MDE</li> </ul>	All-hazard planning, suicides, restorative environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interview with WCCO-TV and radio, KARE 11, MPR</li> </ul>	Fall school start and Sandy Hook school shooting anniversary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MDE newsletter</li> </ul>	School Safety Center re-establishment

### **Budget**

The amount appropriated for re-establishment of the School Safety Center was \$455,000. Based on that amount and the operating costs of the previous center, it was determined that this allotment would support four fulltime employees and their accompanying expenses.

### **Strategic Plan Development**

The following paragraphs include highlights of the MnSSC strategic plan.

#### **Vision**

All Minnesota K-12 schools will have a safe school environment.

#### **Mission**

The mission of the Minnesota School Safety Center is to serve as a resource to schools, law enforcement, emergency responders and community partners by providing information, guidance, training and technical assistance for all-hazard safety planning. The MnSSC coordinates its prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery activities with federal, state and local partners.

#### **Operating Principles**

The MnSSC strives to embody the following principles:

- Schools are not unsafe, but they can be made safer when schools, law enforcement and communities work together
- Being safe is a key element of learning
- The MnSSC is an essential resource for schools, law enforcement, emergency responders and other partners, offering training and technical assistance as communities prepare to handle any school emergency
- The MnSSC enhances partnerships so school districts, law enforcement agencies and communities can be part of a coordinated response

## **Core Functions**

The MnSSC will concentrate on these core functions:

- Form a state agency school emergency response/recovery team:
  - HSEM (MnSSC director)
  - Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (investigating agent)
  - DPS Office of Communications (public information officer)
  - Fire Marshal Division (school safety inspector)
  - Minnesota Department of Education (school climate, restorative practices, public information officer)
  - Minnesota Department of Health (Behavioral Health and Emergency Preparedness)
- Develop two strategies for determining the school emergency response/recovery team role. Based on the nature of the incident (natural disaster or school violence), the team will provide support to an incident commander, a school official, or will respond to the scene during emergencies.
- Develop state-coordinated response plans for state agency representatives
- Guide school districts in developing and enhancing emergency plans
- Assist in developing school all hazard safety plans
- Develop and provide pertinent and requested trainings

## **Key Work Activities**

- Establish a state agency school emergency response/recovery team
- Develop a state response plan for a large school emergency
- Update the Comprehensive School Safety Guide to include the most current emergency procedures guidance, training and toolkits
- Re-establish and foster partnerships with school districts, and law enforcement agencies
- Re-establish electronic communications (website, e-newsletter, web-based training)
- Identify best practices and lessons learned in school safety
- Collaborate in school emergency plan reviews
- Update the School Safety Assessment Checklist
- Update MnSSC training curriculum
- Conduct training needs assessment
- Coordinate required training

## **Key Partners**

- Schools (boards, district administrators, school administrators, school staff)
- Law enforcement agencies (local, county, state, federal)
- Associations related to education, law enforcement, community members
- State agencies
  - Minnesota Department of Education
  - Minnesota Department of Health
  - Minnesota Department of Public Safety

- Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- Office of Communications
- State Fire Marshal Division
- Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
- Federal Agencies
- Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Department of Education
- Other school safety centers

### **Measureable Program Outcomes**

To determine the effectiveness of MnSSC outreach and training, assessments will include: tracking the use of staff services, documenting telephone/email requests and inquiries, tracking numbers and demographics of training participants, and conducting feedback surveys on trainings.

### **2014 regional training classes will include:**

- Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools
- Threat Assessment in Schools
- Tools for Schools
- National Incident Management System
- Active Shooter /Intruder
- Bomb Threats
- School Resource Officer
- Crisis Communications

### **In addition to the formal training classes, staff of the MnSSC will continue to:**

- Conduct outreach activities (facility assessments, plan reviews)
- Present at professional conferences
- Help design scenarios and evaluate school drills and exercises