



Safety and Security Best Practices

Review, Self-Assessment, Recommendations, and Report

Goal A: The school district ensures that its safety and security program has clear direction and is effective at meeting its intended purpose in a cost-efficient manner.

- 1. The district has established and implemented accountability mechanisms to ensure the performance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the safety and security program.**

Findings:

The Monroe County School District has created the position of Safe School Coordinator to oversee most of the safe school programs including school resource officers, emergency management training, crisis response and preparedness planning, collaborations with district and community agencies, violence and substance abuse prevention, and the SDFS program. Additionally, state safe school funds provide support for alternative education programs for at risk students, school resource officers and security aides for all high schools.

The Safe and Drug Free School program coordinates with district and community agencies to provide a comprehensive district wide violence and substance abuse prevention program. The program consists of an advisory council that oversees the implementation, coordination, and planning of these school-based programs. The SDFS program has clear stated-adopted goals with specific objectives that further define the intended outcomes. These goals and objectives are based on data collected from the School Environment safety Incident Report and The Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey.

- 2. The district regularly reviews the organizational structure and staffing levels of the safety and security program and minimizes administrative layers and processes.**

Findings:

Monroe County School District uses and models a school-based management philosophy. The organizational structure is comprised of a district level planning team which consists of both district level personnel and school based administrators. School based decision making allows for input to come from parents, teachers, students and district and school administration.

Staffing allocations are based on student enrollment figures and available state funding from the district budget. Federal funds are used to supplement these state allocated funds by providing additional resources and personnel. By increasing personnel, improvements are made by reducing class size and increasing the supervision of students.

Recommendations:

An independent program evaluation needs to be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the Safe and Drug Free Program.

Strategies:

The Safe School Coordinator will work with the Director of Assessment and Accountability to develop an evaluation instrument and procedures.

Conduct a program evaluation.

Actions:

Step 1: The evaluation instrument and procedures will be piloted and implemented.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

Currently, plans for evaluation are scheduled for September 2002. The costs associated with this evaluation will be encumbered with existing SDFS resources. It is possible that there will be costs associated with an outside independent evaluator.

Goal B: The school district has comprehensive plans and procedures to ensure the safety and security of students and employees.

- 1. The district has implemented a school safety plan that includes district-wide emergency and safety procedures and identifies those responsible for them.**
- 2. The district has developed a checklist for each educational facility that provides step-by-step emergency procedures.**
- 3. The district develops and maintains its school safety plan and emergency response procedures with stakeholder input.**

Findings:

The Monroe County School District has developed a comprehensive district-wide emergency and safety procedures manual for school and district employees and students. The plan includes roles and responsibilities and procedures for district personnel and school staff and administration to carry out in specific emergency situations. The manual was developed and designed with input from teachers, administrators, local emergency agencies and community members. Currently, the Deputy Superintendent, Executive Director of Support Services and the Safe School Coordinator are responsible for revising and updating these plans. The manual also includes sections for schools to identify safety and crisis team members, as well as, those members certified in first-aid and C.P.R... The manual has been in the process of being revised and updated during the 2001-2002 school year. These revisions will be completed by the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year.

- 4. The district provides emergency response agencies with floor plans and blueprints as appropriate.**
- 5. The district and each school regularly practice emergency responses based on potential hazards at each site.**

Findings:

Each year the district provides school blueprints and floor plans to local emergency agencies to familiarize them with the school campuses and facilities. In addition, table top exercises were conducted this year with emergency agencies to better coordinate emergency response efforts in case they are needed. Simulations are scheduled for the fall of 2002. Schools are required to conduct emergency practice drills and record findings, along with recommendations for improving the response. Those drills include evacuations, lockdowns and severe weather.

6. The district’s Master Plan for In-Service Training identifies district and school personnel who need safety training and provides an appropriate level of safety training for all personnel.

