



Safe Schools Review

Presented by:
Safe
Schools
Task Force



ELEVATING YOUNG MINDS



Safe Schools Task Force



BUNCOMBE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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BUNCOMBE COUNTY SCHOOLS

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PAULA GARLAND, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Duties of the Safe Schools Task Force



- Evaluate the existing Buncombe County Schools safe schools policies and procedures.
- Examine “best practices” of other school districts.
- Review existing resources within the school district and sheriff’s office.
- Consider any additional resources or recommendations that would improve our current plans.

Community Experts



Dr. Tony Baldwin, Supt. Buncombe County Schools
Van Duncan, Sheriff of Buncombe County
Ned Fowler, EMS Coordinator, Mission Hospital
Tammy Shook, Program Administrator, DHHS
Dr. Lori Brown, Expert in Violent Writing
Dr. Monty Fuchs, Technology Director
Dave Mahoney, Sheriff of Transylvania County
Lt. Greg Stroup, Transylvania Count Sheriff's Office
Buncombe County SROs
John Barbour, President BC PAPA, principal
Jerry Vehaun, BC Emergency Management Director
Angie Ledford, Planner, EMS
Lt. Randy Sorrells, Sheriff's Office , Public Information Officer
Brooke Hazlett, Director of Communications, BC Sheriff's Office
Kara Keller, Chief of Police, A-B Technical Community College
J.R. Shelton, Asst. Police Chief, A-B Technical Community College
Steve Padgett, Chief of Police, Black Mountain
Anna Austin, NCAE president

Community Experts Cont.



Lt. Scott Allen, Buncombe County Sheriff's Office

Lt. Randy Whitson, Buncombe County Sheriff's Office

Greg Fox, Director of Maintenance, BCS

Mike Kowaluk, Safety Officer, BCS

Tim Fierle, Director of Facilities, BCS

Earle Butler, Sheriff of Cumberland County

Lt. J.T. Morgan, Cumberland County Sheriff's Office

Sgt. Lester Lowe, Cumberland County Sheriff's Office

Sylvia Clemment, Dept. of Juvenile Justice

Brett Holloman, Chief of Police, Woodfin

Greg Stephens, Chief of Police, Weaverville

Jan Blunt, Director of Communications, BCS

Sgt. Gregory Dills, State Highway Patrol

Dr. Kurt Michael, Director of Counseling Center, Appalachian State University

Angie Garner, System of Care Coordinator, Western Highlands Network

Donald Reuss, Coordinator of Provider Network, Western Highlands Network

Sonia Eldridge, Western Highlands Network

What the National Experts Say



To be effective in preventing crises, safe schools plans should take a balanced approach and address communication, connectedness and adequate support for all aspects of the plan:

- Take a balanced approach to include
 - Physical safety
 - Educational practices
 - Programs to support social, emotional, and behavior needs of students

Experts Say



- Communication is critical
 - Communication about students/adults with troubling behavior
 - Trained threat assessment teams
 - Change the culture about “tattling” to focus on “reporting”
 - Efficient and user-friendly channels of communication

Experts Say



- Connectedness: what binds us together as community
 - Students need to feel that they are a part of school and that others care for them.
 - Community involvement and activities that promote welfare of others.
 - Efforts to build positive connections to marginalized students, showing concern, and fostering avenues of meaningful involvement.



Experts Say



- Support is critical for effective prevention
 - Mental health supports
 - Social Supports
 - Evidence-based conflict resolution strategies
 - Evidence-based bullying prevention programs
 - Three-tiered behavior system: Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports

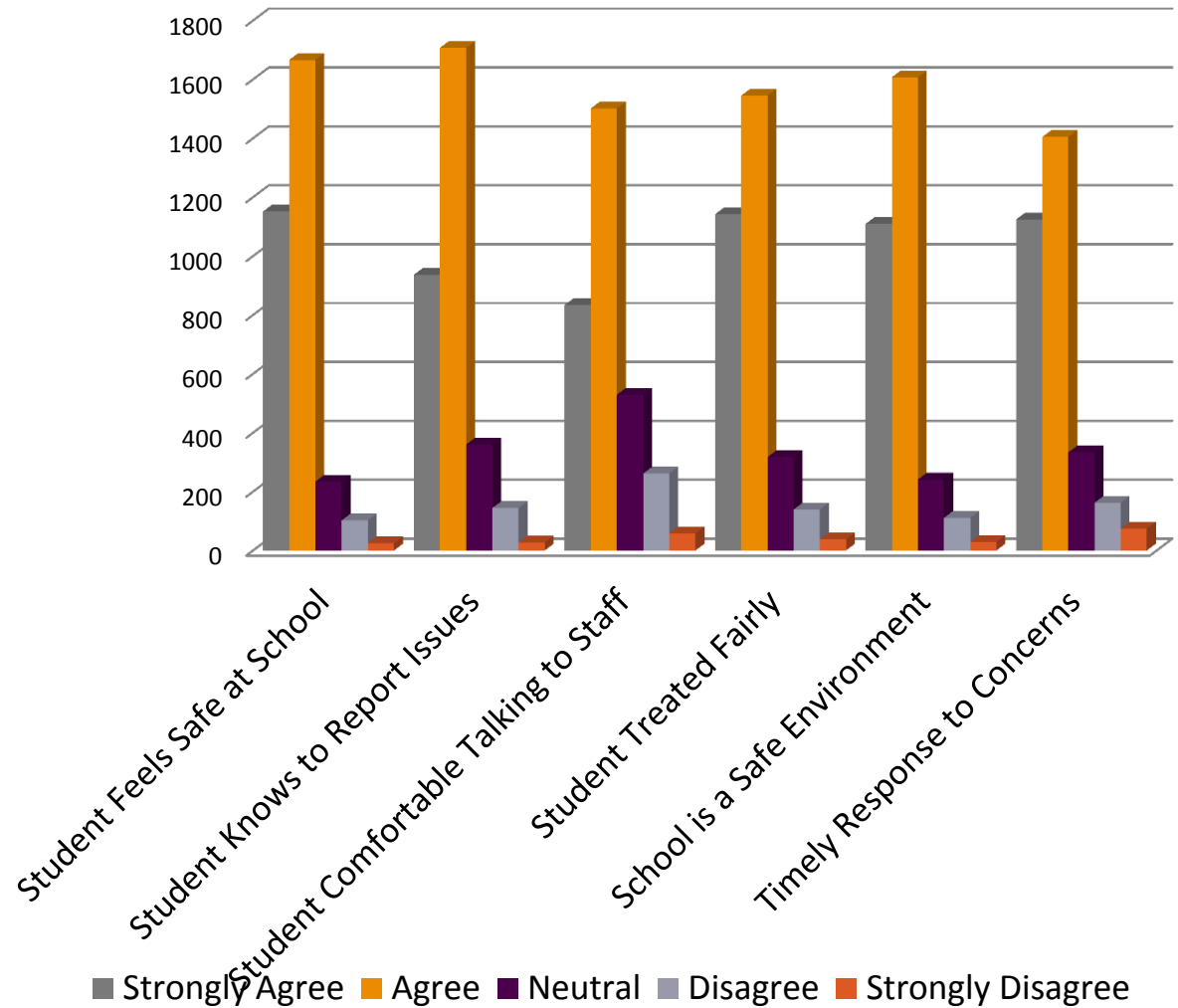
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekyuUajAdWQ>



