

OPPAGA

“ Safe Passage”

2003-2004

**Jackson County School District
2903 Jefferson Street
Marianna, FL.**

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OPPAGA Safe Passage

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

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

Strategies and Actions:

The district has made school safety an integral part of its strategic plan. There has also been a concentrated effort to involve all local law enforcement agencies; fire rescue and emergency management to insure our safety program realistically addresses the safety issues in our schools.

The Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Health and Safety meet annually to assess the performance and cost efficiency of the safety programs. Potential cost savings have been utilized by contracting with local law enforcement agencies.

The district regularly assesses the school safety programs from data received from the Jackson County Health Department, OSHA, Panhandle Area Education Consortium, local law enforcement agencies, and the staff of the Jackson County School Board.

Recommendation:

We need to continue trying to improve our relationship with all local police, fire departments and emergency management staff to insure we have up-to-date information and a quality program.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There will be no additional cost to the district. This will be a continuous plan.

2. The district has in place a process to collect, revise and update the appropriate data related to the School Environmental Safety Incident Report.

Strategies and Actions:

Appropriate data for the SREB report is updated regularly through TERMS. The district receives reviews of the safety and security program from the Jackson County Health Department, OSHA, Panhandle Area Consortium, and staff of the Jackson County School District.

The district has established and implemented strategies to ensure the accuracy and reliability of our program data.

Recommendation:

The District will continue to revise and update the appropriate data related to the SREB report through the TERMS software.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There will be no additional cost to the district. The reporting and collecting of data and reports is a continuous process.

3: The District regularly reviews the organizational structure and staffing levels of the safety and security program and minimizes administrative layers and process.

Strategies and Actions

At least once a year the Superintendent of Schools, the Deputy Superintendent, and the Administrator of Health and Safety meet to review the program, staffing levels and the administrative process to ensure that the chain of command runs efficiently and effectively.

The staffing level includes reasonable lines of authority and responsibility. There is input on staffing and administrative procedures from a variety of stakeholders.

Recommendation:

We recommend that we continue to evaluate our administrative chain of command.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There is no fiscal impact to the district.

4. The District has implemented a school safety plan that includes district wide emergency and safety procedures identifying those responsible for implementation of the plan.

Strategies and Actions:

Each school in the district has a School Safety Team Plan, which was created by the School Improvement Team, along with additional help from the principal and district office administration. The School Safety Plan includes emergency and safety procedures and identifies responsibility.

The implementation of the school's safety program is the responsibility of the principal. The principal must work with the different emergency response agencies, delegate and monitor all areas to ensure the health and safety of all individuals on his campus. Principals, teachers and Guidance counselors are aware of troubled students and put forth a concerted effort to assist these students with their problems.

There are mutual agreements in place with local emergency agencies to ensure immediate assistance when called upon.

All schools distribute a copy of the School Improvement Plan, the student handbook, school rules, and discipline policy and safety procedures to the parents at the beginning of the school year. Copies are available upon request at any time during the year.

Recommendation:

We need to continue to improve our communication between staff and parents to ensure the health and safety of all involved.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There is little fiscal impact to the district and this is a continuous process.

5. The District develops and maintains its school safety plan and emergency response procedures with stakeholder input.

Strategies and Action

Each school safety and procedures are also adopted in the individual School Improvement Plan. The district has also implemented a comprehensive school safety plan that establishes emergency and safety procedure for employees and students to follow. These are reviewed and identified through faculty meetings and classroom discussions.

All local emergency response agencies have a copy of our district crisis response plan. They have been invited to visit our campuses and are encouraged to participate in district emergency drills.

A crisis response team has been established on all school campuses. These teams include administrators, teachers and staff. Duties include, but are not limited to emergency response. The crisis management plan is distributed to all personnel.

Recommendations:

- Although we do a good job, we need to continue review and training on our emergency response procedures and invite input from stakeholders.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

This is a continuous process and will have little fiscal effect on the District.