Findings:

School Improvement plans reflect staff development needs for each school. Crisis Response, Safe Physical Management, and C.P.R. training are areas identified by schools under the safe school section of listed staff development.

Recommendations:

A review of the revised procedures will need to be conducted with district and school administrators at the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year. Principals will be required to disseminate the information to school faculty and staff.

Copies of the floor plans and blueprints from Key West High, Coral Shores High School and any other new facility will need to be sent to local emergency agencies.

The district needs a coordinated system to provide training in crisis planning and intervention and CPR.

Strategies:

The Safe School Coordinator will: attend the principal’s meeting to review the revised safety and security manuals and will assist them in the dissemination of new procedures at their respective schools.

- 2. Deliver floor plans of the new facilities sent to local L.E.A.s.

Actions:

Step 1. Develop manuals of revised procedures and disseminate to staff.

Step 2. Contact maintenance director to have floor plans delivered to law enforcement agencies.

Step 3. Appropriate follow up and training will be provided in crisis management.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

August 2002- 2003

Material cost for manuals and floor plans will be attained with existing supply allocations.

Goal C: The school district has developed a clearly written code of student conduct and communicated with students and parents.

1. The district and each school have established disciplinary policies and a code of student conduct that are well-defined.

Findings:

Each year at the first faculty meetings, principals review the district and school discipline policies with all faculty and also the discipline policies and procedures are clearly and thoroughly communicated to students during orientations, usually in the first week of school. In addition, students are provided copies to take home for parents to review. In addition to the discipline policies, students are also given copies of the Student Code of Conduct.

The Student Code of Conduct includes:

Disclosure requirements at registration regarding the student's prior disciplinary history;

Statements that the district, through an inter-local agreement with county law enforcement agencies, promotes and enforces the "zero tolerance policy":

Policies and statements which are consistent with state and federal requirements for students with disabilities:

Disciplinary policy including statements regarding anti-harassment and anti-violence policies and due process rights:
and

Standards for using reasonable force by school personnel are present. Policies and standards comply with relevant state laws in order to maintain an orderly environment.

2. The district revises its code of student conduct and informs all stakeholders as to the final product.

Findings:

Currently, the Code of Student Conduct and School Board Policies are being revised. These revisions are being conducted by the school board attorney, district personnel, school administrators and teachers. These policies and codes are reviewed and revised annually. The Code of Student Conduct, along with School Board Policies, are posted on the district web page and are available at each individual school site.

Recommendations:

Continue the visibility of the Code of Student Conduct with all constituencies.

Strategies:

Develop a pamphlet for district-wide dissemination and place on the district website.

Actions:

Step 1. Use channel 98 to inform parents and community.

Step 2. Use SDFS facilitators to disseminate information to parents and students on the Codes of Conduct and policies and collect feedback.

Step 3. Collect input from student leader regarding the Code of Conduct via video conferencing.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

Policies and codes will be completed by 2003-2004 school year. No additional cost will be encumbered with this project.

Goal D: The school district identifies, minimizes, and protects others from disruptive and/or violent student behavior.

Findings:

The Monroe County School District is not immune to violent and disruptive behavior as indicated by the School Environment Safety Incident Report. However, despite these figures, our school climate surveys indicate above average comments from parents, teachers, students and community members. Monroe County Schools offer a variety of programs and activities to minimize and protect others from inappropriate violent behaviors. District programs include: comprehensive health curriculum K-12, 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program, SDFS violence and substance abuse prevention programs, Character Education, Mentoring, Conflict Resolution and prevention awareness campaigns. In addition to district programs, collaborations with district agencies have produced programs, such as: D.A.R.E., violence and substance abuse counseling, teen court, crime stoppers hotline, teen help line, S.W.A.T., Project Alert and a host of other programs.