Summary of On-line Survey: February, 2013

Approximately 3000
Total Responses

Parent Survey Results - All Districts

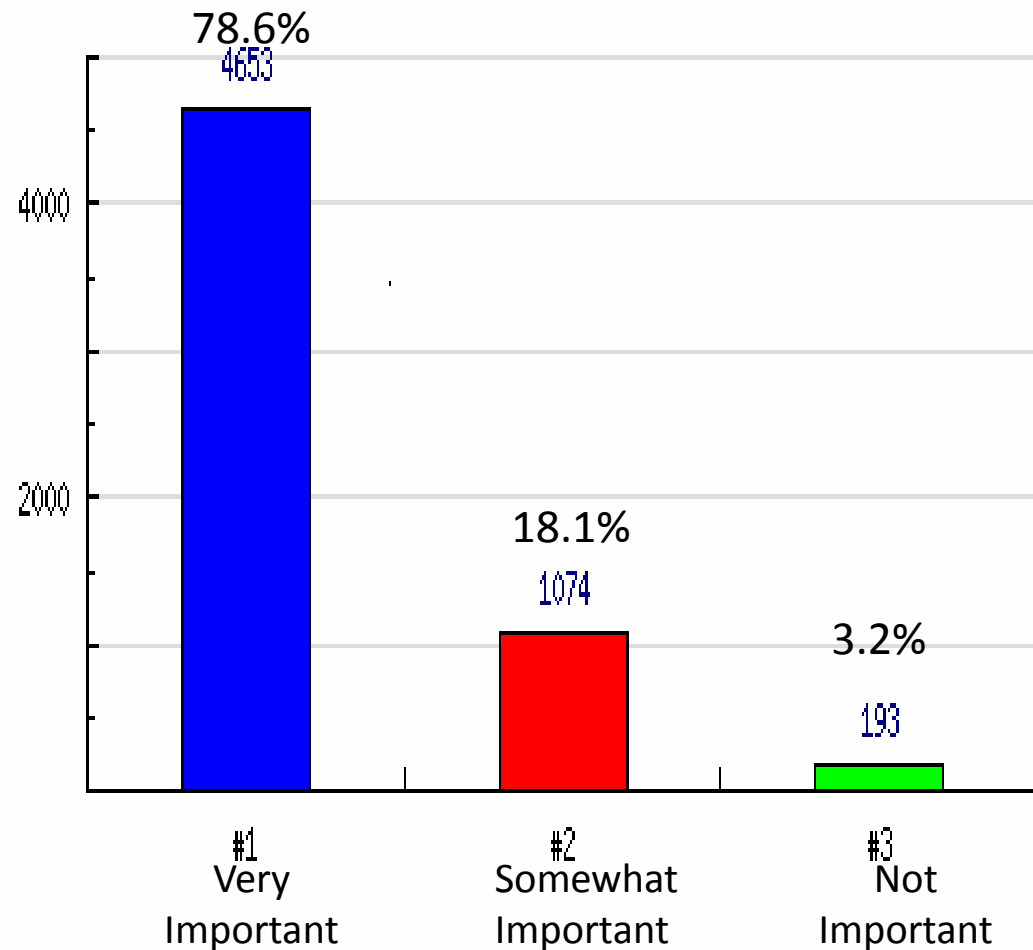




Phone/On-Line Survey: March, 2013

Question 1

Support for
increased
Counselors and
Social Workers

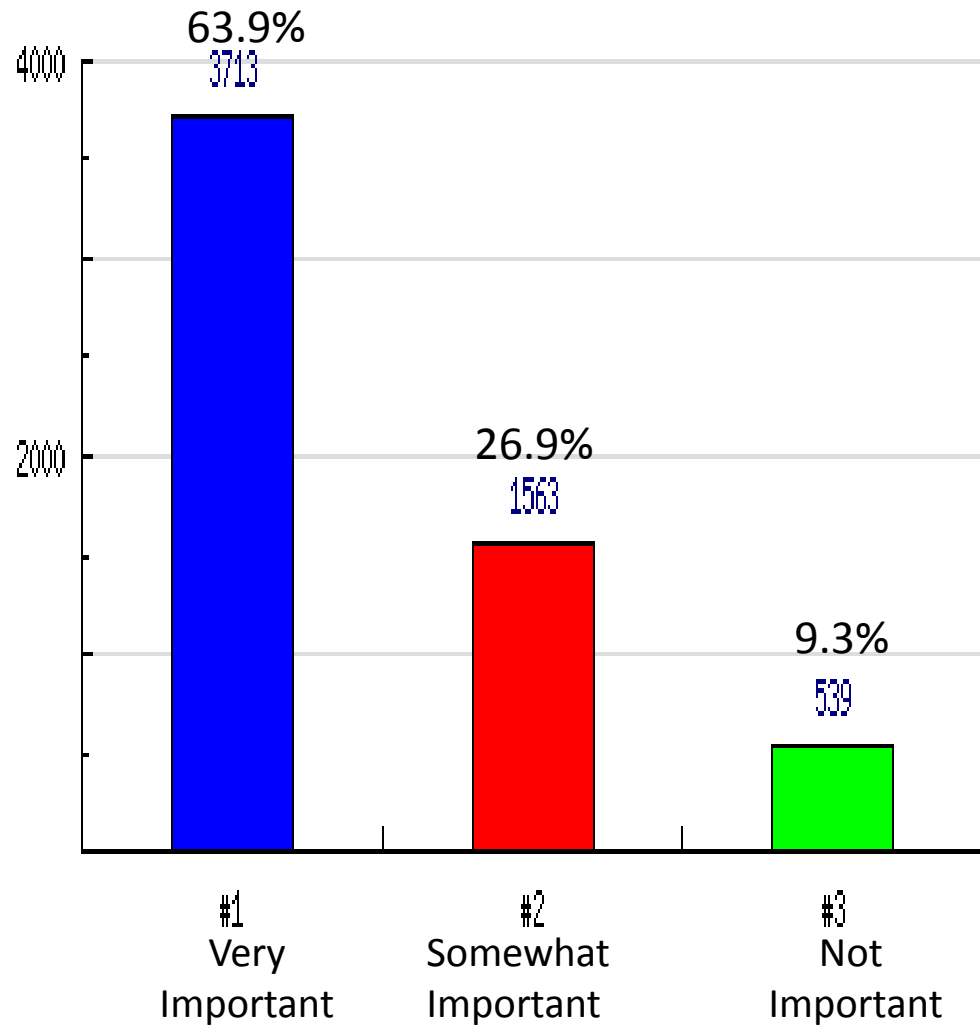




Phone/On-Line
Survey: March, 2013

Question 2

Support for
Increasing Law
Enforcement
Presence in
Elementary
Schools

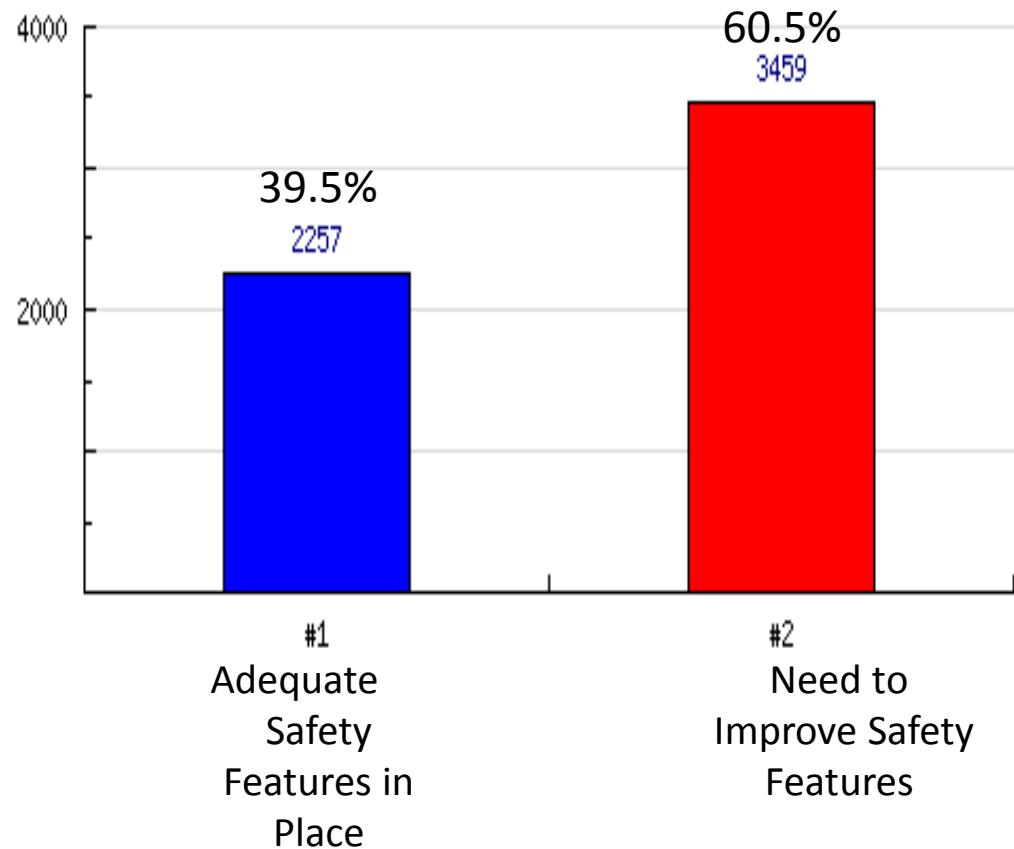




Phone/On-Line
Survey: March 2013

Question 3

School Buildings
Have Adequate
Safety Features

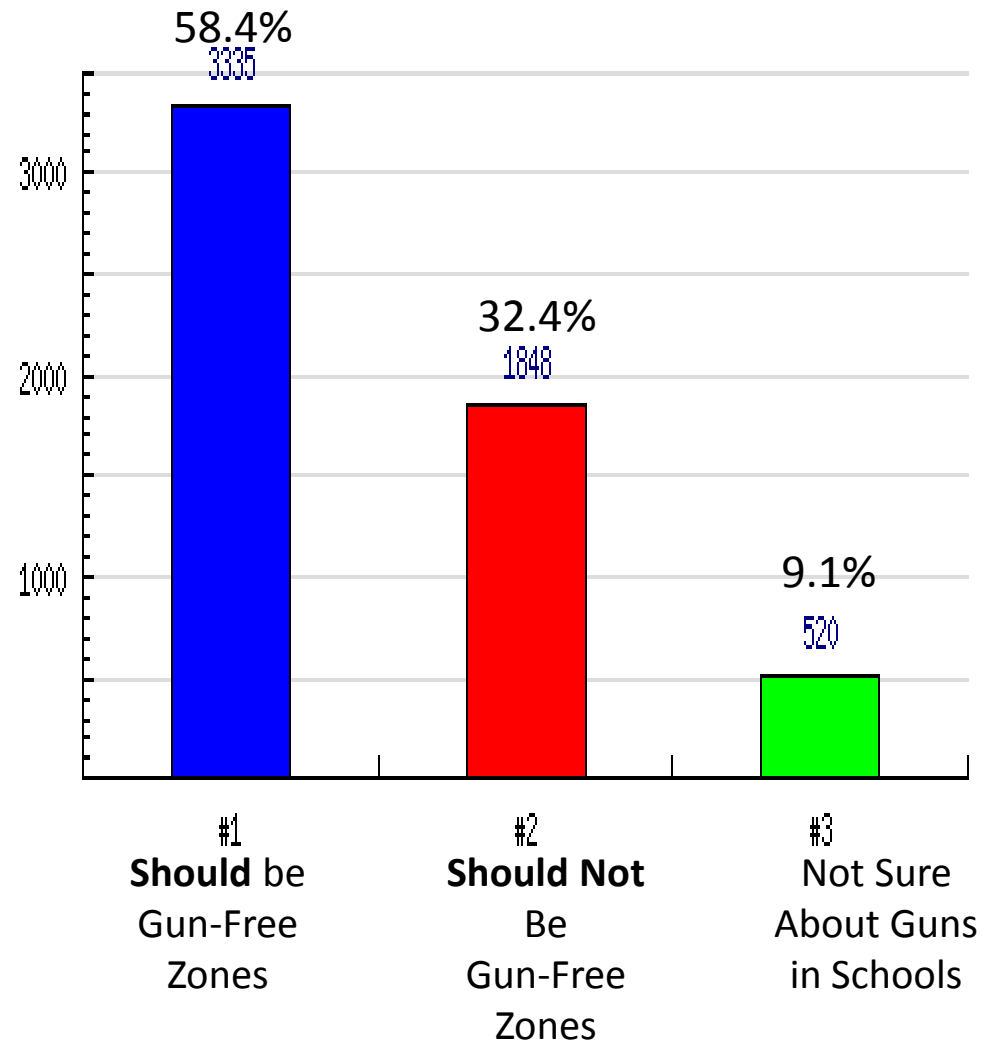




Phone/On-Line
Survey: March 2013

Question 4

Support for
Maintaining
Schools as
Gun-free Zones

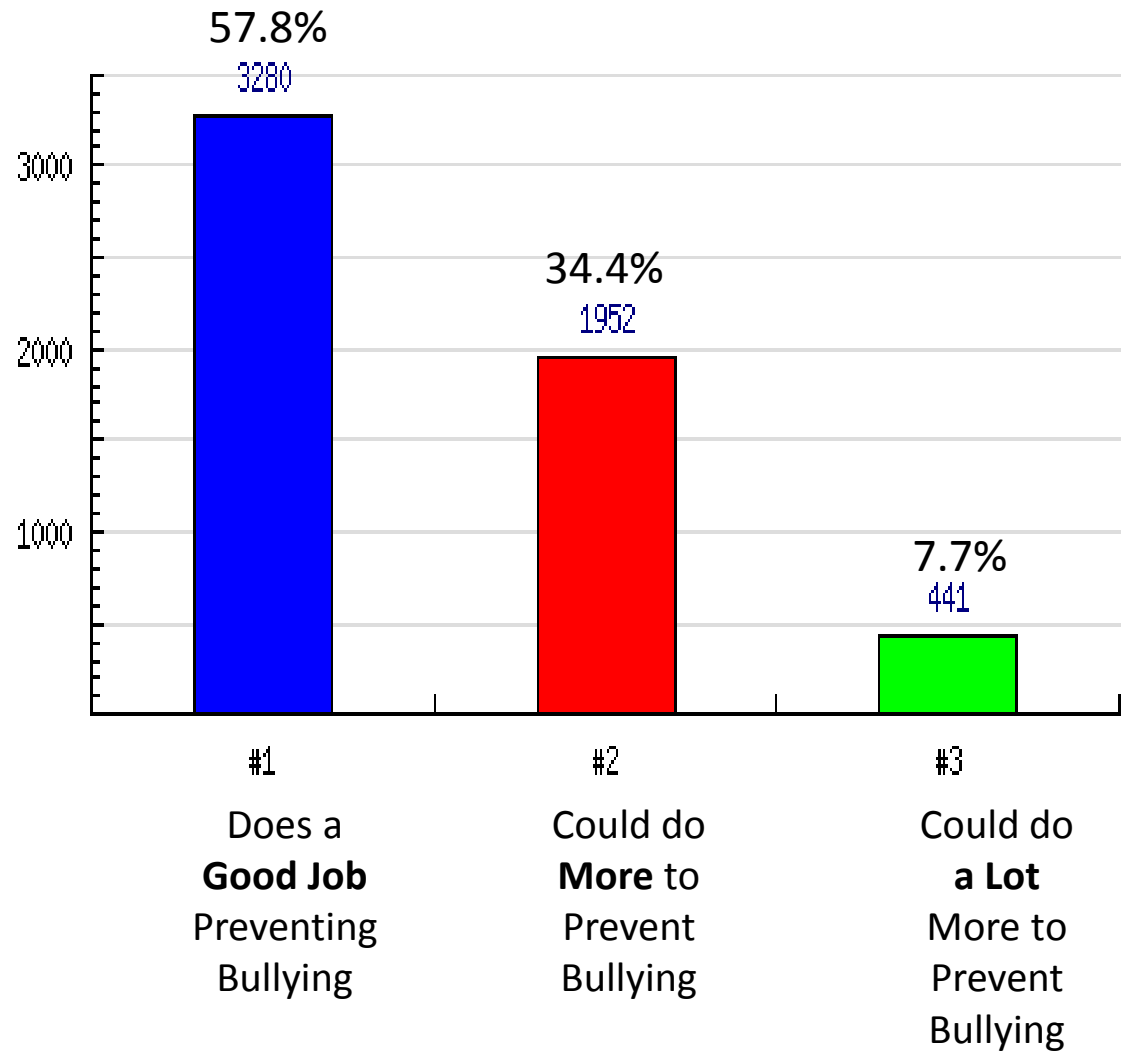




Phone/On-Line
Survey: March 2013

Question 5

Schools Create
Climate that
Encourages Respect
And Discourages
Bullying

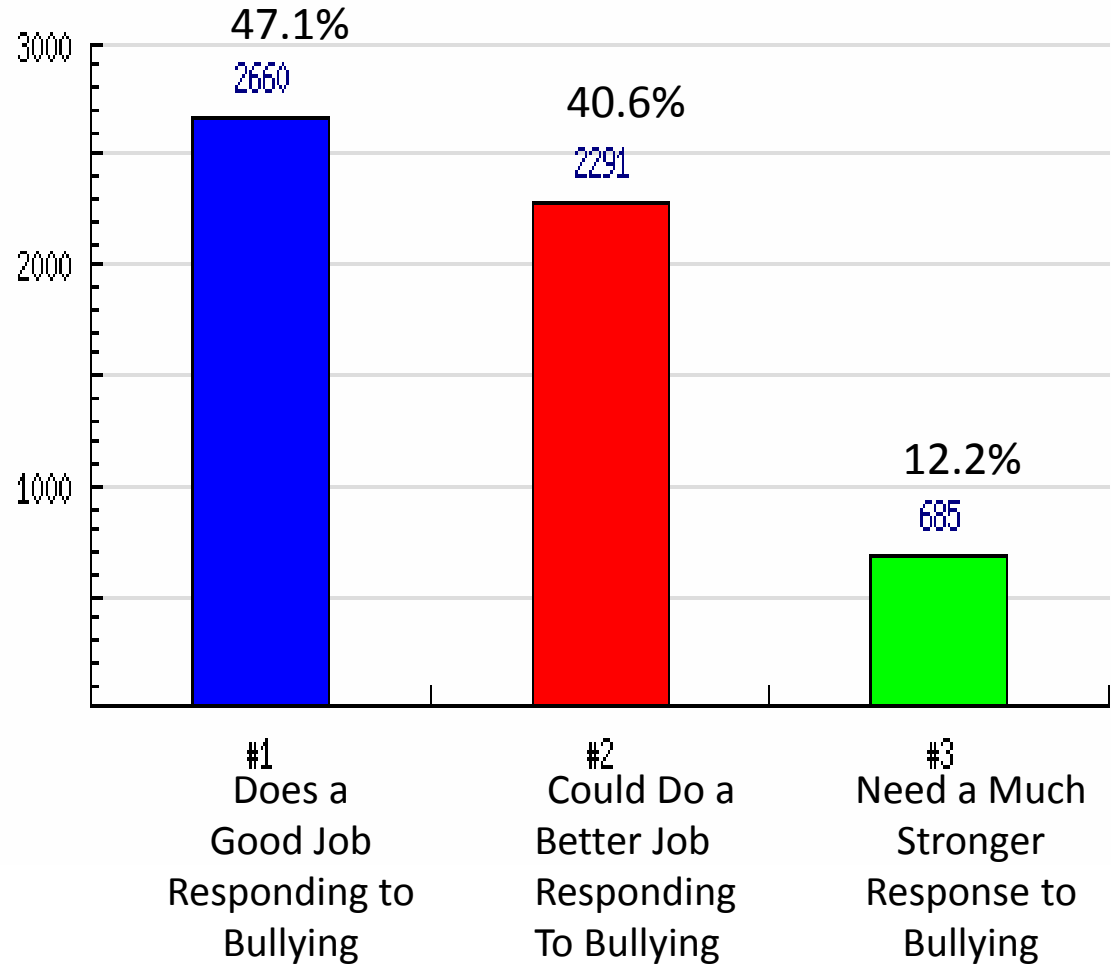




Phone/On Line
Survey: March 2013

Question 6

Schools Have
A Timely and
Adequate Response
