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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*
DATE: July 15, 2008
SUBJECT: Summary of Summit on School Safety Solutions

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to summarize the outcomes of the June 3, 2008 Statewide *Summit on School Safety Solutions* and to provide a copy of the **Report from the Summit on School Safety Solutions** (ATTACHMENT).

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Despite the fact that they remain one of the safest places for children and youth, schools are not immune from what occurs in their communities, the norms and behaviors that are acceptable in families and communities, or the influences of the media. Suspension data are provided on an annual basis by the local school systems to the Department and give one indicator of misbehavior in schools. During the 2006-07 school year, local school systems reported more than 1,800 weapons were found on school grounds, students sustained more than 5,600 physical attacks, and teachers sustained more than 1,500 physical attacks. Troubled by this data and reports of recent incidents of school violence in our schools, Congressman Elijah Cummings and I convened a statewide **Summit on School Safety Solutions** on June 3, 2008, at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

Invitees to the Summit included students, parents, teachers, principals, school system central office administrators, elected officials, law enforcement officers, representatives from institutions of higher education, faith-based leaders, and representatives from non-profit and state and local government agencies. More than 280 individuals participated in the day-long agenda.

The agenda included presentations by two national experts. Mr. Ivan Juzang, Founder and President of MEE Productions, Inc., advocated for the need of strong relationships between children/youth and adults, the need to understand youth culture and the influences media plays on that culture, assisting children/youth learn alternatives to violence, and the need to actively engage youth leaders in school safety efforts. Dr. Sam Goldstein, University of Utah School of Medicine, promoted the need for empathy, resilience, and responsibility in youth, early identification of and intervention with children struggling to develop self control.



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Two panels of experts fielded questions from the audience and questions prepared in advance based on the result of a pre-Summit survey of invitees. The afternoon was spent in breakout sessions where participants were asked to brainstorm and prioritize solutions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff at the Department has analyzed the proposed solutions and found they may be broadly characterized around the following topics: family and community involvement, students, professional development and pre-service training, and services. The following next steps were also identified: (1) create and disseminate a report from the summit, (2) convene a summit for students on school safety, (3) work to standardize behavior expectations and consequences for misbehavior across the State, and (4) form an action committee to act on the solutions generated. The Action Committee on School Safety Solutions is scheduled to meet on July 14, 2008.

ACTION:

For information only.

Attachment can be found on our website at

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/newsroom/publications/>

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