1. Each school has a system in place to identify the early warning signs of student violence.

Findings:

Referral procedures are in place at each school site to assist and protect students. At risk students are identified in the early grades, so interventions can begin as soon as possible. Each school has Intervention Teams comprised of counselors, administrators, and teachers who assist students with academic and behavior problems by developing Academic Improvement Plans. Disciplinary actions include I.S.S., O.S.S., Expulsion to Alternative Education Programs or in severe situations, Expulsion out of school. Monroe County School District also assigns a School Resource Officer to each middle and high school to deter, protect, and minimize violent student behaviors. Finally, this summer approximately one hundred district and school and community agency personnel will complete FBI training focusing on early warning signs and workplace violence.

2. The district identifies and implements parent and community outreach strategies to promote safety in the home and community.

Findings:

The 21st century learning centers grant provides opportunity for students to be in safe environments both before and after school. This program is available to all students in Monroe County. In addition, all schools are required to have a minimum number of family nights with the primary focus of getting parents involved in their child's education. These family nights often involve free dinners and day care, so parents can participate freely in the activities and programs.

3. The district conducts a hazards analysis to determine the potential safety and security issues facing each school.

4. Based on the needs identified in the school hazards analysis, the district implements appropriate violence and drug prevention programs for each school.

Findings:

See # 6 Below

5. The district has crime watch and school safety hotlines available in all schools.

Findings:

Monroe County School District collaborates with the Sheriff's department to provide the Crime stoppers Hotline in each of our schools. Posters are hung throughout the schools where students gather or frequent. In addition, Monroe county offers a 24 hour help line for students to call and seek professional advice.

6. The school board adopts curricula and programs aimed at protecting students, teachers, bus operators, administrators, and school personnel.

Findings:

Finally, staff development and training activities are identified through our School Improvement Plans. These are determined through the needs assessment process. In addition to School Improvement Plans, the SDFS program reviews discipline and survey data to determine needs for schools regarding safety and security. District and school personnel have identified and participated in staff development activities, not only in academics, but also in the following areas: Classroom management techniques, Safe Physical Management, Learning Styles, and Early Warning Signs of Violence and crisis response training. In addition, as a component of the Induction and orientation Training Program, all new teachers each year are trained on student behavior management.

Recommendations:

Continue to collaborate with schools to implement violence and substance abuse prevention programs and activities for students.

Strategies:

Each principal will identify a prevention program of need with input from the faculty, staff, students, Safe School Coordinator and School Advisory Council.

Actions:

Step 1: Implement the program and evaluate data.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

Program identification will occur during the 2002-2003 school year. Costs will be encumbered through SDFS program funds and collaborations.

Goal E: Educational facilities and equipment are safe and in good working condition.

- 1. The district conducts an annual review of all relevant health and safety issues for each educational facility.**

Findings:

Maintenance personnel, school level administrators, teachers and staff routinely check for safety issues and equipment. All maintenance requests are reported electronically or for emergency purposed by phone and repairs are ongoing throughout the year. Certified maintenance personnel conduct annual 6A -2 inspections and all findings are referred for maintenance requests. Each summer maintenance personnel will spend at least one week at each school site conducting repairs and replacements of broken or out dated equipment.

- 2. The district designs educational facilities and sites to enhance security and reduce vandalism through the use of “safe school design” principles.**

Findings:

To ensure that facilities and equipment are as safe as possible, the Monroe County School District must carefully plan and design construction, implement safety procedures and evaluate current sites and equipment on a regular basis.

New School facilities are being constructed and designed to enhance security and reduce the risk of vandalism by using the “safe school design” principles. Several district staff members have completed the CPTED training which enables them to make decisions that will enhance the security of the facilities and campuses. In addition, schools and other district facilities have surveillance and security equipment to increase security measures.

