

# **School Safety and Security Study Executive Summary**

**From the  
Wyoming Department of Education  
In Consultation with the  
School Facilities Commission**



**December 1, 2006**

**Dr. Jim McBride  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction**

Wyoming Department of Education  
Hathaway Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
2300 Capitol Avenue  
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0050

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**Introduction.**

Pursuant to House Enrolled Act 23 (from the original HB 0139) Section 7 (g), the Legislature has required that the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE), in consultation with the School Facilities Commission (SFC) review school district safety and security needs.

The survey portion of the study encompassed 39 out of a possible 48 respondents – an excellent response by most survey standards.

**A. Phone Feedback.** (Reference Main Study)

**B. Survey Data.** (See below)

The safety and security survey administered to Wyoming school districts in 2006 is shown below along with the frequency of answers.

	Question:	Yes	No	In Process	Not Reported
1.	Are safety and security needs addressed in a district policy or a crisis management plan?	37	1	0	1
2.	Does each school have an individual, appointed in writing, responsible for administering a school safety program?	31	6	1	1
3.	Does the district have a risk manager (full or part-time)?	18	18	1	1
4.	Are the school emergency plans reviewed by appropriate first responder agencies (Sheriff, Police Chief, Fire Chief, etc.)?	30	8	0	1
5.	Has each school conducted a risk/vulnerability assessment identifying both internal (fire potential, disturbed individuals, etc.) and external (nearby chemical facilities, half-way houses, etc.) risks? If no, go to question 7.	22	17	0	0
6.	Do the emergency plans reflect prevention, preparedness, response and recovery issues specific to risks and vulnerabilities identified?	23	7	0	N/A 9
7.	Is there documented training for all school district employees in regard to school safety and security?	25	13	0	1
8.	Is student access controlled during the school day?	31	8	0	0
9.	If yes, how? (Reference main study.)				
10.	Does your district have an anti-bullying program? If yes, please list the program. (Reference main study.)	23	12	0	4
11.	Do you track incidents of bullying in your end-of-year district report?	32	7	0	0
12.	Do schools have two-way communication with all teachers during the regular school day?	35	4	0	0
13.	Do schools have three days of sheltering supplies readily available?	6	33		
14.	If the district is facing any kind of new structure, addition or remodel, is a professional review specifically conducted that addresses school safety concerns?	29	6		N/A 4

15. In what way(s) are first responders apprised of key school information in the event of an emergency? (Put an x by all that apply.)
- a. Information & Access Response Kit (25)
  - b. Wysters Emergency Website (5)
  - c. Use of CDs (4)
  - d. Other (See summary below.) (14)
    - i. Safety handbook.
    - ii. Crisis management team meetings.
    - iii. Annual joint trainings.
    - iv. Facility tours.
    - v. School design plans shared with first responders.
    - vi. SRO briefs building administrators weekly.

	Put an x by all that apply.	a. No effective safety/security measures are present.	b. Basic cameras at the front of the school or other key entrance.	c. Door/window security alarm systems.	d. Video monitoring technology covering extensive locations.	e. Adequate security personnel/ School Resource Officers in the school(s).	f. Integrated video, door access, alarm system throughout all facilities networked to the district office.	g. Integrated video, door access, alarm system throughout all facilities networked to the district office.
16.	For the <b>elementary school(s)</b> in your district, indicate the presently existing safety and security item(s) that is/are collectively in place.	13	12	7	7	8	2	
17.	For the <b>junior high/middle school(s)</b> in your district, indicate the presently existing safety and security item(s) that is/are collectively in place.	10	16	5	13	11	1	
18.	For the <b>high school(s)</b> in your district, indicate the presently existing safety and security item(s) that is/are collectively in place.	8	19	7	18	17	1	
19.	For the <b>elementary school(s)</b> in your district, what are your <i>future</i> safety & security needs?	1	27	16	23	10	2	27
20.	For the <b>junior high/middle school(s)</b> in your district, what are your <i>future</i> safety & security needs?	4	17	13	17	12	3	28
21.	For the <b>high school(s)</b> in your district, what are your <i>future</i> safety & security needs?	4	15	14	15	12	5	27

There was an optional comment section at the end of the survey that asked for additional specific safety and/or security district needs that were not covered in the question section. The responses were divided into the following major categories:

- a. Our district needs assistance in updating our comprehensive emergency plan.
- b. We need to update our policies regarding physical access to facilities.
- c. Space is needed for the school SRO.
- d. Integrate door access systems, without alarm, that will network to one main location.
- e. Two-way radios at each school [should be made available] to communicate with law enforcement.
- f. Increase exterior lighting.
- g. Need security alarms in new buildings.
- h. Need to train some staff to serve as a district level [emergency] coordinator.
- i. Need security alarms in areas besides the computer labs and office areas.
- j. Classrooms need intercom systems or telephones.
- k. Some schools are not alarmed, but they need them.
- l. Available district wiring needs to be able to handle more video
- m. The state should hold a safety/security conference every year to keep abreast of new technology and ideas. (It would be an opportunity to learn from what other districts have done and exchange valuable information.)
- n. Need ideas.
- o. Need a radio system interconnected between buildings and all emergency responders.
- p. More trained personnel to screen and protect.
- q. Integrated technology surveillance equipment.
- r. Integrated locks on all external and internal doors with an electric door hold opener so a button could be pressed and all doors would close and lock.
- s. External lighting is needed on several schools in the district.
- t. Need a “contact system” to alert police and sheriff if a problem situation arises.

### **C. School Safety Committee/State Homeland Security Recommendations.**

Listings with no following dollar amount can be implemented with no cost to the state.

#### **1. School Emergency Notification.**

Recommendation – funding **\$320,000** for a trial first year, depending on performance, may request next biennium funding.

2. Access Monitoring.

Approximately \$35,000 per school.  
\$11,235,423 for remaining schools.

Recommendation: explore School Facilities Commission making a change to accommodate installation of new systems in addition to current ability to replace them.

3. Single Access Point.

4. Anti-Bullying Programs/Efforts are Critical.

5. Annual School Survey.

6. Anonymous School Safety Hotline.

Expected to introduce it to Wyoming with a grant. Depending on performance, may request next biennium funding of \$49,360.

7. Annual School Safety Workshops.

Expected to start small and build each annual even in size and scope. May charge attendance fee.

8. Increased use of SROs (School Resource Officers).

a. Optionally by district, may be funded locally.

$\$4,600/\text{month} \times 9\text{ months} = \$41,400$   
 $\$41,400 \times 48\text{ school district} = \$1,987,200$

b. By school size: one SRO for each school at or above 700 students equals 22 schools (based on the latest edition of the Wyoming Education Directory).

$\$41,400 \times 22\text{ larger schools} = \$910,800$

c. By unique need: there will be different demands in each school. This will need to be covered by districts on a case-by-case basis. No state cost.

Recommendation – possible funding for 5A and 4A schools only = **\$910,800** (Per year).

9. Increased Police Visits.

10. Varied Routines.

11. Include Non-Certified Personnel in planning and training.

12. Sex Offender Registry. [http://attorneygeneral.state.wy.us/dci/so/so\\_registration.html](http://attorneygeneral.state.wy.us/dci/so/so_registration.html)  
<http://www.sexcriminals.com/regs/1056.html>

13. Walkie-Talkies or Panic Buttons.

The purposes for the walkie-talkie units include:

- a. Increasing the school's communication options in an emergency.
- b. Providing communication to the front office if power is knocked out.
- c. Being able to instantly signal an intruder alert.
- d. Radioing for medical help in a crisis.
- e. Being used independent of standard two-way conferencing which may be tied up in an emergency.
- f. Serving as playground to main office communication.
- g. Being used by the district to designate the varying radio channels for different purposes to align with the purposes of the overall crisis management plan.
- h. Serving to let first responders (if they have similar units or if they are in the presence of school staff) know the status of a protracted event.
- i. (Optional) NOAA weather notification.
- j. Ability to operate when cell phones and land lines are saturated.

Recommendation – all districts should have a backup communication contingency plan. The details of this plan would be up to the districts and could include walkie-talkies, panic buttons, or other forms of suitable emergency communication. Funding would come from district dollars that are already earmarked for preparedness.

14. Computer Integrated Security Management Systems.

Recommendation – because of the cost and complexity of the equipment, as well as the potential for safety & security gains, this option will need additional exploration. This could include work from the School Safety Committee or another group.

**D. Categorical Cost Lists for Proposed Equipment, Personnel, Training and Services:**

1. State Equipment Requirements. None.

2. Personnel Requirements.

Necessary baseline SRO funding per school size. **\$910,800 (Per year)**

### 3. Training.

There are several training need areas, some are already done within the scope of existing jobs:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Costs</u>
a. Train new SROs.	Covered by existing SRO protocol
b. Teachers (classroom level)	Professional development budgets
c. Administration (school level).	Professional development budgets
d. School Emergency Notification.	Comes with service
e. Drills with first responders and communities.	Absorbed in participant's salaries
f. National expert training on best practices for teachers and administrators.	Covered within annual workshop

### 4. Services.

School Safety Workshops.	SDFS Funding and/or fees.
State-Wide Hotline.	Recommended for 2008 budget session.
School Emergency Notification.	<u>\$320,000</u>
	<b>\$320,000</b> (funding for trial year)

### 5. Total Summary of Safety/Security Funding Anticipated.

Sum of all recommended costs for the 2007 session:

$$\$320,000 + \$910,800 = \mathbf{\$1,230,800}$$

### E. Periodical Data.

Six basic elements of school safety design from planner's perspective:

- |                                       |                                |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Closed Circuit Television Cameras. | 4. Electronic Security Panels. |
| 2. Door Security Hardware.            | 5. ID Cards.                   |
| 3. Panic Buttons.                     | 6. Metal Detectors.            |

Four main areas that schools can work on to reduce problems on an administrative level:

- |                        |                                    |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Reducing Vandalism. | 3. Documenting Activity.           |
| 2. Controlling access. | 4. Providing Emergency Assistance. |

Regarding Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), a relatively small investment of cameras can help protect the larger investment made into school facilities.



FBI briefs to various Wyoming communities warn of a wave of student crime coming to the schools in the years ahead. Projected trends of children currently being raised in dysfunctional homes combined with the spread of gangs and drug use do not bode well for school officials. The FBI recommends officials plan accordingly. The U.S. Department of Education web site assists schools in planning for crises.

Students actually have to be safe, not just feel safe. There are seven specific steps that are necessary to preparing a school for a crisis:

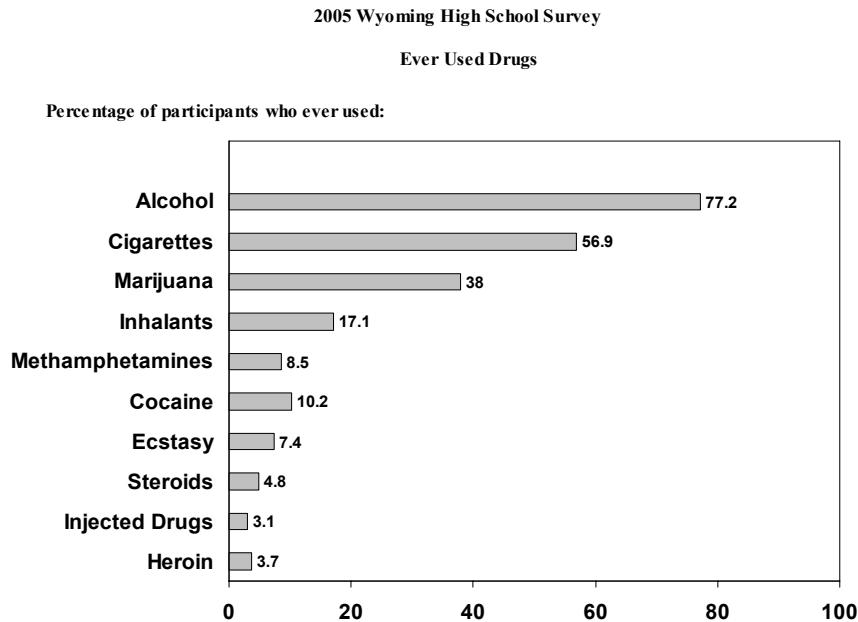
1. Identify and involve a crisis team.
2. Establish policies and procedures for various types of crises.
3. Establish evacuation routes, on-site safe areas, off-site shelters.
4. Establish communication methods and protocol.
5. Secure necessary supplies and equipment to assist staff in a crisis.
6. Gather school plans, facility information and keys.
7. Train, practice and drill.

