



Educator Safety Task Force (ESTF)

February 27, 2025

Remote, Via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Members Present	Laura Carno, Matt Holtman, Marsia Ronyak, Faith Schmelling, Lisa Humberd, Christina Monaco, Elsa Banuelos-Lindsay, Susan Rayburn, Jamie Montoya-De Smidt, Darren Joiner, Suzie McGhghy, Jim Plott, Luke Yoder, Melisa Cellan, Ali Decaro, Chris Zimmerman, Brandon Smith.
Honorary Members	Finessa Ferrell, Robin Singer, Amy Schamberg, Dustin Geist
State Employees	Chris Harms, Director, Office of School Safety
Facilitators	Berrick Abramson and Carrie Steele, Confluence PSG

Meeting Agenda, Purpose & Outcomes

Welcome & Introductions	Confluence PSG President, Berrick Abramson and the Director of the Office of School Safety, Chris Harms gave welcoming remarks.
Agenda & Overview of Meeting by Confluence PSG	<p>Confluence PSG President, Berrick Abramson, gave an overview of the purpose of today’s meeting, which includes:</p> <p>Welcome & Introductions</p> <p>Meeting Overview</p> <p>Discussion of Legislative Directives to Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Finance & Funding • Disproportionate Discipline • Class Size <p>Report Framework & Recommendations Discussion Part 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools & Districts • Colorado State Agencies including Office of School Safety, • Colorado Department of Education & Behavioral Health • Administration • Teacher Prep Programs & Administrator Prep

	<p>Programs</p> <p>Closing Thoughts & Next Steps</p>
<p>Key Themes & Takeaways</p>	<p>Key Takeaways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey results show high rates of physical aggression against educators, highlighting urgency of task force's work • Priorities emerged around establishing school culture of safety/belonging, incident response teams, and "tap in/tap out" systems • Training needs identified in trauma-informed practices, de-escalation, and recognizing escalating behaviors • Recommendations should be research and evidence-based where possible and presented in an actionable, user-friendly format <p>Topics Discussed</p> <p>Class Size and School Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General agreement that smaller class sizes alone do not solve safety issues • Funding should target specific high-need areas rather than blanket reductions • Key funding priorities: retention/training of paraprofessionals, mental health staff, alternative placement options <p>School Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a positive school culture and sense of belonging seen as foundational • "Tap in/tap out" systems allowing staff/students to step away when needed • Mentoring programs for new staff and struggling students and administrators • Ensuring adequate time for students to socialize, be active during school day <p>Staff Training Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding trauma and neurobiology of behavior

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing escalation signs and de-escalation techniques • Emergency response protocols • Ongoing integration of training concepts, not just one-time sessions <p>Incident Response Teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seen as critical for providing immediate support during crises • Need clear roles, procedures for team members • Should include mental health expertise • Post-incident debriefing and support for all involved staff is important
<p>Next Steps</p>	<p>Upcoming Meeting Dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 27, 3:30pm-5:30pm • April 24, 3:30pm-5:30pm <p><i>Please note: Additional meeting dates may occur. Please check the Educator Safety Task Force Website for more information.</i></p> <p><i>We welcome all perspectives critical to shaping the work of the Educator Safety Task Force. Please reach out to Chris Harms with questions and/or recommendations.</i></p>

These minutes are intended to provide an overview of the discussions at the meeting and, where possible, the high-level themes or areas of consensus. The summaries of any topics are not presented as comprehensive notes of the full discussion. Neither the inclusion or omission of any comment or segment of a discussion should be interpreted as a judgment of the value or importance of such items.

If you have questions about this meeting or upcoming meetings, please contact:

Task Force Facilitators

Berrick Abramson, President, Confluence PSG: berrick@confluencepsg.com

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Task Force Lead

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