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**Virginia Board for People with Disabilities**

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**Virginia Board for People with Disabilities awards over \$200,000  
to the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services  
for school crisis planning project**

**Richmond, Va.** – The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD) is pleased to announce that it has awarded a grant to the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) for \$213,718. The grant is designed to ensure that local school divisions include the needs of students with disabilities when planning for, responding to, and recovering from crisis situations like school shooter scenarios.

Through the Board's grant, funded under the federal Developmental Disability and Bill of Rights Act, DCJS will update its current *Model School Crisis, Emergency Management and Medical Emergency Response Plan* to include a component in each section that addresses how to meet the specialized needs of students with disabilities in crisis situation in order to ensure the safety of all students and personnel. The revised Model Plan will be made available in an accessible, online format, and will include a series of interactive, instructional videos for school administrators, teachers, and students with disabilities.

"The Board is delighted to once again be collaborating with DCJS following our recent joint effort to provide disability awareness training for law enforcement personnel throughout the Commonwealth," said Heidi Lawyer, the Board's Executive Director. "We appreciate their ongoing commitment to serving the diversity of Virginia's population."

"Our Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety is committed to the safety and security of all students in Virginia schools. This joint endeavor with VBPD is another opportunity to expand our resources and training to better prepare, respond, and recover from a school crisis," said Shannon Dion, Director of DCJS. "Ensuring that all students, including students with disabilities, are safe and secure is everyone's priority."

The VBPD serves as the Developmental Disabilities Council for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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