Two publications; *Practical Information on Crisis Planning – A Guide for Schools and Communities* and *Jane’s All Hazards Guide for Safe School Planning*.

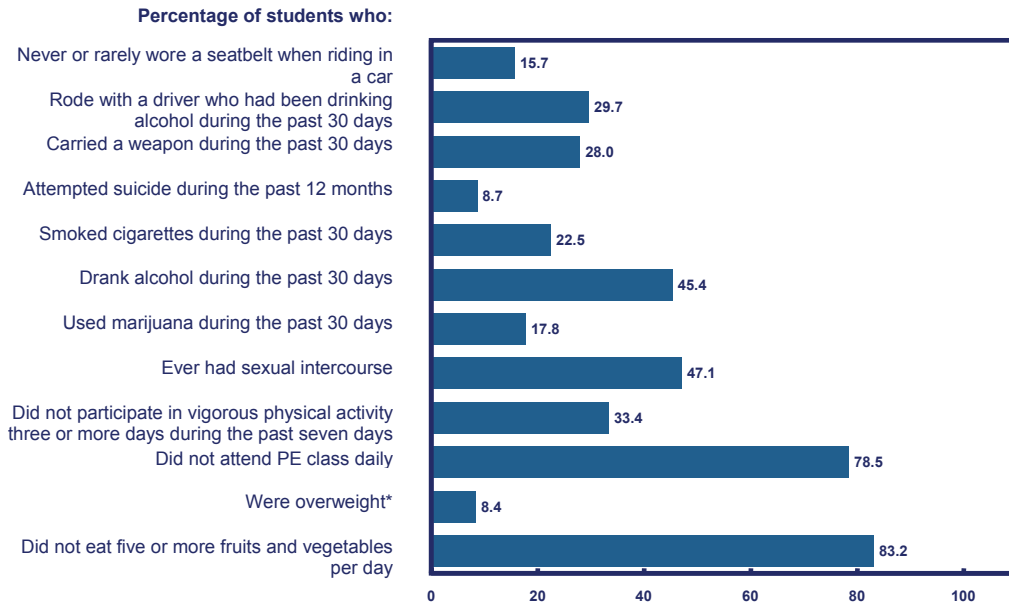
**F. Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Data.**

Percentage of students who carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on one or more of the past 30 days.

2003	2005
24.6%	28%



## Wyoming High School Survey Summary Graphs



### G. Reference Web Sites.

- <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1561>
- <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1938>
- <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1910>
- <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWEB/IS/is362.asp>
- [http://emilms.fema.gov/is362\\_Schools/index.htm](http://emilms.fema.gov/is362_Schools/index.htm)
- <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWEB/IS/IS3621st.asp>
- [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)
- [www.nsscl.org](http://www.nsscl.org)
- [www.nasro.org](http://www.nasro.org)
- [www.nassleo.org](http://www.nassleo.org)
- [www.ed.gov/emergencyplan](http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan)
- [www.secretservice.gov](http://www.secretservice.gov)
- [www.nspra.org](http://www.nspra.org)
- [www.phppo.cdc.gov/phtn/schools](http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/phtn/schools)
- [www.safeschools.org](http://www.safeschools.org)
- [www.edfacilities.org](http://www.edfacilities.org)
- <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm>
- [infor@ercm.org](mailto:infor@ercm.org)
- <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/cp/documents/crisisrespbox.pdf>
- <http://www.theiacp.org/documents/pdfs/Publications/schoolviolence2%2Epdf>
- <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/crisisplanning.pdf>
- [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_1239\\_protect-school-crisis.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_1239_protect-school-crisis.html)
- <http://www.nea.org/crisis/index.html>
- [http://www.safetyzone.org/safe\\_secure.html](http://www.safetyzone.org/safe_secure.html)
- [http://www.teach-nology.com/edleadership/school\\_violence/stats/](http://www.teach-nology.com/edleadership/school_violence/stats/)
- [www.LLIS.gov](http://www.LLIS.gov)
- [schoolsafety@llis.dhs.gov](mailto:schoolsafety@llis.dhs.gov)
- <http://www.schoolsafety.us/Checklist-of-Characteristics-of-Youth-Who-Have-Caused-School-Associated-Violent-Deaths-p-7.html>

## **Introduction**

Pursuant to House Enrolled Act 23 (from the original HB 0139) Section 7 (g), the Legislature has required that the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE), in consultation with the School Facilities Commission (SFC) review school district safety and security needs.

An in-depth school safety and security survey for each school would have been about 50 pages per school. This would have been about 18,200 for the raw data alone. It was therefore decided that the very best route was to administer a moderately sized survey with provisions specifically asking for additional feedback not covered in the question section. This data is combined with committee recommended best practices and other agency and national data to round out the review.

The survey portion of the study represents 39 out of a possible 48 respondents – an excellent response by most survey standards. The majority of the remaining districts either turned in their surveys late or experienced technical difficulties.

A presentation on Emergency Notification for Schools sponsored by School Safety Committee in the summer of 2006 is included in the appendix. The actual presentation is on the WDE web site at [www.k12.wy.us](http://www.k12.wy.us).

## **A. Verbal Input From Districts/Call-Ins**

Parent from Goshen #1

We need the following items in our schools:

1. Metal detectors. These are already approved in our culture in airports and Wal-Mart.
2. Single point access.
3. Seminars to principals and superintendents.
4. The state can be less vague, more strict.
5. All visitors need to “buzz” in during the day after approval at the door
6. We need a person to watch all kids who come into the building. We do this at our homes, why can’t we do it at our schools?

Parent from Natrona #1

The local schools can do the following:

1. Advocates \$200 cameras with a switch that can be controlled to open doors.
2. Advocates that schools monitor more closely, through cameras, the halls and other spaces. Last year the caller’s son sustained a skull fracture from a bully who was one grade older at Centennial Middle School.
3. Advocates looking into why the Worland Middle school camera system works so well.

Parent from Sheridan #1

Several things should be done including:

1. There needs to be training in crisis management planning.
2. There should be more guidance in statute for what should be in the plan.
3. Our community needs training in communication and on how to handle emergencies.

Principal of Worland Middle School in Washakie #1

He explains the following:

1. Referrals to the principal have gone down by half, from 1200 per year down to 600 per year after the installation of the 16 camera/monitoring system.
2. Many challenges from parents have been resolved because they have seen the incidents their children were involved in.
3. The word has gotten out that the cameras will pick up mischief, and that – in and of itself – has served as a deterrent.
4. The cameras are mounted high, about 15 feet off the ground to avoid damage.
5. The cameras must have swivel and zoom capabilities to be useful.

Superintendent, Weston #1

There is an expressed need to address vandalism. This may happen with the aid of two approaches:

1. We need two additional SROs in the county: one in Upton and one in Newcastle. Only one SRO is available now. The position is funded by city government.
2. A camera system would greatly help. The SROs could check the monitors for the cameras.

Assistant Superintendent, Carbon #2

There is an expressed need to re-key the external locks on all district schools to electronic locks. Keys can be lost or loaned out – over time, adequate control can be compromised.

**B. Survey Data**

The safety and security survey administered to Wyoming school districts in 2006 is shown below along with the frequency of answers. The data will be shared with the districts and is expected to both validate good decisions as well as encourage further preparedness improvement as applicable. Key data was able to be used in forming cost estimates for school safety/security needs.

Space is provided for comments to be written in on the right. The asterisk \* in the comment section reflects areas that technical assistance can be likely administered to districts to improve preparedness.

1. Are safety and security needs addressed in a district policy or a crisis management plan?

Yes	No	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
37	1	1	The existence of a district crisis plan is required by Chapter VI of the School Accreditation Rules. The content details of this plan, however, are up to the individual districts. *

2. Does each school have an individual, appointed in writing, responsible for administering a school safety program?

Yes	No	In Process	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
31	6	1	1	The affirmative answer is the ideal, but small districts may not have the manpower to specialize in this area like the larger districts.

3. Does the district have a risk manager (full or part-time)?

Yes	No	In Process	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
18	18	1	2	In some cases, the duties of a risk manager may be subtitled under other existing school staff duties or spread out over a number of individuals.

4. Are the school emergency plans reviewed by appropriate first responder agencies (Sheriff, Police Chief, Fire Chief, etc.)?

Yes	No	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
30	8	1	It is highly recommended that first responders be involved in reviewing school emergency plans. They can give an experienced perspective that most others can't.*

5. Has each school conducted a risk/vulnerability assessment identifying both internal (fire potential, disturbed individuals, etc.) and external (nearby chemical facilities, half-way houses, etc.) risks? If no, go to question 7.

Yes	No	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
22	17	0	Many articles on school safety recommend this as one of the first steps schools should take in beginning their risk identification and mitigation process.*

6. Do the emergency plans reflect prevention, preparedness, response and recovery issues specific to risks and vulnerabilities identified?

Yes	No	Not Applicable	State Wide Inference/Comments
23	7	9	Over three times the number of districts have based their preparedness measures on a vulnerability assessment than have not. This does not mean that the “have nots” have preparedness measures that are not targeted. It may be that this group has not formalized their assessments but rather take them informally from knowledgeable staff. It is a best practice, however, to link preparedness measures to known studies, external or internal. *

7. Is there documented training for all school district employees in regard to school safety and security?

Yes	No	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
25	13	1	The majority of districts answered in the affirmative nearly 2 to 1. The operative words are “documented” and “all”.*

8. Is student access controlled during the school day?

Yes	No	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
31	8	0	About 3 out of 4 districts claim student access control during the day. *



9. If yes, how? (The types of summarized answers are shown below.)

- a. All non-monitored entrances are locked/restricted.
- b. Only doors by school office are open or certain access points open.
- c. Only main entrance doors open during the school day. All others are locked.
- d. Attendance is taken each class period.
- e. Monitors patrol key places at set times during the day.
- f. Student sign in/out procedures exist.
- g. Visitor sign-in procedures exist.
- h. Exterior entrances are controlled via an electronic key-card system.
- i. The front office serves to monitor those who enter.
- j. Keyless electronic entry systems are used.
- k. Some security cameras are used.
- l. Students are often escorted to new locations.
- m. Buzzer on locked front door. All other doors locked as well.

10. Does your district have an anti-bullying program? If yes, please list the program.

Yes	No	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
23	12	4	There seems to be a universal awareness that bullying is wrong, and yet about a third of the districts appear to have no formalized program for it. This could indicate one of two things: there is not a perceived serious “bullying problem” in the given district, or there is a belief that some of the formal programs are not as effective as they could be. *

(The types of programs are summarized below.)

- a. “Boys Town”.
- b. “DARE”.
- c. “Bullying – Not My Kid” (Video).
- d. “Olweus Bullying Program”.
- e. “Bully Proofing”.
- f. “Safe Schools”.
- g. “Stop and Think”.

- h. Material is included in curriculum.
- i. Policy is in place.
- j. School psychologist has a home grown bully program.
- k. Character Counts.
- l. Self-designed policy, internal anti-hazing policy.
- m. "Challenge Program".
- n. "Second step, Get Real About Violence".
- o. Hybrid programs.

11. Do you track incidents of bullying in your end-of-year district report?

Yes	No	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
32	7	0	About 4 out of 5 districts track bullying incidents.

