

**MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (MCPS)**  
**Public Safety Advisory Committee**

April 23, 2013

**Session Summary**

**PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE “CHARTER”**

The Public Safety Advisory Committee is asked to help inventory what’s in place; identify “core elements” they collectively agree are important for public safety; and deliver recommendations to the School Board that forward a consistent, District-wide approach to public safety in our schools.

**SESSION OBJECTIVES**

1. Briefly revisit and affirm the purpose of the Public Safety advisory process and desired outcomes in terms of products from the Committee; review the February session summary.
2. Further discuss “gap questions” listed at the February meeting. Within those identified gaps, increase Committee member knowledge and understanding related to “situational awareness” and “active resistance” in a public school building and/or public school area.
3. Agree on priority areas related to public safety in schools and establish guiding principles related to those priorities.
4. Plan for a May meeting to finalize recommendations.

**COMPLETED AGENDA ITEMS**

**SESSION OBJECTIVE 1: Briefly revisit and affirm the purpose of the Public Safety advisory process and desired outcomes in terms of products from the Committee; review the February session summary.**

Heather Davis Schmidt represented Superintendent Alex Apostle in reiterating the importance of the process and how it was developed after receiving calls from parents/the public responding to the Connecticut school shooting that occurred in December 2012. She again described the three Committees (Mental Health, Safety and Security; Public Safety; and Facilities Security and Safety) and explained that Mark Muir (Missoula Chief of Police) is serving as a co-chairs for the process.

The facilitator reminded the group about its Charter and briefly reviewed objectives and the agenda for tonight’s meeting. Those in attendance introduced themselves and identified who they were representing including citizens of Missoula.

**SESSION OBJECTIVE 2: Further discuss “gap questions” listed at the February meeting. Within those identified gaps, increase Committee member knowledge and understanding related to “situational awareness” and “active resistance” in a public school building and/or public school area.**

Committee members in attendance agreed that the “0 to 4 minute gap” before law enforcement/first responders arrive is critical to public safety in the school environment. The Missoula County Sheriff’s Department did a presentation on “active resistance based on the following guiding principles/best practices.

**Guiding Principles/Best Practices**

- Do something proactive.
- Cause the “bad guy” to otherwise occupy herself/himself.
- Run, hide, fight – whatever fits the situation in that order.

The Sheriff’s Office presentation included:

- New thoughts/ideas about crisis situations – particularly related to reactions in the first few minutes
- Affirming that doing something to delay/distract the “bad guy” can increase chances for survival
- Examination of “lock down” as a measure beyond buying time
- Identifying ahead of time – possible escape routes – or useful hiding places
- Improvised barricades (i.e., chairs/desks; locks that keep people out, etc.)
- Improvised weapons (i.e., flag pole; fire extinguisher; throwing backpacks, etc.)

As part of that presentation, Committee members discussed:

- How to maintain an appropriate balance between respecting the learning environment and a feeling of safety for kids and being prepared.
- How District personnel might best be trained in active resistance and situational awareness (i.e., Participate in local law enforcement training with an outside consultant; use local law enforcement to do the training; “train the trainers” among school personnel and spread it throughout the District for all employees).

**SESSION OBJECTIVE 3: Tentatively agree on priority areas related to public safety in schools and draft guiding principles related to those priorities.**

**Draft Guiding Principles**

- We believe that children and adults deserve to be safe in school.
- We believe that everyone involved in schools share a responsibility for safe schools – including students.
- We believe that those involved in schools should receive the training necessary to prepare them for a variety of safety situations.

**Tentative Priority Recommendations Areas – not listed in any rank order**

- Survey of school building personnel to determine what they think is most important related to increasing public safety in schools
- Training for all in active resistance and other safety protocols including first aid
- Ongoing assessment of school environments by first responders
- Consistent, reliable systems (i.e., systematic locking; door structures, etc.)
- Collaboration of all local systems and dispatchers
- Additional resource officers
- Up to date, ongoing training on the District's Crisis Plan
- Prevention training/drills

**SESSION OBJECTIVE 4: Plan for a May meeting to finalize recommendations.**

- The next Public Safety Committee meeting will be May 28: 5:00 to 7:30 PM in the District Board of Trustees room with public comment at 5:40.
- To prepare for the May meeting, the facilitator asked Committee members to:
  - Review these notes – and think about the draft priority recommendation areas. From your perspective, what would a recommendation look like? What might be included? What concrete actions do you think should be in the recommendation per priority area?
  - Review the “gap” questions from the February Public Safety meeting summary and come prepared to finalize any additional needed actions related to them.