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Alabama School Security and Student Safety Task Force Issues Report

By: **STEPHEN CREWS** (<http://www.dothanfirst.com/meet-the-team/stephen-crews/78426462>) | ✉ (<mailto:screws@wdhn.com>)

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Montgomery - The Alabama School Security and Student Safety Task Force, a review panel formed by the Legislature during its 2016 regular session, on Friday released its final report and findings, which included a number of recommended updates to emergency response standards in public schools.

The panel was chaired by State Rep. Terri Collins (R - Decatur) with State Fire Marshal Steve Pilgreen serving as vice chair. A resolution sponsored by House Majority Leader Nathaniel Ledbetter (R - Rainsville) authorized its creation.

Formation of the task force was a priority in the House Republican Caucus' 2016 "Right for Alabama" legislative agenda.

"Ensuring that our teachers, students, and support personnel are protected, safe, and secure during school hours is one of the highest responsibilities of state and local governments," Collins said. "While we pray that they do not occur on any campus, the goal of our task force is to help equip every school with the information and resources necessary to deal with emergencies ranging from active shooter situations to severe weather events and everything in between."

The House recently took action on one of the task force recommendations when it approved HB89, which is sponsored by State Rep. Alan Baker (R - Brewton) and requires the implementation of a statewide notification system allowing school systems to immediately inform officials in Montgomery of emergency situations as soon as they occur. The bill is now being considered in the Senate.

Designating an individual **SECTIONS** Coordinator in each local school district, with a required **WEATHER** coordinator attend two safety-related trainings per **COMMUNITY**

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Requiring local school districts to develop simplified Emergency Operating Plans that comply with guidelines provided by the Department of Education.

Requiring the Alabama Peace Officers' Standards and Training Commission, in cooperation with the Department of Education, to develop annual training for law enforcement officers specific to school emergency operation plans and proper utilization of Virtual Alabama.

Encourage the Department of Education to distribute to local school districts a "School Safety and Security Best Practices" checklist that identifies comprehensive best practices to enhance school safety and security.

Amend Section 12-15-217, Code of Alabama 1975, to provide for the sharing of information between juvenile probation officers and school districts relating to delinquent students that may pose a threat to safety.

In addition to Collins and Pilgreen, the members of the task force and their appointing authority included: Jenna Bedsole, Attorney, appointed by the Alabama Law Institute; Erica Bozeman, appointed by the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency; Jeff Byard, appointed by the Alabama Emergency Management Agency; Dick Brewbaker, Alabama State Senator, District 25; Chair of the Senate Education Committee; Curt Carpenter, appointed by the Alabama Tactical Officers Association; Kathy Carson, appointed by the Alabama Association of Emergency Managers; Philip Cleveland, Interim Superintendent of Education; Jim Cunningham, Fort Payne City Schools Superintendent, appointed by the Alabama School Superintendents Association; Greg DeJarnett, appointed by the Department of Education; Joanne Hale, Secretary of Information Technology; Cary Hill, appointed by the Alabama Department of Mental Health; Cindy Jackson, appointed by the Alabama School Boards Association; Jay Jones, Sheriff of Lee County, appointed by the Alabama Sheriffs Association; Joseph McPhillips, Educator, appointed by the Governor; Rudolph Munnerlyn, appointed by the Alabama Association of Police Chiefs; Pamela Revels, School Resource Officer, Lee County, appointed by the Alabama Association of School Resource Officers; Emily Rich, President of the Alabama School Counselors Association; and Art Rousseau, appointed by the Alabama Community College System.

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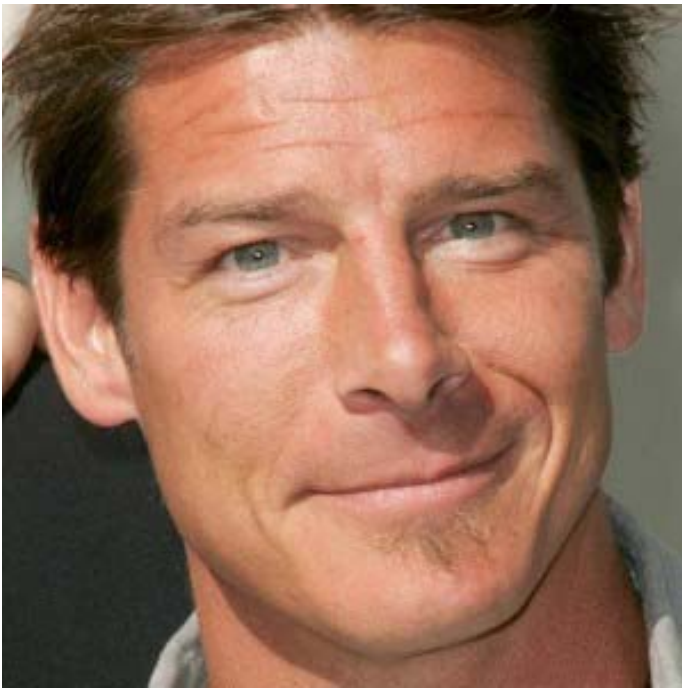
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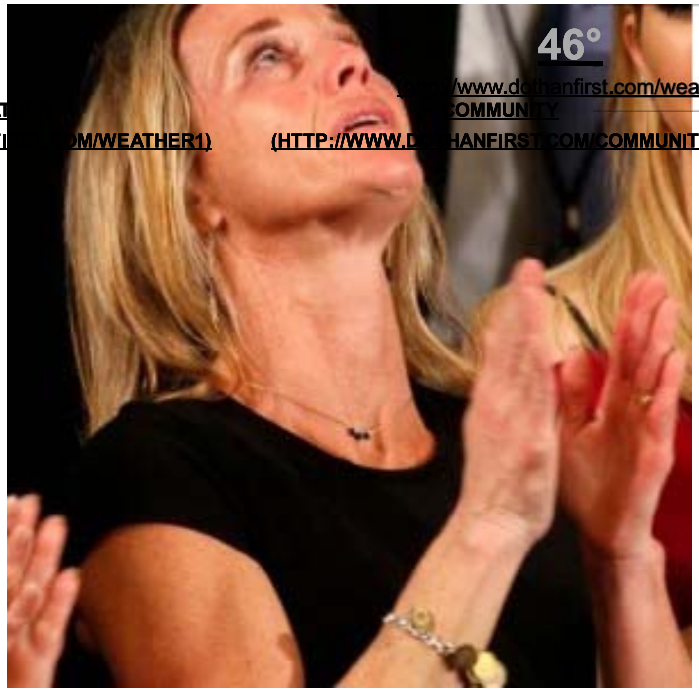
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