12. Do schools have two-way communication with all teachers during the regular school day?

Yes	No	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
35	4	0	About 90% of the districts in the state have two-way communication of some sort with their teachers during the day. Because of the variability of district size, the exact percentage of actual schools could be more or less.*

13. Do schools have three days of sheltering supplies readily available?

Yes	No	Not Reported	State Wide Inference/Comments
6	33	0	There is an increasing awareness that self sufficiency in an emergency may be as important as the first responder efforts to that emergency. * Some districts see the need to work with local agencies for these needs.

14. If the district is facing any kind of new structure, addition or remodel, is a professional review specifically conducted that addresses school safety concerns?

Yes	No	NA	State Wide Inference/Comments
29	6	4	Note: If a project is over \$200,000, the School Facilities Commission provides a value engineering package that has a school safety component included.

15. In what way(s) are first responders apprised of key school information in the event of an emergency? (Put an x by all that apply.)

- a. Information & Access Response Kit.
- b. Wysters Emergency Website.
- c. Use of CDs.
- d. Other (See summary below.)
  - i. Safety handbook.
  - ii. Crisis management team meetings.
  - iii. Annual joint/on-site trainings.
  - iv. Facility tours.
  - v. School design plans shared with first responders.
  - vi. SRO briefs building administrators weekly.
  - vii. Table top exercises.

	Yes	State-Wide Inference/Comments
a.	25	
b.	5	
c.	4	It is believed that many more districts than indicated provide district information on CDs to area first responders.
d.	14	

16. For the **elementary school(s)** in your district, indicate the presently existing safety and security item(s) that is/are collectively in place (put an x by all that apply):

- a. No effective safety/security measures are present.
- b. Basic cameras at the front of the school or other key entrance.
- c. Door/window security alarm systems.
- d. Video monitoring technology covering extensive locations.
- e. Adequate security personnel/School Resource Officers in the school(s).
- f. Integrated video, door access, alarm system throughout all facilities networked to the district office.

	Yes	State-Wide Inference/Comments
a.	13	Of all three major categories of schools, the elementary schools are the most vulnerable.
b.	12	
c.	7	
d.	7	Proportionally speaking, less than 18% of the districts employ video monitoring technology at the elementary level.
e.	8	
f.	2	

17. For the **junior high/middle school(s)** in your district, indicate the presently existing safety and security item(s) that is/are collectively in place (put an x by all that apply):

- a. No effective safety/security measures are present.
- b. Basic cameras at the front of the school or other key entrances.
- c. Door/window security alarm systems.
- d. Video monitoring technology covering extensive locations.
- e. Adequate security personnel or School Resource Officers in the school(s).
- f. Integrated video, door access, alarm system throughout all facilities networked to the district office.

	Yes	State-Wide Inference/Comments
a.	10	
b.	16	
c.	5	
d.	13	About a third of the middle schools use some type of video monitoring technology.
e.	11	Only about a third of the middle schools have adequate Security Resources Officers.
f.	1	

18. For the **high school(s)** in your district, indicate the presently existing safety and security item(s) that is/are collectively in place (put an x by all that apply):

- a. No effective safety/security measures are present.
- b. Basic cameras at the front of the school or other key entrances.
- c. Door/window security alarm systems.
- d. Video monitoring technology covering extensive locations.
- e. Adequate security personnel or School Resource Officers in the school(s).
- f. Integrated video, door access, alarm system throughout all facilities networked to the district office.

	Yes	State-Wide Inference/Comments
a.	8	Surprisingly, about 20% of the respondents would classify their high schools, in general, as having no safety/security measures.
b.	19	The presence of cameras can be a deterrent to criminal behavior. The issue that needs to be addressed is which of those cameras are monitored.
c.	7	
d.	18	
e.	17	Expectantly, the number of SROs increase in high schools, but about 66% of the high schools, state-wide, still need resource officers.
f.	1	

19. For the **elementary school(s)** in your district, what are your *future* safety & security needs? (Put an x by all that apply):

- a. No additional safety/security measures are necessary.
- b. Basic cameras at the front of the school or other key entrance.
- c. Door/window security alarm systems.
- d. Video monitoring technology covering extensive locations.
- e. Increased security personnel/School Resource Officers in the school(s).
- f. Metal detectors.
- g. Integrated video, door access, alarm system throughout all facilities networked to the district office.

	Yes	State-Wide Inference/Comments
a.	1	
b.	27	This may point to a need for camera use.
c.	16	
d.	23	
e.	10	
f.	2	Only one district intends to install metal detectors in the future at the elementary school level.
g.	27	About 69% of all respondents see the eventual need of a fully integrated video, door access, alarm systems in all elementary schools that are networked to the main office.

20. For the **junior high/middle school(s)** in your district, what are your *future* safety & security needs? (Put an x by all that apply):

- a. No additional safety/security measures are necessary.
- b. Basic cameras at the front of the school or other key entrances.
- c. Door/window security alarm systems.
- d. Video monitoring technology covering extensive locations.
- e. Increased security personnel or School Resource Officers in the school(s).
- f. Metal detectors.
- g. Integrated video, door access, alarm system throughout all facilities networked to the district office.

	Yes	State-Wide Inference/Comments
a.	4	
b.	17	
c.	13	
d.	17	
e.	12	
f.	3	Metal detectors are not the tool of choice regarding planned future security measures.
g.	28	



21. For the **high school(s)** in your district, what are your *future* safety & security needs? (Put an x by all that apply):

- a. No additional safety/security measures are necessary.
- b. Basic cameras at the front of the school or at other key entrances.
- c. Door/window security alarm systems.
- d. Video monitoring technology covering extensive locations.
- e. Additional security personnel or School Resource Officers in the school(s).
- f. Metal detectors.
- g. Integrated video, door access, alarm system throughout all facilities networked to the district office.

	Yes	State-Wide Inference/Comments
a.	4	The greatest unmet need for security measures lies at the high school level.
b.	15	Security alarm systems and cameras show a tie. See choice d. below.
c.	14	
d.	15	Video monitoring technology/cameras are in the highest perceived need area here along with security alarms.
e.	12	
f.	5	
g.	27	

There was an optional comment section at the end of the survey that asked for additional specific safety and/or security district needs that were not covered in the question section. The responses were divided into the following major categories:

- i. Our district needs assistance in updating our comprehensive emergency plan/long-term district crisis management plan.
- ii. We need to update our policies regarding physical access to facilities.
- iii. Space is needed for the school SRO.
- iv. Integrate door access systems, without alarm, that will network to one main location.
- v. Two-way radios at each school [should be made available] to communicate with law enforcement.
- vi. Increase exterior lighting.
- vii. Need security alarms in new buildings.
- viii. Need to train some staff to serve as a district level [emergency] coordinator.
- ix. Need security alarms in areas besides the computer labs and office areas.
- x. Classrooms need intercom systems or telephones.
- xi. Some schools are not alarmed, but they need them.
- xii. Available district wiring needs to be able to handle more video.
- xiii. The state should hold a safety/security conference every year to keep abreast of new technology and ideas (It would be an opportunity to learn from what other districts have done and exchange valuable information.)
- xiv. Need ideas.
- xv. Need a radio system interconnected between buildings and all emergency responders.
- xvi. More trained personnel to screen and protect.
- xvii. Integrated technology surveillance equipment.
- xviii. Integrated locks on all external and internal doors with an electric door hold opener so a button could be pressed and all doors would close and lock.
- xix. External lighting is needed on several schools in the district
- xx. Need a “contact system” to alert police and sheriff if a problem situation arises.

## **C. School Safety Committee/State Homeland Security Recommendations**

The School Safety Committee is a group of dedicated professional volunteers representing a variety of professions and agencies including: the Fire Marshal, Homeland Security, Department of Health, School Design in Architecture, Department of Education, Sheriff's Office, Firemen, Teachers, School Administrators and the School Facilities Commission. They, along with the State Office of Homeland Security have contributed a proposed list of measures that would lower the current operating risk to students and staff members in Wyoming public schools.

### **1. School Emergency Notification.**

In this proposal, administrators would be able to instantly notify parents and guardians regarding emergency issues or keep parents in the loop in the event of an incident (Reference Appendix IV). The plan would allow for an unlimited number of calls per school year. This has been known to reduce or eliminate anxiety in parents and can serve as an important part of a district's emergency communication plan.

The districts would choose their own providers and invoice the state. The required funding equates to \$4.00 per student per school year. There are not additional charges.

\$4.00 per student x 80,000\* students = **\$320,000**^ (Per year)

\*Actually, the department web site has 83,772 listed as the most recent validated student population. In reality, it is a number that is constantly changing. The School Facilities Commission understands the actual *current* number to be very close to 80,000 students.

^ Recommendation – fund for a trial year. Depending on how the first year goes would determine the likelihood of funding for the next biennium.

### **2. Access Monitoring.**

School access should be monitored physically or electronically. This arrangement would notify staff the moment an unauthorized individual attempted to enter the building. It would also serve to discourage would-be shooters. If an incident did occur, electronic monitoring systems are able to record or reconstruct the elements of an incident. Cameras should be mounted high enough to avoid tampering and be able to swivel and to zoom in at distant objects.

These tools are not to be seen as a panacea in and of themselves, but are part of a wider safety and security strategy.

The latest available Wyoming education directory verifies there are a total of 364 public schools statewide.

364 schools/48 districts = 7.6 average schools per district  
80,000 students/364 = and average of 220 students per school  
80,000 students/48 school districts = an average of 1667 students per district

The Worland middle school (student population 296) has a proven camera/monitoring system that cost \$35,000. It is a midsized school which closely replicates the state average of 220 students per school. Regardless of the population variation, the monitoring equipment and number of cameras would not significantly vary within this range of students. Therefore we can make the following relation:

7.6 Schools/district x \$35,000/school = \$266,000/average district  
\$266,000 x 48 districts = \$12,768,000  
\$266,000 per average district/1667 pupils per district = \$159.57 cost per student

Note: the above figures have the lows and the highs cancel out and apply only on a state-wide basis. One *cannot* necessarily take a small school of 30 students, multiply by \$159.57 and expect that a camera/monitoring system will cost them only \$4,787.10.

We can surmise from the survey that the number of schools currently without adequate video monitoring equipment, along with the cost to outfit them, equals:

$\$33,000 \times (364 \text{ schools} - 43 \text{ schools}) = \$35,000 \times 321 \text{ schools} = \$11,235,423^{\wedge}$

<sup>^</sup>Recommendation – the School Facilities Commission could, via rules and regulations, allow schools to pay for new systems from existing major maintenance funding. Currently schools can only use major maintenance funding to *replace* camera/monitoring systems.

### **3. Single Point Access.**

Schools must maintain a single access point. No entry should be available from alternate doors during the school day. This greatly simplifies the monitoring tasks. In some areas, it is not viewed as reasonable for young students to go around to the main entry doors on the other side of the building to come in from recess or to “buzz” students in after this time. For some, two solutions could be electronic swipe ID cards for teachers or having supervising teachers opening the doors with standard keys at the end of recess.

Note: single point access is important if the school decides to use metal detectors. In addition, single point access only applies to entry. All egress routes must be able to be operated in case of a required evacuation.

#### **4. Anti-Bullying Programs/Efforts are Critical.**

A large percentage of school shootings have been, at least in-part, directly related to ill-will created by bullying. Often hostility begets hostility. When there are little or no support systems at home to help the youth cope, resentment and anger can be acted out against staff or students at the school.

All schools must have a well thought out and effective anti-bullying policy. Historically the minimal program costs have been borne by the districts. In the survey, 12 out of 39 (nearly a third) of the districts reported that they did not have bullying programs. Four did not reply to the question. Collectively we need to take this area more seriously.

#### **5. Annual School Safety Survey.**

The safety survey would have to be short and relevant. The point of contact would likely be the WDE. The cost would be covered under the existing state infrastructure. Districts have made it clear, however, that they are already under an overly heavy information providing load.

#### **6. Anonymous School Safety Hotline.**

This type of hotline has already saved countless students in other states by tipping authorities and derailing domestic terrorism before it could strike. Kansas has had at very good experiences with its safety hotline.

