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Governor Wolf Launches School Safety Task Force with Auditor General DePasquale

Wynnewood, PA - Governor Tom Wolf was joined by Auditor General Eugene DePasquale at Penn Wynne Elementary School in Montgomery County today to announce the creation of a School Safety Task Force that brings together government officials, statewide education organizations, law enforcement, community members, school officials, teachers, parents, and students to talk to about ways to improve school safety and security.

"Ensuring the safety of Pennsylvanians, especially our children, is my top priority as Governor," said Governor Wolf. "I am creating a school safety task force to ensure we are doing everything we can to make sure that our schools are a safe place for our children to learn. By working together and listening to those on the front lines, we can find solutions that will improve school safety, security, and preparedness."

Governor Wolf and Auditor General DePasquale will co-chair the task force along with vice chairs Charles Ramsey, chairman of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency; Mark DiRocco, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators; Judy Morgitan, Immediate Past President of the Pennsylvania Association of School Nurses and Practitioners; and Bonita Allen, President of the Pennsylvania Parent Teacher Association.

"Combining the safety review experience of my team with the knowledge of the other members on the task force will help make our schools safer," said Auditor General DePasquale. "There is not a one-size-fits all solution to school safety. We will use our combined expertise to raise the bar for safe schools in Pennsylvania because we must provide a safe learning environment for our current students and protect future generations."

The Wolf administration and state partners will support the work of the task force including Education Secretary Pedro Rivera, Acting Health Secretary and Physician General Dr. Rachel

Levine, Labor and Industry Secretary Jerry Oleksiak, and Lt. Colonel Robert Evanchick, Deputy Commissioner of Operations, Pennsylvania State Police.

Governor Wolf's priorities for the task force include:

- Hearing from school officials, teachers, parents, students, law enforcement, health professionals, and community partners about their concerns with safety and potential policy changes;
- Determining additional funding needs for the Office for Safe Schools, security and safety personnel, school counselors and nurses, and additional or upgraded security equipment;
- Examining effectiveness of student support and physical and mental health programs and information sharing;
- Evaluating stronger state requirements for active shooter trainings and other security protocols, including current programs offered by the Pennsylvania State Police and other state agencies;
- Strengthening information and best practice sharing among local schools, law enforcement, health care providers, and human services programs; and
- Examining new or existing tools to ensure easy and effective anonymous reporting of suspicious activity to law enforcement;

The task force will hold regional meetings throughout Pennsylvania over the next few months to hear the perspectives and needs of different communities.

As part of the governor's effort to hear from Pennsylvanians on school safety, he is inviting the public to share their perspective and suggestions by providing feedback online at <https://www.governor.pa.gov/school-safety-feedback/>. The submissions will assist the task force in preparing a final report to the governor.

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