

School Safety and Security in Idaho Public Education



Matt McCarter, Director

Student Engagement & Postsecondary
Readiness Division



Background

- The SDE examined safety and security equipment & capabilities among a large sample of schools in 2008
- Based on data uncovered the following tools and guidance were implemented:
 - Educator’s Guide to School Safety Equipment
 - School Safety Continuum
 - NIMS / ICS training (face to face and online)
 - Lockdown procedure standardization
 - Emergency Operations planning guidance



Current Activity

School safety and security remains a top priority of Superintendent Luna, as such he convened a stakeholder group to improve school safety / security in Idaho.

The Governor appointed Colonel Russell to inform and compliment the SDE's efforts to enhance school safety and security and has been involved in the process.



Current Activity

School Safety & Security Task Force meetings
Jan. 24, Feb. 12, March 4, June 14 and September 27

Susan Fletcher, ISBA-
American Falls

Anita Christenson, Principal-
Nampa

Steve Steiner, BHS

John Overton / Jeff Lavey- ICOPA	Vaughn Killeen, ISA	John Robert, IEMA
Vicki Johnson, Counselor / fed programs- Blackfoot	Bill Hatch, DBS	Robert Feeley, BHS
Larry Callicut, SDE / IDJC (former)	Steve Meyers, BPD	George Stevens, BPD
Gaylen Smyer, IASA / Cassia S.D.	Dale Nader, BHS	Todd Zucker, Vice Principal- Weiser
Mike Munger, Boise S.D.	Guy Bliesner, Bonneville S.D. (former)	Heidi Novich, BHS
Brian Armes, principal- Bonneville	Steve Keys, DBS	Sam Hulse, Bonneville Sheriff's office



Task Force Goals

- To identify the critical infrastructure, resources and action steps to create a culture of readiness to prevent and respond to crisis situations in every school community in Idaho (statewide plan).
- To build capacity for local jurisdictions to effectively prevent and respond to their unique crisis situations.
- To assure every student, parent and staff member feels safe in Idaho schools.



Task Force Determinations

Core Concerns:

- There is a wide variance in the level of attention and preparation for school safety and security issues in public school districts and charter schools across the state.
- The majority of districts in the state lack the resources (expertise, personnel and funding) to establish meaningful and sustainable school safety and security improvements.
- Ownership of school safety issues at the local and state levels are nebulous and not well defined.



Task Force Determinations

Elements of Success / Recommendations:

- Safety and emergency operations plans must be NIMS, ICS and THIRA* compliant.
 - ICS- Incident Command System
 - NIMS- National Incident Management System
 - THIRA- Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Guide
- Solutions must balance empowering local decision-making and establishing a baseline of statewide uniformity.
- A dedicated funding source for state and local activities must be established to sustain efforts and maintain attention on school safety & security.



Current Activity

(SB 1200, section 24)

The legislature appropriated \$100k for FY14 to support the implementation of the common threat assessment tool throughout the state and to support the work of the Idaho Safe and Secure Schools Task Force.

The assessment tool is available on the SDE website.

http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/safe_secure/



Current Activity

(SB 1200, section 30)

- SDE is to compile information related to school district and charter school expenditures pursuant to safe environments for learning and classroom discipline (33-1002 sections 1 & 2) for FY14.
\$300 per support unit*
- Information to be posted on SDE website by December 31, 2014.



*The SDE has limited authority / oversight over these funds.



National Guidance

From a statewide perspective, the following sources recommend implementing a common school safety and security threat assessment as an initial step in improving preparedness:

- Sandy Hook Advisory Commission Interim Report
- NRA National School Shield Task Force Proposal
- Congressional Research Service Report on Public Mass Shootings in the United States
- USDOE Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans



FEMA



Task Force Deliverable

A common, valid & reliable statewide school safety and security threat assessment tool has been identified and adapted for Idaho.

- Source- Texas Center for School Safety
- Includes in-depth assessment among the following domains:



School climate
Demographics
Neighborhood
Intruder
deterrent
Instructional
settings

Administration
Transportation
Warehouse
Stadium
Maintenance
Construction
EOP
Website



Current Activity

- The SDE is implementing threat assessment among a sample of schools in Idaho (75 total- approximately 10% of schools in the state by January 15, 2014). 28 completed as of 10/1/13.
- Division of Building Safety is providing school safety inspection reports, which aids in streamlining assessment implementation.
- Detailed results remain at the local level, the SDE will compile an aggregate summary for reporting to the legislature during the 2014 session.