A grant is being considered by Project Guardian that would fund the line roughly till the next biennium. Once the grant runs out, the following amounts would be needed:

\$7,000 per year	posters (average 10 per school)
\$3,500 per year	radio advertising; two weeks during two fall months
\$3,000 per year	printing costs
\$280 per year	phone costs
\$2,400 per year	web hosting
<u>\$8,500</u> per year	bill board advertising
\$24,680 per year	
(Ongoing expense per year)	

$$\$24,680 \times 2 \text{ years} = \$49,360 \text{ per biennium}^{\wedge}$$

<sup>^</sup>Recommendation – the state needs this hotline. It has proven itself around the country. Administrators have asked for it. However, it is possible that funding can come from the Safe & Drug Free Schools Budget.

**7. Annual State-Wide School Safety Workshops.**

It has been suggested that annual school safety workshops would help schools share best practices, share ideas of what other districts are doing and to keep schools current in this rapidly changing area. It is estimated that the workshop would cost about \$25,000^ a year to put on.

^Recommendation – there may be other funding sources that can be drawn from. The state would start small and build the annual event each year in size and scope. Districts may be able to cover an event fee.

**8. SROs (School Resource Officers).**

The one personnel area that is growing is the need for more SROs. The following list\* gives a representation of where most of the SROs are currently located:

<u>Community</u>	<u>Estimated number of SROs</u>
Laramie	2
Cheyenne	5
Gillette	4
Douglas	1
Wheatland	1
Torrington	1
Buffalo	1
Casper	2
Sheridan	2
Lovell	1
Riverton	2
Lander	2
Jackson	1
Cody	1
Evanston	2
Green River	1
Rock Springs	3
Rawlins	1
Thermopolis	1
Worland	1
New Castle	1
Pinedale	1
Kemmerer	<u>1</u>
	38

The official count has been as high as 43, the actual number in always in flux.

\*According to the Wyoming Association of School Resource Officers, October 2006.

SROs are in demand. Cheyenne East High School has asked for a second. In other areas of the state, oncoming SROs are often splitting time between various schools to cover more ground.

The average salary is \$4,600 per month including benefits. Typically this cost only applies to the schools for nine months, the cost for the remaining three summer months is borne by the city or community and is handled locally.

The problem in assessing SRO need is that there is no “critical mass” in school population that would serve as an absolute benchmark that would indicate “okay, now you are going to get an SRO.” The driving forces have historically been the availability of funding and whether the administrators, board and community felt that one was needed.

SRO’s have been able to build trust and respect in their schools. Many times both students and ex-students alike have given them necessary information that has helped prevent a crime form happening. They have successfully built bridges to the students and parents.

SRO funding rationale:

- a. All districts have the basic needs of building bridges from their students to law enforcement, maintaining order and being able to respond better to disturbances that often occur in groups of students.
- b. Research has shown that when a school gets to be between 500 to 700 students, it becomes more impersonal and often loses its small school atmosphere. School size is a factor.
- c. No state program can cover all district unique contingencies. Those local needs are best left up to the district to address. Therefore additional SROs above what would be provided by a. and c. shown above, would be locally provided by local resources

Putting this all together, the state load could be calculated in the following way:

Suggested SRO Formula (shared approach)

- a. By district: one SRO per each district (to be assigned as the superintendent sees fit).

$$\begin{aligned} \$4,600/ \text{ month} \times 9 \text{ months}^* &= \$41,400 \\ \$41,400 \times 48 \text{ school district} &= \$1,987,200 \end{aligned} \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{Cost could be covered locally} \\ \text{on a per/district basis.} \end{array}$$

\* the school would typically use only 9 month of this amount, but could use him or her all year if need be or the community could pay the school for the use of the officer in the community during the summer.

- b. By school size: one SRO for each school at or above 700 students equals 22 schools (based on the latest edition of the Wyoming Education Directory).

\$41,400 x 22 larger schools = \$906,400^

- c. By unique need, there will be different demands in each school. This will need to be covered by district on a case by case basis. This cost could be provided by local resources.

^ Preliminary Recommendation – funding augmentation of \$906,400 which is based on demonstrable school size. This roughly equates to all A5 and A4 sized schools being provided an SRO.

### **9. Increased Visits.**

It would be highly beneficial to increase police presence at the schools. The exact amount of time this would occupy would be based on the needs of the school and the community. It would also take the cooperation of the cities and communities to cover the costs.

### **10. Varied Routines.**

From a crime prevention perspective, it is wise to the extent possible, to not let school schedules become too routine. Although administrators, teachers and students seek routine schedules so that everyone is easily on the same time-management page, criminals have used known routines to time their actions. The cost would be a more complex schedule during the school week.

### **11. Include Non-Certified Personnel.**

Often groups including substitute teachers, maintenance personnel and bus drivers are not adequately covered in the planning for emergencies. It is very important that substitute teachers are briefed regarding exactly what to do in a variety of emergencies and that all staff know exactly how to respond in all anticipated emergencies.

### **12. Sex Offender Registry.**

Schools should regularly access web sites that allow them to learn where convicted sex offenders live near the schools. The SROs could follow the neighborhood trends. The following two sites are a start:

[http://attorneygeneral.state.wy.us/dci/so/so\\_registration.html](http://attorneygeneral.state.wy.us/dci/so/so_registration.html)

<http://www.sexcriminals.com/regs/1056.html>



### **13. Walkie-Talkies or Panic Buttons.**

These tools can instantly notify the front office of a serious problem, whereupon the front office would seal off the classroom area and call the police and summon (if available) the SRO. Walkie-talkies would have the added versatility of being able to be used away from the building in coordination or group movement efforts.

There are several purposes<sup>^</sup> for these suggested walkie-talkie units, they can:

- a. Increase the school's communication options in an emergency.
- b. Provide communication to the front office if power is knocked out.
- c. Be able to instantly signal an intruder alert.
- d. Radio for medical help in a crisis.
- e. Be used independent of standard two-way conferencing if it is tied up in an emergency or rendered unusable by a power outage.
- f. Serve as playground-to-main-office communication.
- g. Be used by the district to designate the varying radio channels for different purposes to align with the purposes of the overall crisis management plan.
- h. Serve to let first responders (if they have similar units or if they are in the presence of school staff) know the status of a protracted event.
- i. Be bought with NOAA weather notification.
- j. Work when cell phones and land lines saturate in a serious emergency.

These may be issued directly to specific teachers instead of by location. An average pair costs \$40.

Districts should ensure that any emergency communication system operated must, in some way, be able to be used with an operator on the Wyolink system.

<sup>^</sup>Recommendation – all districts should have a backup communication contingency plan within their crisis management plan. This plan would be up to the district and could include walkie-talkies, panic buttons, or other forms of suitable emergency communication. Funding would come from district dollars that are already earmarked for preparedness measures.

### **14. Computer Integrated Security Management Systems.**

These systems represent the latest state-of-the-art safety tools that allow total security management at all district schools from one monitoring station. They offer integrated video, door access, and alarm systems throughout all facilities networked to the district office. They provide for an efficient use of security personnel and maximum deterrence to vandalism and other crime. The cost per system would vary considerably depending on the size of the district.

At a preliminary level, it would be likely that such a system would have to be able to interface with the Wyolink system and law enforcement. It would need a comprehensive training package^.

^Recommendation - because of the cost and complexity of the equipment, as well as the potential for safety & security gains, this option will need additional exploration. This could include work from an ad hoc committee or the School Safety Committee.

**D. Categorical Cost Lists for Proposed Equipment, Personnel, Training and Services:**

**1. State Equipment Requirements.**

None.

**2. Personnel Requirements.**

Necessary baseline SRO funding per school size. **\$910,800** (Per year)

**3. Training.**

There are several training need areas, some are already done within the scope of existing jobs:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Costs</u>
a. Train new SROs.	Covered by existing SRO protocol
b. Teachers (classroom level)	Professional development budgets
c. Administration (school level)	Professional development budgets
d. School Emergency Notification	Comes with service
e. Drills with first responders and communities	Absorbed in participant's salaries
f. National expert training on best practices for teachers and administrators	Covered within annual workshop

**4. Services.**

School Safety Workshops	SDFS Funding
State-Wide Hotline	Recommended for 2008 budget session
School Emergency Notification	<u>\$320,000</u>
	<b>\$320,000</b> (Trial year would be <i>this</i> year)

**5. Total Summary of Safety/Security Funding Anticipated.**

Sum of all recommended costs for the 2007 session:

$$\$320,000 + \$910,800 = \mathbf{\$1,230,800}$$

## **E. Periodical Data.**

1. There are six basic elements of school safety design (Hensley, 2004):

- a. Closed circuit Television Cameras.

These tools are best used when used to observe the likes of playgrounds, gyms, hallways, stairs and entrances. They can be monitored 24-7 or intermittently.

- b. Door Security Hardware.

Doors can be locked automatically in the event of a lockdown. The school would need a backup generator if the power went out.

- c. Panic Buttons.

These are electronic emergency notification devices that are often used by a teacher or other staff member to signal the front office that an incident is in progress or eminently pending.

- d. Electronic Security Panels.

This control panel may monitor door alarms and locks. It can allow one person to observe the security condition of the whole building from one place.

- e. ID Cards.

These may be designed to be swiped over a sensor or placed on a reader. They allow access into key spaces through electric locks, they track who arrived and departed and at what time.

- f. Metal Detectors.

These may be handle held or a larger walk-through version. The latter is very expensive. The former is less so, but takes time to examine each individual person.

2. There are four main areas that schools can work on to reduce problems (Kromkowski, 2003):

- a. Reducing Vandalism.

This may be done by (among other design features) maximizing lighting in any given area and increasing visual control, i.e. increasing supervision.

b. Controlling Access.

Regarding the future expectations of school facilities, Kromkowski points out that:

Access to and from the facility can also be controlled with electronics. Electronic door hardware and card-access readers can be programmed to allow access during specific times of the day, and can restrict access to specific individuals.

c. Documenting Activity.

There are two main ways to achieve this end: with people or with cameras/monitors. Many schools now utilize CCTV (closed circuit television). The evidence that these electronic systems provides schools with increased security has proved valuable.

d. Providing Emergency Assistance.

It is important to provide to first responders a logical and clear way to find their way around the building in the event they are not familiar with its layout. Architects do this by design. Administrators may provide other tools, maps, etc. In addition, “installing a complete communications system is essential in schools.” It should be more than telephone services.

3. In another resource, CCTV is highlighted again and is affirmed that this tool can be an important part of school security (Lupinacci, 2004). The relatively small investment of cameras can help protect the larger investment made into school facilities. Cameras need to be sealed. Moisture can destroy the electronics or the optical quality. Buyers must understand purchased camera operating parameters including temperature, humidity, usable range, distance to monitor ranges, expected clarity of image, the type of light needed to function properly, etc.

4. Electronics is a part of the bigger picture. Another part of the safety/security picture is the quality of the parts used in the door & window equipment (Vigue, 2006). This approach demands that all of the security hardware needs to be top notch, that quality in this area makes it more difficult for youth to break into key areas. Vigue’s steps include:

- a. Ensure that your key systems prevent unauthorized duplication.
- b. Break-away level trim and high quality wall trim reduces vandal damage.
- c. Latch guards provide added protection to latch bolts.

- d. Surface bolts now have a jimmy-resistant design.
- e. Security door stops are advisable.
- f. Door closers should be heavy-duty.

5. It may be worth looking at steps high crime districts have taken in the past to bolster safety/security. One such district is the Clark School district (203,800 students in 237 schools) in Las Vegas. There, administrators have relied on a mix of:

- a. Risk management.
- b. Increased security.
- c. Student discipline.
- d. "Personal guidance".

While Wyoming does not have the problems that Las Vegas has (in 1998 there were 172 knife incidents school police handled and 80 "gun incidents" leading to a total of 1,323 arrests) the main origins of the problems were twofold: gangs and drugs (Neeley, 1999).