- 3. The district has procedures that govern access to each educational facility and its students and access is limited to authorized students and visitors.**

Findings:

Just as important as the design of the buildings, is the importance of access to those facilities. School Board policies and signage are posted throughout each school campus to limit access to only authorized personnel and students. All visitors and parents must check in the front office and sign in and receive a visitor badge when on school grounds. Other school board policies related to visitors address “Civility”- “Conduct of Parents and Other Visitors to Schools and other School District Facilities” and “Parent/ Visitor Access to Classrooms.”

4. The district ensures that playgrounds are properly constructed, maintained, and supervised.

Findings:

Certified maintenance personnel conduct annual inspections to check all facilities, safety equipment, playground equipment and campuses. All playground areas, especially around the equipment, are properly covered with surfaces that will reduce injuries to students and decrease maintenance costs to flooring. In addition to maintenance personnel, the fire Marshall makes routine inspections of fire extinguishers, alarms and safety equipment.

5. Each educational facility has appropriate equipment to protect the safety and security of property and records.

Findings:

Procedures and policies are in place to protect and properly store student records and property. These procedures include safety from water and fire damage, as well as, from theft or vandalism.

6. The district provides appropriate safety equipment and information to prevent injuries to students and others.

Findings:

All athletic and physical education programs have approved safety equipment to prevent injuries. Proper techniques and demonstrations are taught to students to prevent injuries from improper use or improper technique. Each physical education department posts rules and proper techniques for using equipment. All physical education departments have first aid kits and athletic departments have certified athletic trainers at practices and games at the high school level. At the elementary level, all playground surfaces are covered with a special type of wood chip or sand to reduce injuries in case a child falls. The wood chips are specifically placed around the playground equipment to reduce the impact on students. Supervision schedules are also required, especially during recess or lunch time periods.

7. The district follows environmental and food safety health practices and regulations.

Findings:

Inspections are conducted by both district and county agencies to ensure campuses, facilities, and equipment are safe and in good working condition. In addition to safety inspections, district and health department officials routinely check and inspect common and food service areas.

Recommendations:

Annual reports on school facilities and equipment are provided to the Superintendent and School Board.

Strategies:

Reports will be developed by the Maintenance Director and Construction Program Manager.

Actions:

Step 1. Schedule report as a school board agenda item each year.

Goal F: The district takes steps to ensure the safety and security of students and staff during transportation.

1. The district has procedures to create safe and orderly process for students arriving at or leaving each school campus. ¹

Findings:

Transportation personnel, along with school administration, evaluate the arrival and departures procedures and areas of their respective school to make sure students are safe when getting on and off the bus. In addition, regularly scheduled evacuation drills are conducted each semester to familiarize students with safety and security procedures. Each drop off and loading area has signage posted to alter traffic in those areas. Also, proper supervision is scheduled during loading and unloading times at each individual school. Surveillance cameras are also used on a rotating basis to assist bus drivers with supervision and to further deter misconduct.

2. The district has implemented policies, procedures, and practices that ensure the safety of transported students.

Findings:

The transportation department has developed and implemented additional policies and procedures, such as: a drug testing policy for drivers and driver and student handbooks containing bus policies, procedures, and rules. These are in addition to the current school board policies and the Code of Student Conduct. Also, surveillance cameras are randomly used to deter misconduct and increase safety while students are being transported.

3. School buses, including buses operated by schools, charter schools, and contractors, are inspected and maintained in accordance with states laws and state Department of Education rules.

Findings:

Due to the unique geographic layout of Monroe County and the schools within the district, approximately 42 % of the students in the district are transported by school buses on a daily basis. To ensure their safety, school buses are inspected and maintained in accordance with state laws and Department of Education rules.

Recommendations:

Work with new Transportation Director to give additional emphasis to staff development for bus drivers in behavioral management.

Strategies:

Based on student referral data, identify the types of staff development that would be most beneficial for drivers to provide techniques to reduce the number of disciplinary bus referrals.

Actions:

Step 1. Identify staff development and set up training.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

Staff development for bus drivers will be provided in the summer of 2003. Staff development costs will be encumbered in the transportation budget.