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La traducción en español comienza en la página 5.

February 16, 2024

Subject: Implementation of School Security Officers at Colorado Early Colleges Campuses

Dear CEC Community,

I am writing to inform you of a recent decision made by the CEC Governing Board (Board) concerning the enhancement of security measures across all CEC campuses.

CEC has recently invested over \$1,000,000 in upgrading security at all CEC campuses. Some of these upgrades include:

- New digital handheld two-way radios for school staff to quickly communicate with one another.
- A unified door access control system that uses military grade encryption and unique identifiable tokens for secure access into CEC buildings.
- Next-gen, AI enhanced security camera system that proactively monitors all doors and campuses for threats.

We know that across the country incidents of violence and threats targeting educational institutions have increased 69% from 2018-2019 to 2022-23¹. Specifically, CEC has seen an uptick in behaviors around some of our campuses by community members that involve criminal activities. Most recently, there was an escalated police incident at a business located across the street from one of our campuses.

Over the past several months, the Board has engaged in discussions regarding contracting with Colorado security firms to provide School Security Officers (SSOs) at CEC campuses as CEC and other state-chartered schools have been unsuccessful in securing contracts for School Resource Officers with local police departments. At its January 19, 2024 meeting, the Board voted unanimously to initiate the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to contract with Colorado security firms to provide armed SSOs at all CEC campuses.

I recognize the significance of this decision and the need for a comprehensive and phased approach in bringing SSOs onto our campuses.

- The presence of SSOs is to ensure the security of the exterior and interior of our physical buildings, and to serve as a visible and proactive threat deterrent ensuring a swift and efficient response in case of emergencies.
 - SSOs **will** be an extra layer of security to keep staff and students safe by working to bridge the time between when police are called and when they arrive. This is particularly crucial given that

¹ Dr. Amy Klinger, Amanda Klinger, Esq, and Hannah Klinger; *Violent Threats and Incidents in School: An Analysis of the 2022-2023 School Year*, Educator's School Safety Network.



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nationally, and particularly in Colorado, the time for police to respond to incidents is increasing².

- SSOs **will not** be involved in any student discipline. Student discipline will remain the responsibility and focus of the Campus Culture staff at each CEC campus.

CEC's RFP is now available on the [School Safety](#) page of the CEC website.

- The RFP asks security firms for specific details on qualifications and/or certifications they require of their staff in addition to what is legally required at both federal and state levels.

CEC will follow a meticulous evaluation process when vetting the RFPs submitted by Colorado security firms. CEC's focus is to select the right security firm(s) that hires the right people for the job. CEC will not compromise.

If CEC finds a qualified security firm(s) with qualified SSOs to serve our campuses, we anticipate having the SSO initiative implemented no earlier than July 2024.

The Board and I are committed to being diligent in our work, and in maintaining open and transparent communication with CEC staff and families throughout this process. Should you have questions or concerns, please email me directly at sandi.brown@coloradoearlycolleges.org, or send an email to the CEC Safety Team at safety@coloradoearlycolleges.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandi Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Sandi

² Jent, Breeanna, "Waiting for the policy: Data show CSPD response times have worsened since 2019", "The Gazette," Colorado Springs, August 7 2023, updated Dec 19, 2023, and George Brauchler, Mitch Morrissey, and Steven Byers, Ph.D.; *Spotlight on Crime in Aurora, CO*; Common Sense Institute; Oct. 17, 2023.