6. Conversely, it may be that as Wyoming looks to preparing for the future, we may expect some of the worse problems to come from these two primary sources; gangs and drugs. Certainly the FBI briefs to various Wyoming western communities parallel this thinking and warn of a wave of student crime coming to the schools in the years ahead. Projected trends of children currently being raised in dysfunctional homes combined with the spread of gangs and drug use do not bode well for school officials. The FBI recommends officials plan accordingly. This would imply investing in safety/security procedures and equipment before the problems arrive.

7. Other sources point to the need for student to feel safe. That is only part of the solution. Students actually have to *be* safe. There are seven specific steps that are necessary to preparing a school to be safe in a crisis (Ridgeway, 2004). These are:

- a. Identify and involve a crisis team.
- b. Establish policies and procedures for various types of crises.
- c. Establish evacuation routes, on-site safe areas, off-site shelters.
- d. Establish communication methods and protocol.
- e. Secure necessary supplies and equipment to assist staff in a crisis.
- f. Gather school plans, facility information and keys.

g. Train Practice and Drill.

8. In addition, there is an aid to planning for crises at the U.S. Department of Education's website. Ridgeway recommends two publications; *Practical Information on Crisis Planning – A Guide for Schools and Communities* and *Jane's All Hazards Guide for Safe School Planning*.

9. Before disasters strike, there are many things schools can do to prepare for and reduce the disaster impact (Kennedy, 2004). These may include:

- a. Taking storm watching seriously. The new radios provided by the National Weather Service will go a long way to helping schools do this.
- b. Evacuate portable classrooms into the main structure in suspect weather.
- c. Know your building strength. Know what force of wind that it can withstand. That will be important in decision making when the crisis arrives.
- d. Provide for "survival packs" for each classroom. This may include:
  - i. extensive first aid materials.
  - ii. water for three days.
  - iii. sanitation supplies.
  - iv. tools.
  - v. folding tables, chairs etc.
  - vi. food storage.
  - vii. school supplies.

## **F. Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Data**

One of the most useful tools in assessing school trends and problems is the YRBS. It gives a snapshot into student behaviors through confidential self-reported means. The data serves as a barometer for the level of safety kids have both on and off campus. It also serves as trend indicators for what kinds of problems to expect in the schools.

The YRBS results can help determine the number of Wyoming youth engaging in health risk behaviors and to create school health programs to help reduce these behaviors. The YRBS data can be used to explore trends over time and to make comparisons with school safety and student behaviors that affect school safety in other states.

Because the statewide YRBS data is representative of students throughout the state, you can use the statewide results to determine the health risk behaviors that are most likely to be performed by students at your own school. These problems can then be targeted with prevention and intervention programs.

Specific examples of ways that you can use the data from the statewide and local Youth Risk Behavior Surveys include:

- Developing targeted at-risk plans to address the health risk behaviors of youth.
- Developing nutrition and physical education programs.
- Selecting health education curricula.
- Evaluating Safe and Drug Free Schools programs.
- Tracking outcomes of projects such as the Coordinated School Health pilots and 21<sup>st</sup> Century State Incentive Grant programs.
- Developing grant proposals.



Figure 1. Middle School survey of major risk behaviors.

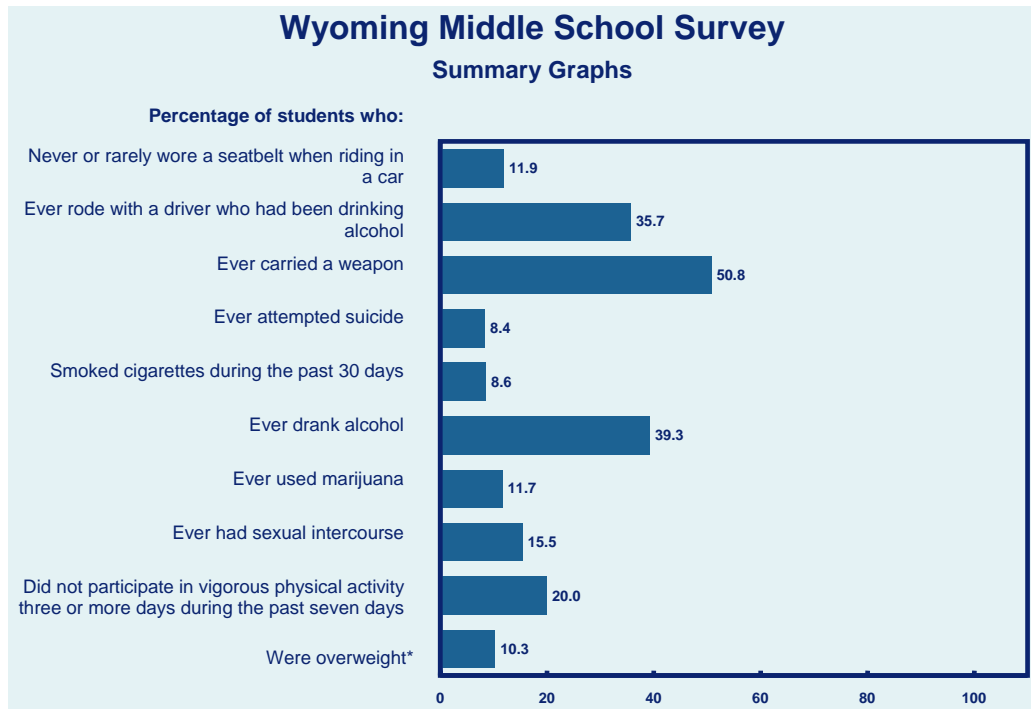


Figure 2. High School survey of major risk behaviors.

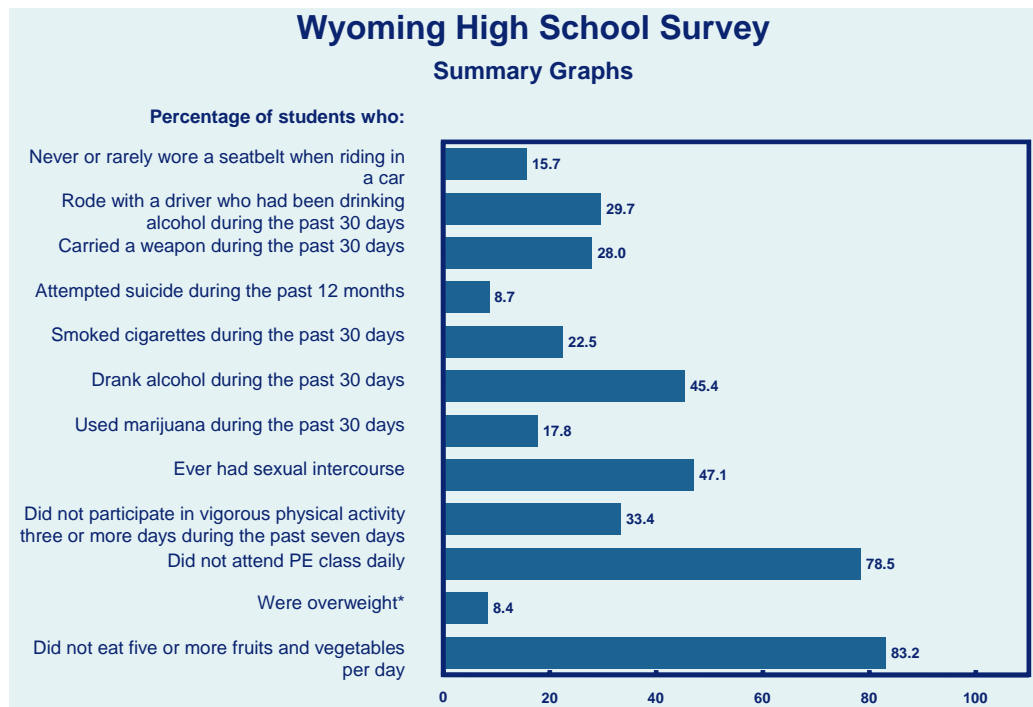


Figure 3. Percentages of students that were involved with a gun or a knife.

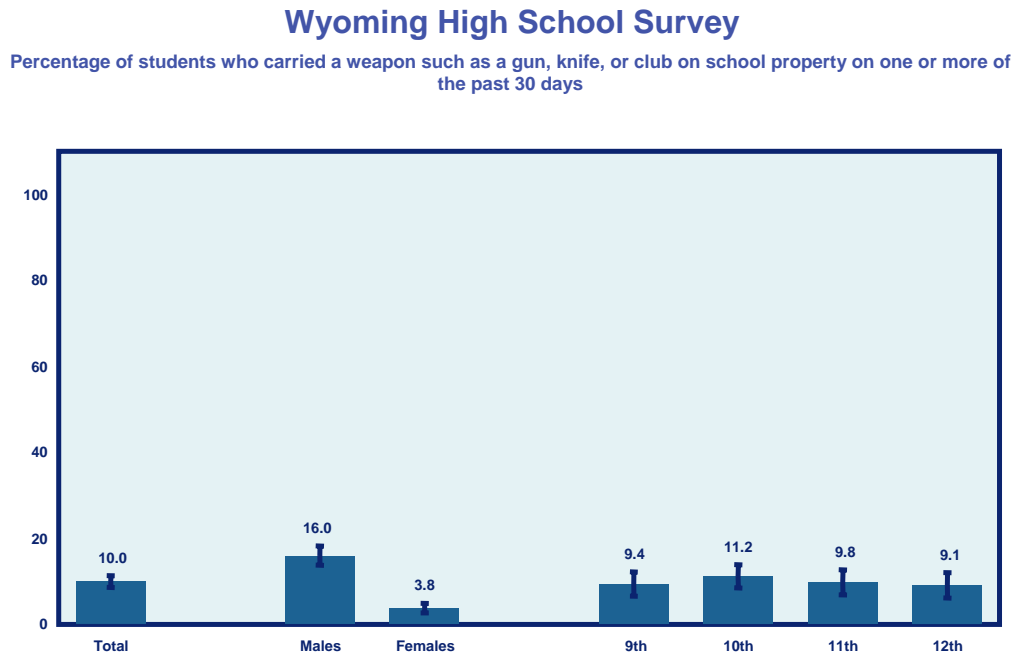


Figure 4. Wyoming student drug use over the past thirty days.