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

Strategies and Actions:

Throughout each school year its Administrator of Health and Safety meets with all principals to discuss safety issues and hazards at each individual school. There is also a Safety and Security Assessment Form that is provided by PAEC for each principal to complete.

The required fire safety inspections, SREF reviews, casualty safety reviews, etc. are conducted annually through PAEC.

Students at all levels are required to complete various surveys addressing drugs, sex, tobacco and other relevant issues.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that we work closer with emergency management to ensure that more of our facilities are designated as emergency shelters. Continued meetings with principals and teachers needs to be mandatory.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

This is a continuous process and no additional funding is required.

7: The district has developed emergency response procedure.

Strategies and Actions:

This year the Jackson County School Board hosted a safety meeting addressing terrorism. All emergency response organizations participated in this meeting. The resulting overall response was that our crisis response program needed to be expanded to include different acts of terrorism.

In the event of an emergency, all schools can be notified simultaneously via fax or e-mail.

The district outlines a plan to form a crisis response team but has not organized the team.

The district as well as each school has a person assigned to the media. Each member has limited training in how and what information should be disseminated.

Recommendation:

We recommend there be an active crisis team created, although one already exist, it's structure needs to be redefined and in place. There needs to be additional training for personal speaking to media.

Fiscal and Timeline:

There would be little or no cost to the district. This could be implemented at the beginning of the following school year.

8. The district has provided each school with an emergency checklist.

Strategies and Actions:

There is a crisis management plan in every classroom in the Jackson County School District. This plan includes emergency procedures, emergency checklist, emergency phone listings, and evacuation procedures.

There are also contact numbers and provisions for backup communication with emergency response teams.

Transportation, law enforcement, and all emergency response teams are involved in and are familiar with our evacuation procedures and plans.

Recommendation:

We recommend teachers attend all district or school based workshops that address the contents of our crisis management plan.

Input and Timeline:

There is no cost to the district and should be a continual plan.

9: The district and each school regularly practice emergency responses based on potential safety concerns.

Strategies and Action:

The school district has developed procedures for emergency drills in accordance with state law. There is a procedure to verify when schools complete the required emergency drills. The results of these drills are in accordance with Florida Law and are kept on file by the Risk Manager.

The annual self-assessment is used to identify potential hazards for each facility. These hazards after being identified are corrected as soon as possible.

There is a procedure to verify when schools complete the required emergency drills.

Recommendation:

We recommend schools continue to conduct drills and when feasible invite local emergency response teams to attend these drills.

Input and Timeline:

There is no cost to the district and this strategy should be a continual plan.

10: The district provides emergency response agencies with floor plans and blueprints as appropriate.

Strategies and Action:

Floor plans are on file at local fire and police departments.

The district has blue prints or drawings readily available for review during an emergency.

Recommendation:

We recommend the district put all the floor plans and blueprints of all facilities on computer disc. This information would then be readily available in emergencies.

Fiscal and Timeline:

There would be little additional expense to the district.

11. The districts Master Plan for in-service training identifies personnel training needs and provides for appropriate levels of safety training for all personnel.

Strategies and Action:

The district has developed a thorough Master Plan for in-service training addressing several types of training.

The documentation should reflect that the staff has received training based on the District-wide Needs Assessment Plan. Training should include First Aid, CPR, Blood-borne Pathogen Exposure, Florida Right-to-Know and Conflict Resolution.

The district uses a variety of organizations to conduct safety training for its employees. The Department of Education, Emergency Management, local Fire and Rescue as well as Law Enforcement agencies have sponsored district in-service training this year.

Safety Equipment is provided to trained personnel throughout the district.

Teachers at each grade level are trained in positive social skills and conflict resolution; however, this needs more emphasis.

Recommendation:

The Jackson County School Board in conjunction with the Staff Development Administrator provide opportunities to attend safety in-service; however, we recommend that the scope of in-service expand to include: Conflict Resolution, Teaching Students Positive Social Skills, Violence Prevention, Oral Communication and Decision Making Skills for all teachers and staff. We are in the process of sending selected personnel to “Train-the Trainer” sessions.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There will be some cost to the District to implement the training; however, some grant dollars will be used to cover certain portions of the expense. The training for this “Train-the trainer” component should be completed this 2002-03 school year. The goal is to establish a crisis response team at each school trained in the areas of first aid, CPR, light fire suppression and emergency response.

