

BUDGET REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the 2024 Interim

October 16, 2024

Call to Order and Roll Call

The fifth meeting of the Budget Review Subcommittee on Education was held on October 16, 2024, at 10:30 AM in Room 154 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Matthew Deneen, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Matthew Deneen Co-Chair; Representative Kim Banta Co-Chair; Senators Christian McDaniel, and Gerald A. Neal; Representatives Adam Bowling, Josh Bray, Shane Baker, Derrick Graham, Steve Riley, James Tipton, and Killian Timoney.

Guests: Jon Akers, Executive Director, Kentucky Center for School Safety; Chief Chris Barrier, Director of Law Enforcement, Montgomery County Schools

LRC Staff: Liz Columbia, Mariah Derringer-Lackey, David Talley, Justin Smith, Ethan Williams, and Amie Elam.

School Safety

Jon Akers, the Executive Director of the Kentucky Center for School Safety, and Chief Chris Barrier, the Director of Law Enforcement at Montgomery County Schools, testified regarding historical and current allocations of safe school funds and the roles and responsibilities of School Resource Officers (SROs). The presentation included a breakdown of the calculations for district allocations and the types of school safety issues handled by SROs.

In response to a question from Representative Riley, Mr. Akers said that 2019 Regular Session Senate Bill 1 and 2020 Regular Session Senate Bill 8 made the penalties for terroristic threatening more specific and each offense a Class B felony. He added that a letter must go out in each district within the first ten days of school stating the consequences for any student who engages in threatening behaviors.

In response to a question from Representative Tipton, Mr. Akers stated that he believes the General Assembly has allocated sufficient funds to continue supporting the principal mentorship program. He agreed to reach out to the General Assembly regarding any future funding requirements for the program.

In response to a question from Senator McDaniel, Mr. Akers explained that in the past, limited electronic resources and training were offered to private school systems. He noted that the 2024 Regular Session Senate Bill 91 funding would enable the Center to expand these services.

In response to a question from Senator Neal, Chief Barrier stated that the recidivism rate of students is the most quantifiable measure of success when it comes to school safety issues. He added that the data collected provides the district with valuable information that could help reduce the number of violations of the law.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the subcommittee, the meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.