To Reports of
Bullying



Buncombe County Safe Schools Plan and Incident Command System



- Four areas of planning:
 - Prevention and Mitigation
 - Preparedness
 - Response
 - Recovery



Priority 1



**ENHANCE BUNCOMBE COUNTY
SCHOOLS' SAFETY POLICIES,
PROCEDURES, PHYSICAL
SECURITY, AND DISTRICT
SUPPORT FUNCTION.**

Recommendations



- Entry systems at elementary schools, intermediate schools, and Community High School.

This recommendation will give each school a sense of control of who enters the building through the main entrance.

The contract for these systems have been awarded and the installation is in progress.



Recommendations



- Establish a yearly budget for the Safe Schools office.

This budget will allow for training opportunities and equipment upgrades.



Recommendations



- To establish a position to work in the Safe Schools office-
“Safe Schools Field Coordinator.”

This person will be utilized to assist with training school staffs, attend crisis team meetings, conduct site assessments and work with outside agencies on school safety projects. Along with the Director of Safe Schools the Field Coordinator will be a point of contact to all our schools with school safety concerns.

Recommendations



- To establish “Shared Communication Technologies” with other agencies such as Sheriff’s Office, EMS (BC Emergency Management Center), Mission Hospital, Woodfin Police Department, Weaverville Police Department, AB Tech Campus Police, NC Highway Patrol, local Fire Departments and Black Mountain Police Department.

This recommendation will allow direct communication with these agencies in the event of an emergency at one of our schools.

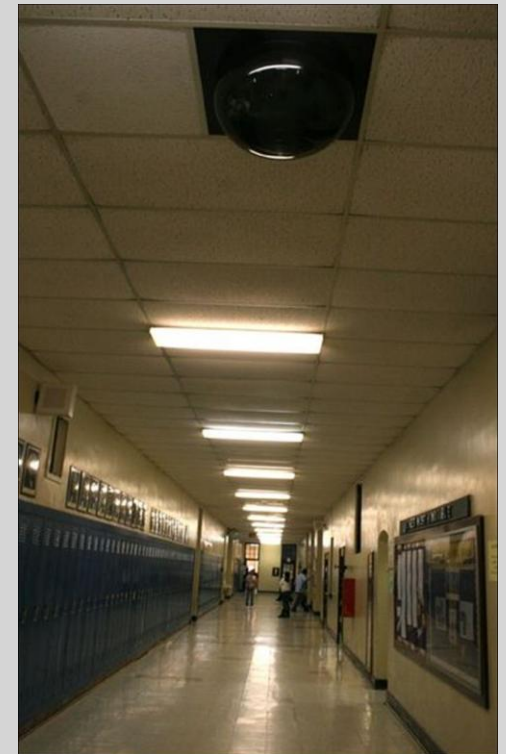
This recommendation is in progress as many of these agencies are changing to a different type of radio communication system.

Recommendations



- To install cameras at all elementary schools, intermediate schools and add cameras at the middle and high schools.