12. The district and each school have a code of student conduct based on stakeholder input and revised on an annual basis.

Strategies and Actions.

The Jackson County School Board complies with relevant laws and regulations regarding discipline policies including the code of student conduct. These policies are evaluated annually with input from different sources, including but not restricted to parents, teachers, staff and students.

These policies are clearly written and distributed to parent and students at the beginning of each school year. Administrators and teachers review these policies with students within the first week of school. Additional copies are available upon request.

Recommendation:

Although we put great effort in trying to inform parents and students, we recommend that a more concentrated effort throughout the year be given.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There is little or no additional cost for this effort. Informing parents and students should be a continuous effort.

13. The District Student Code of Conduct provides clear procedures to address disciplinary issues.

Strategies and Action:

The Jackson County School Board enforces a zero policy for crime, substance abuse, and victimization. The district reports all violations subject to Florida law to the local law enforcement agencies.

Certain offenses require action other than suspension. These are determined by the school administrator along with guidelines given in the District discipline policy.

Policies are in place to address relocation of students who are regularly dismissed from class, anti-harassment policies, anti-violent policies and locker searches.

The district's discipline policies are consistent with the state and federal requirements for students with disabilities.

Recommendation:

We recommend to continually improve our relationship with all state and local emergency agencies.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There is no additional cost to the district.

14: The district has a process in place to minimize danger to students from community members, staff, or other students.

Strategies and Actions:

Students at the time of registration are required to disclose prior history of expulsions, arrest resulting in charges or juvenile justice actions.

The Jackson County School Board requires all personnel to report to the principal or his designee anyone who is suspected of unlawful use, possession or sale of a controlled substance.

The Jackson County School Board requires that all new employees be fingerprinted, drug tested and have a background check run.

Periodically the School Board encourages an administrator to monitor the website of registered sexual offenders.

The Jackson County School Board outlines the standards for use of reasonable force by school personnel.

Recommendation:

We recommend expansion in training our teachers and staff to better recognize potential global dangers. Selected teachers at each school will be certified or updated in Crisis Prevention Interaction (CPI) and Aggression Control Techniques (ACT).

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There is a minimum financial impact to the district. Training should begin with the 2003-04 school year.

15: Each school has a guideline in place to identify students that exhibit early warning signs of or pose a threat of future violent behavior.

Strategies and Actions:

The district makes information available to the staff relating to the detection of the early warning signs of violent behavior. The district policy encourages a request for assistance with students who exhibit signs of violence and has a means to facilitate the request.

The district does make available appropriate psychological counseling for students who exhibit signs of violence. We also have a student assistance program team in place to assist students who are experiencing learning and/or behavioral problems.

Health Promotion Wave, a curriculum containing a violence prevention component is implemented at some grade levels-purchased with Safe and Drug Free Schools project funds.

The school board continuously revises the process in identifying students who exhibit violent behavior. This is accomplished by interpreting data such as discipline reports and teacher observations.

Legal confidentiality of student information will continue to be maintained.

Recommendation:

We recommend teachers and staff be provided more in-service workshop as well as literature in regards to identifying the student with violent behavior tendencies. Continue purchase of Health Promotion Wave Curriculum, provide teacher training for its implementation.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There will be no additional cost to the district. Use Safe and Drug Free Schools monies as they become available. Complete purchase of teacher training by 2004-2005 school year.

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

Strategies and Actions:

The district has a cooperative agreement with the Department of Juvenile Justice, Elder Care, Children and Family Services to assist in our philosophy of zero tolerance and crime victimization.

The district works with agencies such as the Community Traffic team, Teen Court, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council, and Crime Stoppers to address safety issues and keep our schools safe.