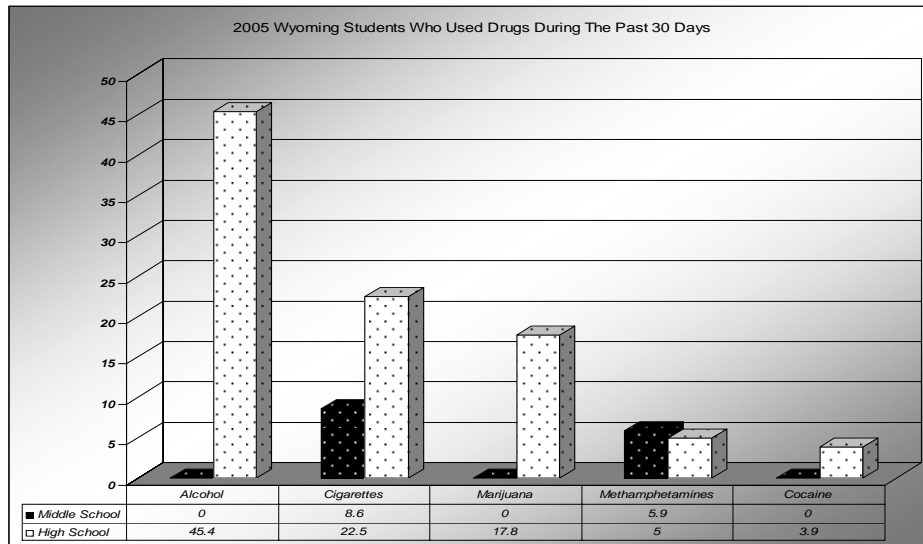
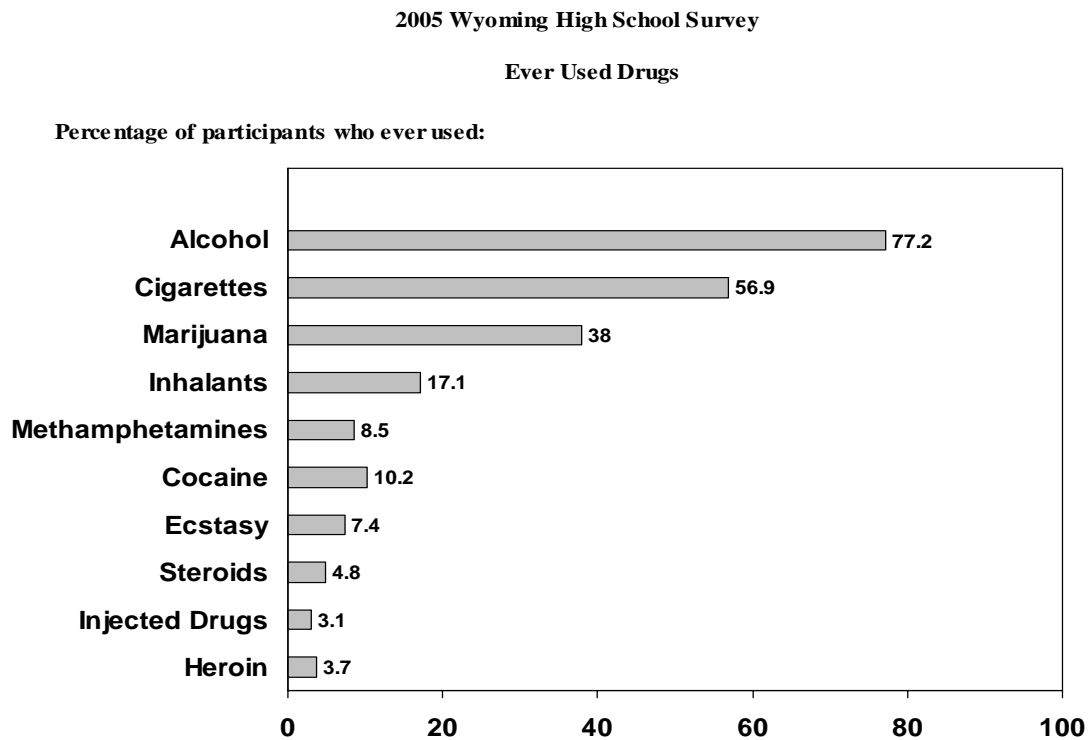


Table 1. Injury and Violence

Percentage of students who carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on one or more of the past 30 days

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2005</u>
	24.6	28

Figure 5. Indicators of Wyoming’s high school drug use.



### What We Know About Risky Sexual Behaviors from the YRBS

#### Middle School Students (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade)

- 15.5% of middle school students have ever had sexual intercourse
- 6.3% of middle school students have had sexual intercourse with three or more people during their lifetime
- 69.7% of middle school students used a condom during their last sexual intercourse (of middle school students who had ever had sexual intercourse)
- 65.6% of middle school students had ever been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school

### High School Students (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade)

- 47.1% of high school students have ever had sexual intercourse
- 5.2% of high school students had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13
- 34.7% of high school students have had sexual intercourse with one or more people during the past three months
- 64.9% of high school students used a condom during their last sexual intercourse (of students who had had sexual intercourse during the past three months)
- 24.9% of high school students used birth control pills during their last sexual intercourse (of students who had had sexual intercourse during the past three months)
- 89.5% of high school students had ever been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school

## **G. Reference Web Sites**

### **1. FEMA Web Sites**

Primer for Design Safe Schools Projects in Case of Terrorist Attacks:

<http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1561>

A How-To Guide to Mitigate Potential Terrorist Attacks Against Buildings:

<http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1938>

Safe Rooms and Shelters - Protecting People Against Terrorist Attacks:

<http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1910>

The Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools course is from the Emergency Management Institute: <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWEB/IS/is362.asp>.

You can take this course online at [http://emilms.fema.gov/is362\\_Schools/index.htm](http://emilms.fema.gov/is362_Schools/index.htm) or you can download the course material from

<http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWEB/IS/IS3621st.asp> and teach it as an eight hour (classroom) class.

### **2. Crisis Management Guidance**

American National Red Cross

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

National School Safety Center

[www.nssc1.org](http://www.nssc1.org)

School Resource Officers

[www.nasro.org](http://www.nasro.org)

National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officers

[www.nassleo.org](http://www.nassleo.org)

U.S. Department of Education

[www.ed.gov/emergencyplan](http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan)

U.S. Secret Service

[www.secretservice.gov](http://www.secretservice.gov)

National School Public Relations Association

[www.nspr.org](http://www.nspr.org)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.phppo.cdc.gov/phtn/schools](http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/phtn/schools)

National Alliance for Safe Schools  
[www.safeschools.org](http://www.safeschools.org)

National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities  
[www.edfacilities.org](http://www.edfacilities.org)

### **3. In addition....**

The Emergency Response and Crisis Management TA Center at <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm> also has some excellent material. They have a wide range of resources available. You can call them toll-free at 1-888-991-3726 or email them at [infor@ercm.org](mailto:infor@ercm.org).

The California Attorney General and State Superintendent of Public Instruction's Safe Schools Task Force developed the Crisis Response Box as a guide to assist schools in crisis prevention planning, it is available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/s/ss/cp/documents/crisisrespbox.pdf>.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) has produced the Guide for Preventing and Responding to School Violence which is available at <http://www.theiacp.org/documents/pdfs/Publications/schoolviolence2%2Epdf>

The U.S. Department of Education has produced Practical information on Crisis Planning -- A Guide for Schools and Communities which is available at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/crisisplanning.pdf>

There is a website addressing How to Prepare Your School for a Major Crisis which is available at [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_1239\\_protect-school-crisis.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_1239_protect-school-crisis.html)

The National School Safety Center has created a Checklist of Characteristics of Youth Who Have Caused School-Associated Violent Deaths which is available at <http://www.schoolsafety.us/Checklist-of-Characteristics-of-Youth-Who-Have-Caused-School-Associated-Violent-Deaths-p-7.html>

The National Education Association has produced Crisis Communication Guides and Toolkits (4 Volumes) which is available at <http://www.nea.org/crisis/index.html>

Another excellent source of information is the Safe and Secure: Guides to Creating Safer Schools available at [http://www.safetyzone.org/safe\\_secure.html](http://www.safetyzone.org/safe_secure.html)

- Guide 1: Creating School-Wide Prevention and Intervention Strategies
- Guide 2: School Policies and Legal Issues Supporting Safe Schools
- Guide 3: Implementing Ongoing Staff Development to Enhance Safe Schools
- Guide 4: Ensuring Quality School Facilities and Security Technologies

- Guide 5: Fostering School-Law Enforcement Partnerships
- Guide 6: Instituting School-Based Links with Mental Health and Social Service Agencies
- Guide 7: Fostering School, Family, and Community Involvement
- Guide 8: Acquiring and Utilizing Resources to Enhance and Sustain a Safe Learning Environment

The Online Teacher Resource has a website on School Violence at [http://www.teach-nology.com/edleadership/school\\_violence/stats/](http://www.teach-nology.com/edleadership/school_violence/stats/)

[www.LLIS.gov](http://www.LLIS.gov) Launches a School Emergency Planning Page to capture lessons from a variety of school incidents, [www.LLIS.gov](http://www.LLIS.gov) is conducting research in the area of school emergency planning. This original research will be presented on the School Emergency Planning page along with after-action reports, related documents, templates, plans, related links, recent news, upcoming conferences, and more.

[www.LLIS.gov](http://www.LLIS.gov) has assembled these resources to help emergency planners, responders, and administrators work together to develop and maintain comprehensive school emergency plans. If you would like to share your school emergency plans, lessons, or other with the LLIS.gov network, please submit your documents or email your comments, experiences, and observations to [schoolsafety@llis.dhs.gov](mailto:schoolsafety@llis.dhs.gov).

# Appendices



## Appendix I

### MEMORANDUM NO. 2006-217

**TO:** School District Superintendents  
**FROM:** Dr. Jim McBride  
**DATE:** October 13, 2006  
**SUBJECT:** School Safety and Security

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#### URGENT SCHOOL SAFETY NOTICE

In the wake of three recent school shootings in Wisconsin, Colorado and Pennsylvania, we all collectively need to critically assess our preparation efforts.

As a minimum, it would be appropriate to ensure that the following items are being done:

1. Ensure your Crisis Management Plan is fully updated. It should be tested on a regular basis. Staff should be knowledgeable about it.
2. Include your community's first responders in hostage taking and related exercises.
3. Review your 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) to be fully informed regarding present risk behaviors that directly affect school safety.
4. Reiterate that it is *everyone's* job to keep students safe. Students and staff should be trained to report unusual behavior to someone in authority.
5. Encourage all staff to truly get to know their students. Take positive and proactive steps necessary to eliminate bullying in your schools.
6. Ensure that schools maintain a single building access point. No entry from alternative doors should be available during the school day.

School District Superintendents

October 13, 2006

Page 2

7. Operate a quality and well thought out student mentor or buddy system.
8. Have teachers meet with at-risk kids with their parent/guardians as required.
9. Ensure policies exist to address the threat of a pandemic flu.
10. Provide for visitor sign-in and other types of proactive access control.
11. Conduct school safety/security audits, if not already done, in consultation with security personnel or law enforcement.
12. Take advantage of technology (cameras, security systems, monitoring systems, Wystars, etc.) where possible. This can inhibit criminal behavior, aid your efforts at dealing with juveniles and facilitate emergency information to first responders.

Though we cannot control the violent actions of troubled or deranged individuals, we can affect what is in our control and take proactive steps to ensure our schools are as safe as possible.

Thank you for your efforts in this important endeavor. If you have any questions regarding what the state is doing to aid districts, please call Bruce Hayes, Facilities and School Safety Consultant, at 777-6198, or see our web site at [www.k12.wy.us](http://www.k12.wy.us).

JM:bh

## Appendix II

### Wyoming's State Level Activities Regarding Public School Safety

October 16, 2006

Prompted by the recent school shootings in Wisconsin, Colorado, and Pennsylvania, the inventory below highlights the efforts by the Health and Safety Unit, and the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) as a whole, to increase Wyoming public school safety. Future initiatives are likely. Current efforts include:

- a. Combating substance abuse and violence in schools and communities through key WDE personnel actively involved in the following statewide initiatives:
  - i. The Wyoming First Lady's Initiative (WFLI) on underage drinking.
  - ii. The Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws (EUDL) state level management team.
  - iii. The Governor's Substance Abuse and Violent Crime Advisory Board.
  - iv. The Health Department/Substance Abuse Division's State Prevention Framework—State Incentive Grant which has a focus on underage drinking.
- b. Partnering with law enforcement to support a Project Guardian grant that would create a state-wide anonymous school safety tip line. This is in the approval process. The grant would pay for the first two years of operation and the WDE would pick up the cost after that. This is the same kind of tool that averted an attempted Columbine repeat in western Kansas. Authorities confiscated the weapons and bombs soon before the intended strike.
- c. Creating Wystars. This web tool, when properly utilized, greatly aids the flow of information in response efforts for police, firemen, and county emergency coordinators. The districts need to load data they deem important for local and regional first responders to know for the system to be effective. This is an evolving process with training that will be occurring into 2007 for both law enforcement and districts.
- d. Writing school safety & security grants from the State Office of Homeland Security, as opportunity permits, for emergency equipment including software, security cameras and radios. One major grant was successfully written for \$386,066 in 2004.
- e. Conducting a school safety and security review pursuant to House Enrolled Act 23 from the original HB 0139, Section 7 (g). The results are due in the late fall of 2006 and will be reviewed by committee before the end of the year. This will give

the Legislature more direction regarding school safety and security needs that were not a major part of the November 30, 2005 Picus Funding Formula and Recalibration Report.