This recommendation is designed to enhance interior and exterior security of our schools. Cameras have become a widely used tool by school administrators while conducting investigations that threaten school safety.



Recommendations



- To help facilitate an *Annual Safe Schools Assessment Retreat*.

This retreat should include school leadership, law enforcement, representatives from other agencies and the community college.

The retreat can serve as an annual training session on school safety. Moreover, each year it will bring key players together to have meaningful conversations on the topic of school safety in Buncombe County.

Recommendations



- Crisis Response Teams home visits aided by law enforcement.

The recommendation suggests that school based crisis teams make home visits in an effort to establish a relationship with students and parents that may be experiencing challenges in the school and in the community. The insight potential of such a visit can be invaluable.

Recommendations



- To install complete camera sets on all yellow buses (262) throughout the county.

This recommendation is designed to enhance security for all buses to reduce bullying and stop arm violations. Currently we have 2 digital systems and some VCR style cameras. We have one camera on all but 10 buses and 72 buses with old VCR units. Goal would be to completely outfit all buses with a digital system that has a 4 camera set on each bus.



Recommendations



- To install live GPS on all yellow buses (262).

This recommendation is designed to enhance cost saving, operational efficiency, and safety. Drivers will be able to sign in and out on the bus thus saving time. Administration can answer parent concerns on the spot while on the phone with less investigation time. This system would provide immediate feedback on bus location in the event of an accident, hostile actions, or tracking buses during a school evacuation.



Recommendations



- Implement volunteer transportation safety assistants program.