Information regarding the necessary school-entry health examinations and immunizations for all students is provided via the news media, memos and newsletters to parents.

The district has a school safety hotline available to all schools. Students, parents and community members are made aware of service via memos, newsletters to parents, PTO meetings, parent conferences, bulletins, wall posters and newspaper.

In accordance with Florida law and regulations the Principals report safety and discipline infractions into a database through Terms (automated student data-base). This information is addressed in school improvement meetings as well as the student-parent handbook.

Recommendations:

We recommend that the district promote that “Silence Hurts” throughout our schools.

Fiscal Input and Timeline:

There is little financial cost to the district. Reports are generated throughout the year.

17: The district fosters a positive learning climate and culture by assessing the school climate and implementing relevant scientifically based curricula and programs at each school.

Strategies and Actions:

The district provides an annual assessment to each student and parent addressing school climate, discipline, threats and other safety related issues. This information is processed by the principal, school improvement teams, district administrators and the school board members.

Curricula and programs for improving school culture and climate are incorporated into the curriculum. The district has contracted with CARE (Chemical Addiction Recovery Effort) to provide drug prevention education within specific grade levels. Programs such as “Too Good for Drugs”, Health Promotion Wave, Hands Across American, Anti-Smoking, and Abstinence are integrated throughout the district. Results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, and other pertinent surveys, are used to assess needs for change.

Conflict resolution and Peace Initiative are more prevalent in the elementary schools.

All information from district data printouts, parent and student surveys are analyzed by the principal and staff. School improvement teams and district administration are instructed to address any safety issue. Changes are implemented through creation or modification of different programs; change of curriculum and possibly through transfer of staff or personnel.

Recommendation:

We recommend staff and teachers be trained on customer relations and pro-social skills.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

Planning to implement in the 2003-2004 school year.

18: The district has an approved Safe and Drug Free Plan with appropriate stakeholder input.

Strategies and Actions:

A cross section of stakeholders was involved in the development of the Crisis Management Plan. These plans and procedures have been provided to each school advisory council member, school principal, teacher, member of the support staff and all other school district employees.

Although the plan takes into account most of the possible emergencies, a number of new types of emergencies have arisen (suspicious mail, terrorism) that need to be revised.

The district has a drug, tobacco, and alcohol policy. Coaches as well as other school employees are aware of, and are expected to adhere and enforce, this policy.

The district annually publicizes the Safe and Drug Free Progress Report.

Recommendation:

We recommend that the district continue with our present strategies. We feel that we have adequate programs in place to address alcohol, tobacco and drug use among our students. We will continue to educate students on the harmful effects of substance abuse.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There should be no additional cost to the district and this will be a continuous program.

19. Based on the district safety assessment process (see Best Practice 6) the district implements scientifically based violence and drug prevention programs and curricular at each school.

Strategies and Action:

The district to some extent makes available to the school sources of violence prevention and other safety related programs. Programs such as LMS classes, CARE, Too Good for Drugs, and Peach Education in Pre-K are made available to schools. In the past violence prevention, conflict resolution, and communication skills were taught with an emphasis on drugs, alcohol and sex education.

These programs were established by a committee from the Jackson County School District along with school representatives and were approved by the Jackson County School Board.

The district has had a strong partnership with local Law Enforcement, Child and Family Services, Juvenile Justice, Teen Court and other agencies in implementing and maintaining its' safety programs.

The district does not have a uniform dress code, however; each school with input from the School Improvement team, parents and administrators create and administer their individual dress code. The district is constantly analyzing data submitted through TERMS and student/ parent surveys in an effort to improve, eliminate or add programs.

Recommendation:

We recommend the district expand our programs relating to violence, conflict resolution, and other programs designed to reduce violence. The Health Promotion Wave- complete Health Education and Violence program continues to be (with Safe and Drug Free Schools dollars) and will be implemented in the 2003-2004 school year.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There will be little cost to the district in 2003-04 year because curriculum has been purchased in 2002-03 school year.

