



**#111-22**

**Commonwealth of Virginia  
Virginia Department of Education  
Superintendent's Memo #111-22**

DATE: May 27, 2022  
TO: Division Superintendents  
FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction  
SUBJECT: **Student and School Safety Resources and Opportunities**

The senseless tragedy at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas has us all mourning for the lost lives and their families. Our prayers and thoughts are with Uvalde. The tragedy prompts us to analyze our current capacity to ensure the safety of every child and faculty member, and determine what additional steps we can take in Virginia.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) works with entities and stakeholders across the Commonwealth on student and school safety. Here is a compilation of resources and opportunities. The VDOE shares information from other entities, resources, and training.

Most school safety initiatives at the VDOE are developed and offered in close collaboration with the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS), which was established by the Virginia General Assembly in 2000. The VCSCS is located within the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and focuses on improving and enhancing safety by addressing topics which affect Virginia law enforcement, schools, and institutions of higher education. The VCSCS is mandated and funded to provide training for stakeholders, develop, review, and disseminate resources, facilitate the annual school safety audit, provide technical assistance, and develop partnerships to promote school safety and campus in Virginia. A full list of training offered by the VCSCS is available on the [VCSCS website](#).

Additionally, the VDOE provides support to the VCSCS related to threat assessment training, school resource officer (SRO) training, school safety audits, mental health training initiatives, suicide prevention, Handle with Care projects, and school security officer training. Additional resources and opportunities are on the [VDOE website](#).

Collaboratively, the VCSCS and VDOE host several conferences including:

- [Safe and Supportive Schools](#)
- [Mental Health in Schools](#)
- [National Threat Assessment Conference for Educational Institutions](#)
- [Virginia Campus Safety and Violence Prevention Forum](#)
- [Virginia School Safety Training Forum](#)

Other resources and technical assistance offered by the VDOE include:

- [The Virginia Tiered Systems of Support \(VTSS\)](#) provide in depth training to school and school division cohorts on multi-tiered systems of support and implementation of [Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports \(PBIS\)](#) to improve student outcomes and school climate.
- [The Office of Support Services](#) manages school security equipment grants, crisis management plans, and guidance on school safety drills and building security.
- [The Department of Special Education and Student Services Office of Student Services](#) is responsible for developing and maintaining model policies and guidance for student discipline, anti-bullying, suicide prevention, and crisis management plans.
- [The Division of Early Childhood Care and Education](#) ensures that preschool classrooms are fully included in all efforts to keep children safe and to support the emotional and behavioral needs of young learners around traumatic events. Early care and preschool licensing requirements include written policies and procedures for lockdowns, including when there are incidents of violence at centers, and documented annual drills.

## For more information

Contact [Jon.Russell@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Jon.Russell@doe.virginia.gov) for more information at (804) 225-2057.

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