The recommendation would allow schools to have law enforcement periodically ride along on a bus route as a presence to support the driver and school on correct ridership behaviors and general safety. This would allow the schools to use approved school system and/or Sheriff's Office volunteers. The frequency of use would be at the discretion of each school.

Recommendations



- Develop new safety policies and provide training for staff.

NC currently does not have a standoff distance law for parents or strangers approaching the bus. Some states have a 10 to 15 foot standoff distance policy. (Ref. Alabama Shooting)

Buncombe County Schools Transportation would develop this as a policy and implement through new driver training and summer in-service training. In-service would include actual scenario based training.

Priority 2



**INCREASE LAW ENFORCEMENT
PRESENCE AND ADDITIONAL
SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS.**

School Resource Officer Job Description



- Three roles define the functionality of SROs in the school:
 - Law enforcement officer;
 - Informal counselor;
 - Law related instructor.
- SROs must create and maintain a close relationship with principals.
- SROs must work closely with parents, students, and members of the community.
- All SRO's work within our guiding principles of **Service, Accountability, Integrity, Professionalism, and Dignity.**

Recommendations



➤ **Seven additional School Resource Officers**

- One for each of the six Elementary School districts.
- Add School Resource Officer at Community High School.
- Enhance response times/greater visibility in Elementary Schools.
- Build positive relationships with students and community.
- Will allow all Middle and High School SROs to remain on campuses.



Increase Security Guard Presence



- Add an additional unarmed security guard to each high school campus.



Strategies for Buncombe County Sheriff's Office



- ❖ Increase officer involvement in elementary schools.
- ❖ Allow Sheriff's Personnel to take their kids to school in county vehicles. This would increase visibility before and after school hours.
- ❖ Sheriff's Elementary School Reading Program
 - ❖ Anti-bullying books
- ❖ Adopt-A-School Program
 - ❖ Members of other divisions within the Sheriff's Office will adopt a school and periodically participate in school activities.

Technology Resources



Camera Access

- SRO Laptops
- Sheriff's Response Team Command Post
- Sheriff's Office Communication Center

Improved Communications

- Incident mapping system
- Mass texting

Equipment

- Equip every SRO with hand-held metal detectors

Training Recommendations for SROs



- Incorporate SRO specific training into the Sheriff's Office Field Training Officer Program.
- All SROs certified in Critical Incident Training.
- Active shooter training to include school personnel.
- Utilize Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Priority 3



**INCREASE FOCUS ON
PREVENTATIVE MENTAL
HEALTH INITIATIVES**

Rationale: Mental Health Services



- Increasing mental health needs are negatively impacting academic achievement and behavior in schools.
- In every mass shooting there were two keys to prevention:
 - The presence of a severe mental illness
 - An intense interpersonal conflict that the person could not resolve or tolerate

Rationale: Mental Health Services



- Counselors/Social workers increase connectedness of students and families
- Early identification of potential social/emotional issues is crucial
- Threat assessment and safety plans are effective and require full implementation and support
- Punishment for many students with mental health needs is not effective

Recommendation: Implement a research-based anti-bullying curriculum in grades K-8



Bullying is a national and local issue that leads to social isolation and anger and is often a common precursor to school violence. Implementing a research-based program with measureable outcomes will reduce the incidents of bullying resulting in improved, safer school climates.



Recommendation: Enhance middle school mental health supports and alternatives

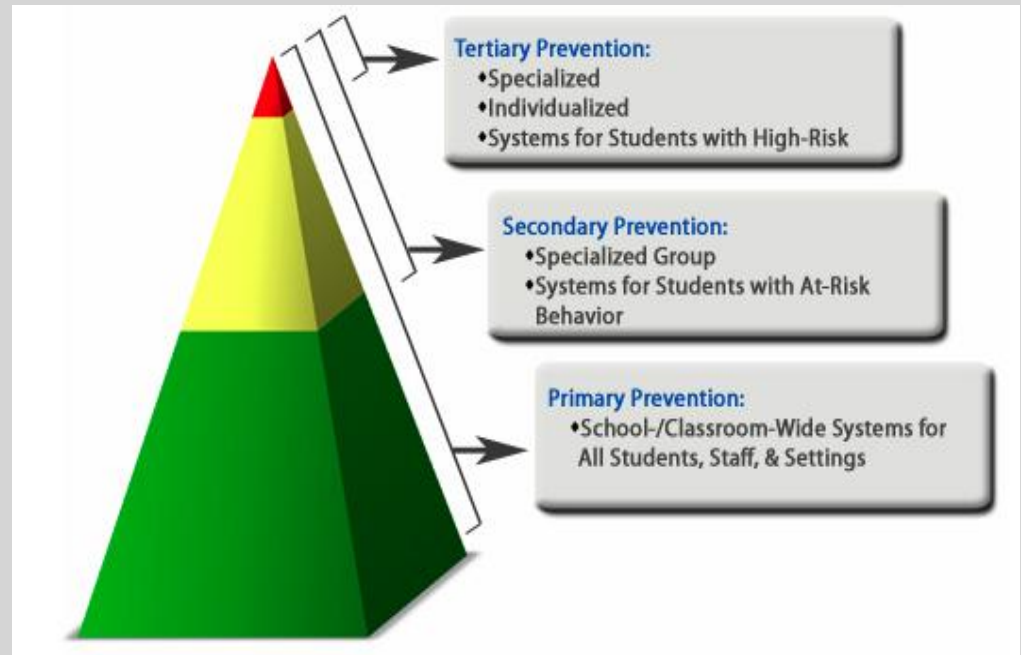


Buncombe County has limited middle school alternative settings for students with behavior and mental health needs. With collaboration from community providers, an in-school alternative program would be developed to provide mental health support to students, teachers, and parents.