*These activities are not intended to replace / supplant existing local efforts but to support and enhance safety planning currently underway.



Local Perspective

Brian Walker, Principal
Fairmont Junior High School, Boise Independent S.D.

Safety / Security Assessment conducted September 20, 2013



Current Activity

- In partnership with the Bureau of Homeland Security, the SDE is piloting a proof of concept to connect schools (Payette H.S.) to county emergency operations centers to enable dedicated, failsafe communication between schools and first responders.
 - 4 VOIP video phones are being deployed in strategic locations in the high school as well as 1 at the EOC / Fire station and 1 at sheriff / police dispatch
 - Cameras have been deployed in high school
 - Lockdown capabilities currently being examined
 - Live test of capabilities will occur in October



Equipment and installation made possible by BHS



Task Force Recommendation

Establish an Idaho Center for School Safety specifically designated to support schools and first responders in increasing preparedness-

- Repository for best practices, data, research, technical assistance, guidance and training for Idaho schools.
- Oversee implementation of common Threat Assessment Tool.
- Charged with state-level ownership of school safety and leveraging existing resources and infrastructure.
- Establish and implement Idaho school safety standards.
- Identify and secure grants and funding to advance school safety efforts in Idaho.
- Identify and scale up exemplary practices.



Task Force Recommendation

Idaho Center for School Safety continued...

- Housed at the SDE
- Startup funds included in SDE FY15 budget request
- Establishment of an oversight committee to inform and direct activities and focus comprised of key stakeholders
- This recommendation is based on:

TEXAS  STATE
TEXAS SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER



Idaho Center for School Safety Objectives

- Threat assessment tool implementation rate among schools / districts
- Trainings delivered throughout the state on topics of greatest deficiency
- Safety planning progress among schools / districts
- Establishment of Idaho school safety standards
- Facilitation of drills conducted in concert with schools and local first responders
- Decrease in incidents of student crime / violence in schools

***“Big Picture”* Vision**

Public school staff and students work and learn in safe, supportive environments and know what to do to protect themselves and each other in the event of an emergency.



Task Force Recommendation

Require trustees (or their designees) and local first responders to meet annually, at a minimum, to implement the threat assessment tool, review the results and conduct planning based on the results (includes training, drills, and exercises).



Task Force Recommendation

Support for Local Jurisdictions

Superintendent Luna's FY15 budget request includes \$2.4 million to support district and public charter school safety / security improvements

- Base amount of \$1,500 and a prorated amount based upon prior year's average daily attendance
- Initial parameters include:
 - Identification of district safety lead
 - Implementation of common threat assessment
 - Craft, train and exercise plans based on the strengths and weaknesses identified by assessment
 - Procurement of equipment or programs based on data



Considerations for Arming Staff

The decision to authorize school personnel to carry weapons on school campus in Idaho rests with locally elected school board trustees per section 18-3302D(4)(f), Idaho Code.

The Task Force recommends retaining this statute section as currently written.



Next Steps

- The Safe and Secure Schools Task Force is reviewing Idaho Statute and IDAPA rule to determine gaps and overlaps.
- As school safety gap trends are identified the SDE will work to leverage trainings, support and recommendations to address the most critical elements.
- The Safe and Secure Schools Task Force will continue working to refine recommendations for the FY14 legislation session.
- The SDE will continue to reach out to stakeholder groups and communities to cultivate a statewide consensus approach to school safety / security strategies.



Students will never be free to learn until they are free from fear, intimidation and violence.

We never want to look back after a tragic school incident and ask:

“What more could we have done? Could we have prevented this?”



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Considerations for Arming Staff

- Consultation with the district insurance carrier to determine applicable policy changes and associated costs.
- Identification of the rules of engagement (for what purposes is it appropriate to brandish a weapon on campus?).
- Identification of enhanced training required of those authorized to carry weapons on campus (training should be ongoing, not a one-time event).
- Consultation with local law enforcement to inform the decision.
- Consultation with parents to inform the decision.



Considerations for Arming Staff

- Clarification of expectations (through policy) of the actions of authorized school staff when in contact with law enforcement personnel.
- Identification of psychiatric screening measures to ensure the sound mental health of staff authorized to carry.
- Determination of requirements to ensure weapon security and retention (prevent unauthorized access and use of the weapon).
- District policy should specify which staff member(s) are authorized to carry weapons, and should identify the specific the weapon(s) to be carried. The amount, location and security of ammunition should also be addressed.