- f. Aligning the expertise and diverse backgrounds in the School Safety Committee (SSC) to continue to explore ways to increase Wyoming school safety and mitigate risk. This group has a membership of 12 and has been operating since 2004.
- g. Partnering with the state Office of Homeland Security to deliver training on Web EOC (Homeland Security's on-line web incident system) and Wystars (Wyoming System to Aid Responders and Schools) together on training district and community personnel on site. This is scheduled to begin in fall 2006 or early 2007.
- h. Conducting presentations or arranging for presentations, where possible, on school safety related issues at the School Improvement Conferences.
- i. Providing direct feedback to district administration (done previously during the actual regular school safety visits, and when current opportunity permits) regarding unsafe situations on school property.
- j. Inviting guest speakers to Cheyenne to speak on school safety issues. Nedda Shafir, Public Information Officer, Cave Creek Unified School District, Scottsdale, Arizona, came to Cheyenne in the summer of 2006 to address the School Safety Committee and interested nearby districts on the impact, advantages, and disadvantages of emergency phone notification systems.
- k. Becoming NIMS (National Incident Management System) compliant. This is an in-process effort and will facilitate future preventive grants from the feds. Organizations that are not NIMS compliant may not qualify for federal prevention funding after 2006.
- l. Providing internet safety training to students using materials provided by I-Safe, a non-profit organization funded by the Department of Justice, in addition to providing information for various articles and news briefs.
- m. Initiating quarterly memos to districts on school safety. These have begun starting with the October 13, 2006 Urgent School Safety Notice to school superintendents.
- n. Attending relevant conferences for all applicable consultants to keep abreast of national trends and best practices in school safety and to build a contact list of individuals who serve to increase the knowledge pool available to this state.

- o. Administering the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The information gathered through the YRBS is useful in updating at-risk and school improvement plans, health education curriculum, and other student health programs. It is important to monitor risk behaviors among young people so we can develop better prevention programs and policies. This is the only survey that monitors a wide range of health-risk behaviors among adolescents at local, state, and national levels.
- p. Creating the Prevention & Education Resource Center (PERC) web site. This site can be reached at [www.preved.org](http://www.preved.org). It is newly created so the content level is not up to where it will eventually be, but it is a highly flexible resource to schools, parents, and community members and can be used to access program information, find best practices, find what other communities are doing, etc. One can also access the specialty areas of various programs. This site is growing, so don't be reluctant to contact the department and make suggestions about it. A logon and password are required, but those can be set up easily.
- q. Administering the state-wide After School Programs. These programs in communities all over Wyoming help instill positive life behaviors. They provide essential reinforcement and keep children in a constructive, controlled, and safe environment during a time when (statistically) kids get into the most trouble. These students are less likely to threaten other students or property around them.
- r. Administering the School Chemical removal program. This program has helped remove approximately three tons of hazardous materials from Wyoming schools, predominantly from laboratory spaces, since it's inception in 2003. For the past four years it has reimbursed participation schools 51% of the removal costs. When the next two-year reauthorization period starts, it will reimburse schools 75%.
- s. Updating and maintaining the *School Facilities Hazardous Materials Guidelines*. The original edition was written and disseminated to districts in May 2003 pursuant to W.S. 21-2-202 (a)(xxii). The second edition was sent out in August 2006. It is a brief user-friendly manual that addresses school chemical purchasing procedures, on-site chemical management, chemical storage, inventory procedures, and chemical disposal options. An electronic copy is viewable from [www.k12.wy.us](http://www.k12.wy.us).
- t. Contributing initiatives to the Governor's Domestic Violence Elimination (DoVE) Council and the Wyoming Prevent Team aimed at providing incentives for citizens to eliminate violence in the home. Less violence acted out at home means less violence acted out at school.
- u. Monitoring the Health and Safety Unit's Safe & Drug Free Schools (SDFS) grant and the governor's portion of the SDFS grant. In doing so, the SDFS staff provides information to districts regarding science/research-based programs that

- districts can use to decrease bullying, school violence, risky sexual behaviors, drug and alcohol consumption, and other risk behaviors. Staff keeps current on offerings of programming, speakers, and other literature that may benefit districts and their students.
- v. Studying the feasibility for an instant phone emergency notification system for possible implementation on a state-wide basis in Wyoming. Such a system can make hundreds of calls in a few minutes to parents. The estimated cost for unlimited calls is approximately \$3.00 per student per school year.
  - w. Monitoring information on school climate in addition to advocating quality child mentoring and buddy systems for students new to the school. When correctly implemented, buddy systems have done much to create a warmer school environment, increase camaraderie and increase student connectedness. This positive environment is a domestically safer environment.

## Appendix III

# Wyoming System to Aid Responders and Schools (Wystars)

**Wyoming Department of Education**  
Bruce Hayes  
Facilities & School Safety Consultant  
[bhayes1@educ.state.wy.us](mailto:bhayes1@educ.state.wy.us)  
(307) 777-6198

### A. What is Wystars?

1. Wystars is a state-wide emergency-only secure web site designed to provide school and district information to first responders in the event of a natural or man-made emergency. The system has:
  - a. Reliability.
  - b. No disks to access or lose.
  - c. Current school data - when input is made and maintained. (CDs could be up to a year old when needed, however this system is only as good as the district data in it.)
  - d. A standardized method and location for district offices to post announcements.
  - e. A standardized input, storage, editing and presentation method.
  - f. A means for the Governor's Office, the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) and the Office of Homeland Security to communicate directly with districts and schools during a prolonged emergency situation when other communication means may be unavailable.

Note: The wireless and dialup internet connections depend on a certain technology infrastructure surviving a disaster or incident, but the more communication options we provide, the more likely we will be able to communicate with those in the disaster area.

### 2. Participant/Stakeholders.

- a. Homeland Security.
- b. Department of Education.
- c. School Districts.
- d. K-12 Public Schools.
- e. Police and Fire Department Personnel.
- f. County Emergency Coordinators.

### 3. Purpose.

- a. Assist in the protection and safety of students and staff in the event of a crisis or disaster.
- b. Provide first responders and school administration with immediate access to the site specific information required to appropriately respond to a crisis or disaster.
- c. Avoids confusion in a emergency (Recall Columbine).

### 4. Design.

- a. Made to be as self-explanatory as possible.
- b. Uses standard web protocols for ease of operation.
- c. Intended to be easy-to-read in a high stress situation.
- d. Information is easily loaded.

## **B. History**

### 1. Home Land Security Grant.

- a. Wystars was a subset of a larger grant applied for in 2004 that provided emergency equipment to districts that demonstrated a need.
  - b. Prior to this grant, feedback was solicited from a number of districts and first responders regarding whether they thought the system would be useful to them.
  - c. It was understood that this system had to have a number of features including:
    - i. It had to operate at *no cost* to the schools it serves
    - ii. It had to be simple to use
    - iii. Include items that would be important to know
    - iv. Include features that gave key district personnel reasons to visit the site
2. Favorable input received from a sample of the districts and first responders gave the WDE a green light to include Wystars in the grant.
  3. Participation is not mandated by statute, it is optional.
  4. It was important to find an acronym that people could easily remember. The name is registered with the Wyoming Secretary of State's Office.
  5. It turns out that the state of Washington has a program similar to ours that was started several years ago called the "Critical Incident Planning and Mapping System." Much like ours, it is designed to maximize the information available to first responders in an emergency. They are still about a year or two away from getting all of the data on their schools loaded into a database.



6. Wystars first became available for loading data in May 2005.

### **C. System Advantages**

1. Features.
  - a. On-line applications can be accessed via wireless means.
  - b. Permission based – only authorized users allowed.
  - c. Secure – individual ID and password required.
  - d. Easy input with predefined templates and menus.
  - e. Standard navigation, standard look and feel.
  - f. Accommodates to the individual requirements of each school and district.
2. Accessible from the Homeland Security's Web EOC through a five digit alpha-numeric means. (First four letters of a district and it's number)
3. Is available 24/7.
4. A principal or superintendent does not need to be retrained when they relocate to another Wyoming school district. The system architecture is the same across the state.
5. District administrators can give access permission to any teacher on staff as required.

### **D. Challenges**

1. The state system administrator has several other duties and is not able to attend Wystars on a full time basis.
2. Well intentioned districts are having trouble finding the resources in personnel and time to load key material into Wystars.
3. At least one Wyoming district has said that they do not intend to use the system because of hacker risk.
4. Many first responders are yet to be trained in Web EOC by the State Office of Homeland Security. It is an effort that is in-process.

### **E. Content may include:**

1. Emergency response protocols.
2. Regional first responders (police, fire, ambulance, etc.).
3. Area emergency resources.

4. Non-emergency resources.
5. School preparedness measures.
6. School emergency management plans.
7. Emergency planning resources.
8. Health rules, procedures and information.
9. First aid procedures.
10. School floor plans.
11. Aerial photos.
12. Video surveillance archives.
13. Calendar for drills and events.
14. Quick links to Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).
15. Key names, home numbers and cell phone numbers.
16. Contents of emergency three day supply packages.
17. Emergency Radio Equipment and frequencies.

Additional Points:

- \* Coalfire, Inc. won the contract to provide the site by competitive bid.
- \* For increased protection, the servers are not in-state.
- \* There are three separate servers for redundancy.
- \* So far, there are two administrators per district appointed to load data and assign viewers within the district's schools.
- \* The Wyoming Department of Education will be assisting schools to load information deemed relevant to first responders by the district.
- \* Training was conducted last year in Riverton and Casper to interested districts before the system came on line.
- \* It is important that districts consult with their local first responders and coordinate regarding what their information expectations are.

**NOTES**

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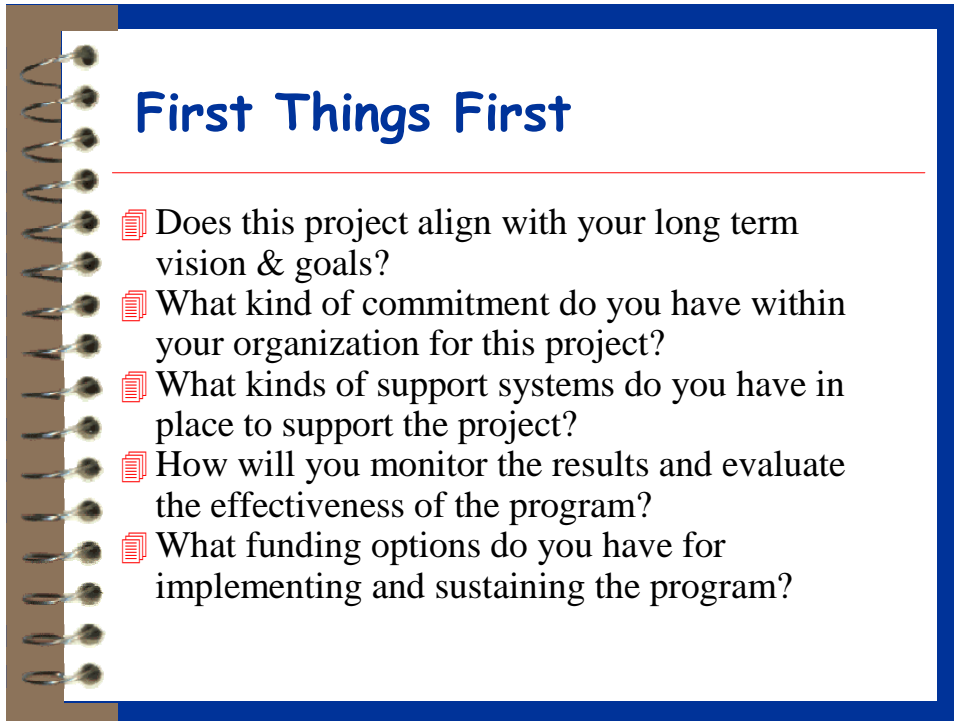
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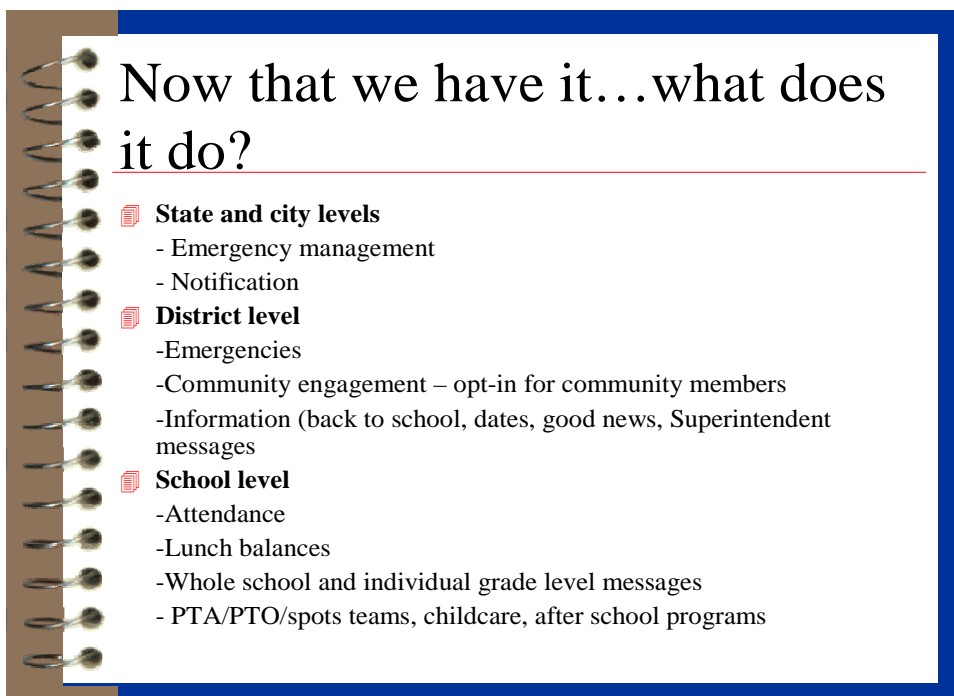
## Appendix IV