Recommendation: Enhance PBIS implementation and integration with Response to Instruction.

All Buncombe County Schools will implement Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports by 2015 with integration of Response to Instruction starting in 2013. District and school-based coaching is necessary to ensure fidelity and sustainability for maximum effectiveness.



Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports Response to Instruction



- Investigate district coaching resources with existing personnel.
- Develop district RtI implementation plan that integrates with PBIS.
- Train internal school teams.
- Identify resources for RtI coordinator.
- Develop implementation schedule for RtI.
- Continue implementation schedule for PBIS.

Recommendation: Increase counselor and social worker positions and supports



School counselors and social workers provide mental health supports and increase the connectedness of children and families to school.

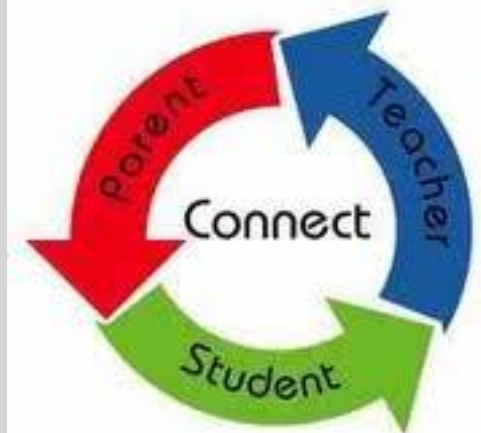
ASCA recommended counselor student ratio: 1:250

Current BCS counselor/student Ratio: 1:356

NASW recommended social worker/student ratio: 1:250

BCS current social worker/student ratio 1:1342

Access to mental health services for ALL children requires availability of school counselors and social workers. If students feel safe, establish meaningful relationships, and have support to resolve conflicts.



Counselors and Social Workers



- Conduct assessment and survey of schools to determine needs according to population, ratios, etc.
- Implement NC counselor/social worker standards to maximize impact schools and monitor via new evaluation instrument.
- Investigate potential funding sources, including local, state and/or potential grant funding.

Cost: Approx. \$50,000-\$60,000/position

Recommendation: Implement behavior outreach to support students with mental health needs



- Investigate potential mental health funding to support cost sharing of positions.
- Develop specific job description, training needs, supervision, etc.
- Investigate funding sources, including grants, for non-certified full or part-time positions.
- Provide training and supports.

Recommendation: Implement research-based suicide prevention/intervention strategies



Numerous students demonstrate self-injurious behavior, suicidal thoughts and attempts due to social demands, unresolved conflict, and family distress. With this initiative school staff would build awareness and proven strategies for preventing and intervening to protect student mental and physical safety.

Suicide Prevention



- Develop district implementation plan.
- Utilize DPI suicide prevention model to train internal trainers in state model.
- Provide training to all counselors/social workers.
- Implement and evaluate.

Recommendation: Provide trauma specific training to Crisis Recovery Teams



Crisis Recovery Teams provide response when students experience death, loss, or other trauma.

Many safety and discipline issues are precipitated by early or current trauma experiences.

Creating trauma-informed practices in schools provides protective factors to mitigate the impact of student's trauma experiences. Establishing internal trainers in trauma-informed practice utilized by other community agencies allows BCS to support and sustain these practices.

Suicide Prevention and Intervention



- Identify other community agencies training relative to trauma, i.e. suicide, family violence, violent death, etc.
- Collaborate with other public/private providers to the extent possible to provide joint training.
- Develop interagency plan to provide preventative and recovery services.

Cost: Training cost for establishing internal trainers

PRIORITY 4



COLLABORATION: SYNERGY AND SAVINGS

The Rationale of Collaboration:



A. Sharing information across agencies allows for ...

- More efficient work for common goals/outcomes for both agencies and clients/stakeholders.
- Minimizes misunderstandings, delays in action, and confusion.
- Innovative teaming practices that build strong inter/intra agency relationships.

The Rationale of Collaboration:



B. Sharing personnel across agencies promotes...

- Stronger programs, initiatives, outcomes.
- Lower personnel costs.
- Ability to recruit part-time experienced professionals who function among agencies.
- Positive relationships through the understanding of how various agencies work.



The Rationale of Collaboration



C. Collaboration makes synergy possible...

- The most knowledgeable persons work together to solve problems efficiently.
- Reduces duplicated efforts by multiple agencies.
- Allows for better use of funding when agencies share systems, equipment, training, and other resources.

Collaboration Recommendations



- Develop a county-wide Threat / Risk Assessment Team with participation from each agency.
- Develop a cross-agency team between Dept. of Health and Human Services and the Sheriff's Office to review abuse/neglect cases.
- Develop a Safe Schools Collaborative- Meets monthly to address issues of mutual interest and plan a yearly Safe Schools Community Forum/Conference.

Recommendations



- Continued dialogue between Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and BC Schools to streamline strategies for seamless communication, shared clients, and joint projects.
- Establish regional collaborative efforts.
- Establish the practice of interviewing a “Safe Schools Stakeholder” at each monthly Safe Schools Collaborative meeting.

Final Thought



There are three reasons why safe schools and security plans fail:

“It will never happen here.”

“We can’t afford it.”

“We just don’t have time to do all that.”

Jack Martin, President of The Martin Group and retired Chief of School Police, Indianapolis Public Schools