On July 31, 2006, Nedda Shafir, Education Consultant and Public Information Officer for the Cave Creek Unified School District in Scottsdale, Arizona addressed a group of district and school safety personnel in Cheyenne. The following Power Point slides comprise the highlights of her communication.



### First Things First

- Does this project align with your long term vision & goals?
- What kind of commitment do you have within your organization for this project?
- What kinds of support systems do you have in place to support the project?
- How will you monitor the results and evaluate the effectiveness of the program?
- What funding options do you have for implementing and sustaining the program?



### Now that we have it...what does it do?

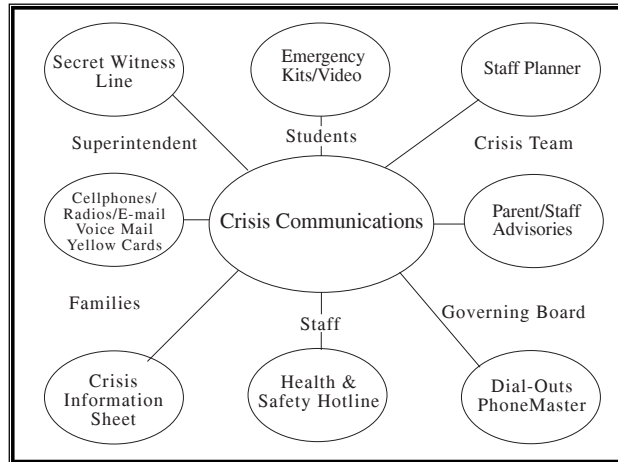
- State and city levels**
  - Emergency management
  - Notification
- District level**
  - Emergencies
  - Community engagement – opt-in for community members
  - Information (back to school, dates, good news, Superintendent messages)
- School level**
  - Attendance
  - Lunch balances
  - Whole school and individual grade level messages
  - PTA/PTO/spots teams, childcare, after school programs

# Communication

*There cannot be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full.*

*- Henry Kissinger*

Communication is key to effective crisis management. School districts should have a plan that is coordinated through one office and the State.



## Benefits for Children and Parents

- Communication between home and school is regular, two-way and meaningful.
- Can be used in any language.
- Both voice mail and email messages.
- Parents feel safe and confident about their schools.
- Parents have a better understanding of what is occurring in school and how they can reinforce it at home.
- All parents have access to the same information
- No more excuses.
- Parents see technology as a positive, effective tool and investment.



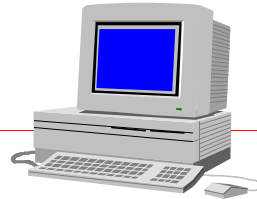
## Benefits for Schools & Districts

- ☞ Supports curriculum and school improvement plans/district goals.
- ☞ Aids in the development of other partnerships.
- ☞ Shows technology funding accountability.
- ☞ Provides for timely and accurate information dissemination.
- ☞ Increased communication helps state department and community to directly connect to schools and district.
- ☞ Easy access to information promotes credibility.



## Technology

- ☞ **Develop minimum technology requirements based on your needs**
  - Length of message/# of lines
  - Recording accessibility
  - Outdial capabilities
  - Call and phone line charges
- ☞ **Research system options**
  - School communication system
  - District communication system
  - Communications company



## Technology continued . . .

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### **Once system is in place:**

- Develop recording instructions
- Make sure it works... Try it yourself!





### **Be prepared to troubleshoot**


- Know who to call for issues beyond your expertise or access
- Make sure support people know whom to call for help
- Develop a chain of command for tech support and equipment issues

## References

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 Dr. Susan J. Cook, Superintendent  
Washington Elementary School District  
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[Scook@wesd.k12.az.us](mailto:Scook@wesd.k12.az.us)

 Dr. Margo J. Seck, Retired Superintendent  
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 Dr. Tacy C. Ashby, Superintendent  
Cave Creek Unified School District  
Scottsdale, Arizona  
[Tashby@ccusd93.org](mailto:Tashby@ccusd93.org)

## Appendix V

### Fall 2006 School Shootings Position Statement *National Consortium of School Violence Prevention Researchers and Practitioners*

www.ncsvprp.org

November 2, 2006

The undersigned school violence prevention researchers and practitioners and associated organizations wish to acknowledge and comment on the tragic acts of violence that have taken place in our schools during early Fall 2006, and to express our deepest condolences to families and loved ones of the victims.

Shocked by these senseless shootings, our nation naturally asks: Why did this happen? What can be done to prevent such events from happening again? Many of us feel compelled to do something in response to these tragedies to assert a commitment to protect children. We all share a common priority: Keeping our children safe while at school. In spite of these recent violent incidents, school remains the safest environment for our children--far more violence occurs at home and in the community than at school. While schools are relatively safe places, we can make them safer without compromising the primary mission of education. We believe that research supports a thoughtful approach to safer schools, guided by four key elements: Balance, Communication, Connectedness, and Support.

#### **Balance – Communication – Connectedness – Support**

A **balanced approach** implies well-integrated programs that make sense and are effective. Although it is understandable in response to these recent incidents to gravitate towards extreme physical security measures (e.g., lockdowns or video surveillance) to increase a sense of control, research has not shown these methods to be the most effective long-term strategy. Given the physical layout of many school campuses and the amount of resources available, there are limits to what schools and communities can do when they rely primarily on physical security measures.

Although it may make sense to limit exterior unlocked public entries to a school to one or two manageable points, the exclusive reliance on metal detectors, security cameras, guards, and entry check points is unlikely to provide universal protection against all school shootings. Indeed, shootings have occurred in schools with strict security measures already in place. It is important to note that two of the recent school shootings involved adult outsiders coming onto school grounds, something different from other recent experiences with school shootings. When considering prevention strategies it is important not to lump all of these incidents together, nor oversimplify the issues. However, schools should regularly conduct an audit to assess physical and procedural aspects of their school from a security/safety point of view.

The most effective approach to preventing violence and protecting students is a balanced one that includes a variety of efforts addressing physical safety, educational practices, and programs that support the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students. Over the past decade, research reveals that safe schools that are effective in preventing violence have a balanced and comprehensive array of appropriate programs.

**Communication** is critical. Comprehensive analyses by the U. S. Secret Service, the FBI, and numerous researchers have concluded that the most effective way to prevent targeted acts of violence at school is by maintaining close communication and trust with students and others in the community, so that threats will be reported and can be investigated by responsible authorities. In the absence of threats or behaviors in preparation for a violent act, it is difficult if not impossible to predict when and where a specific act of serious violence will occur. Attempts to detect imminently violent students based on profiles or checklists of characteristics are not effective and are most likely to result in false identification of innocent students as dangerous. Instead, school authorities should concentrate their efforts on improving communication channels and training a team of staff members to use principles of threat assessment to gauge the safety of the school.

- First, concerned students, parents, educators, and stakeholders in the community should attend to specific verbal and physical behaviors that signal something is amiss. For example, when a person utters threats to engage in a violent act or displays a sudden and pronounced change of mood and related social behavior, markedly different from their longstanding pattern, it makes sense to communicate concerns to others close to that person. Early identification is important not only to prevent violence, but to provide individuals at risk for disruption and violence the support, treatment, and help they need.

- Second, while in school, students need to know about and feel comfortable bringing concerns regarding safety to the attention of teachers and school administrators. Schools and communities must find effective means to overcome students' reluctance to break unwritten rules against "tattling" or "snitching" on their peers. We need to communicate to students that their lives or the lives of their friends may depend on reporting signs of danger when they become aware of such information. Clear policies and handbooks that outline indicators of concern and plans for intervention should be provided and reviewed annually with staff, students, parents, and community. Channels of efficient, user-friendly communication need to be established and maintained.

**Connectedness** refers to what binds us together as a social unit. Students need to feel that they belong at their school and that the school staff and the school community as a whole care for them. In turn, students need to be invested in their school community. Similarly, local neighborhoods and communities are better and safer places when neighbors look out for one another, are involved in community activities, and care about the welfare of each other. Research indicates that those students most at risk for delinquency and violence are those who are most alienated from the school community. Schools need to reach out to build positive connections to marginalized students, showing concern for



them, and fostering avenues of meaningful involvement.

**Support** is critical for effective prevention. Both in schools and the local community, many people experience minor and major life stresses and difficulties. Nationally, the mental health needs of youth and adults are often shortchanged or neglected. That needs to change. Depression, anxiety, bullying, incivility, and various forms of intimidation in schools need to be taken seriously. Every school should have the resources to maintain evidence-based programs designed to address bullying and other forms of student conflict. Research-based violence prevention and related comprehensive support programs should be offered, following a three-tier approach, operating at the *universal* (school-wide), *targeted* (for at-risk students), and *intensive* (for the most chronically and intensely at-risk students) levels.

Finally, it is also important to acknowledge that access to guns plays an important role in many acts of serious violence in the United States. Although guns are never the simple cause of a violent act, the availability of lethal weapons to youth and to emotionally disturbed or antisocial adults poses a serious public health problem that cannot be overlooked. Our political leaders need to find a reasonable and constitutional way to limit the widespread availability of guns to persons who are unwilling or unable to use them in a responsible, lawful manner.

In summary, while keeping schools free of weapons is an important part of preventing school violence, we must also engage in comprehensive planning and coordination to prevent violence and disruption in our schools. These comprehensive programs depend on monitoring multiple facets of the school operation with ongoing data collection and analysis, coupled with coordinated use of evidence-based interventions. Local school communities are encouraged to convene stakeholder groups in discussion of these issues to help chart a safe and productive course in the near-and long-term future. The bottom line is that we must all work together, respecting each other's concerns and ideas, toward the common goal of keeping our schoolchildren safe.

### **Organizations Endorsing This Statement**

American Academy of Pediatrics American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (formerly, AAMR) American Art Therapy Association American Counseling Association American Dance Therapy Association American Psychiatric Association American Psychological Association Association of School Business Officials International Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders Council for Exceptional Children Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health Hamilton Fish Institute on School and Community Violence Learning Disabilities Association of America Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders National Association of Federally Impacted Schools National Association of School Psychologists National Association of Secondary School Principals National Association of Social Workers National Education Association National Mental Health Association National Rehabilitation Association School Social Work Association of America The Advocacy Institute Tourette Syndrome Association

## **Individuals Endorsing This Statement**

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