20: Each school has a system in place to identify, access and minimize the risk of students that pose a threat of or exhibit suicidal behavior.

Strategies and Actions:

The district provides the staff with early detection signs of violent or suicidal behavioral tendencies. Teachers, as well as students, are encouraged to assist in reporting these behaviors to the administrative/guidance staff. If a student is identified, the district solicits help and assistance from other local support groups and organizations in order to help minimize the risk to all individuals.

Guidelines are in place to manage students who may be determined at risk of suicide. These guides include students presently enrolled as well as students re-entering the system. These programs and strategies are discussed with parents upon the admission or dismissal of students.

Recommendations:

The district does a better job of teaching student behavior to our teachers. We believe that all school personnel should be knowledgeable in the varying types of student behavior. We recommend that an in-service workshop addressing behavioral tendencies be extended to non-instructional personnel.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

This can be accomplished with minimal cost and should be a continuous program.

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

Strategies and Actions:

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Principles are used in the maintenance, renovation, and construction of educational facilities in Jackson County. An architect is hired only after the District Facilities Director and other school district administrators confer on all issues involving the safety and security of the educational facility. The “safe school design” principles are then incorporated into the planning and construction of the facility.

The final plans are then submitted to the Department of Education for approval. All renovation and construction plans are approved by the Department of Education before work begins.

Recommendation:

We recommend that the district proceed with the present course of action. We are continually striving to provide well-built, well maintained facilities for our students and staff.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There are no additional costs to continue these actions.

22. The district has procedures that govern access to each educational facility and access is limited to authorized students and visitors.

Strategies and Actions:

The District endeavors to limit the number of entrances to each facility. Entrances and exits are clearly marked with signs. Instructions for visitors to follow are displayed upon entry into the facility. Buildings are secured when unoccupied and key control systems are in place to account for all keys. Janitors, as well as other personnel, are instructed to inspect all facilities daily. All locking devices on doors are designed to allow egress from any building per code requirements.

Each school has a policy in place to monitor the release of students to parents, guardians or other persons authorized to check the student out.

Recommendations:

The district will continue to use the “safe school design” to ensure that ingress and egress to our facilities are monitored.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There is little or no cost to the district to continue this practice.

23: The district ensures that playgrounds are properly constructed, maintained and supervised as to reduce the risk of injury.

Strategies and Actions:

Many of the playgrounds have been in place for a number of years and are showing signs of aging. The district has used U.S. Customer Product Safety Commission guidelines in the construction of playgrounds.

Playground maintenance and repair is an on-going endeavor. The director of elementary education has been working closely with Kaplan Company and Head Start experts to assist the district in playground construction, maintenance, and supervision. Principals as well as maintenance personnel conduct maintenance checks several times throughout the year.

The former Administrator of Health and Safety participated in a week-long seminar on playground safety, conducted at the Bowling Green University. Information gleaned was shared with early childhood education and immediate action was taken to correct obvious playground safety hazards. Head Start funds were used to defray cost of this training.

Principals reported that playground areas are being supervised when children are present.

Recommendation:

Recommendations have been made to the district to have an employee certified in playground construction. We are presently working with a qualified inspector but we feel our needs would be better served with an inspector employed by the Jackson County School District. There are still areas that need extra monitoring.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

The cost to the district would be minimal. Playground maintenance and inspections should be continuous.

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

Strategies and Actions:

Only three (3) of the District schools have security cameras in place on campus. As Jackson County constructs new facilities, security cameras are scheduled for installation.

The security system maintenance and inspections are scheduled annually or as necessity dictates.

First aid kits, emergency medicine and other basic equipment is maintained in the school office and clinic. Duplicate records for students and staff are maintained at the District office.

Recommendations:

We recommend the district invest in more security systems at its earliest date.

Fiscal Input and Timeline:

This would be of great cost to the district and therefore may have to be accomplished in stages. The time to implement this is based on dollars made available to the District.

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

Strategies and Actions:

The District has an agreement with the local Health Department to provide nurses for each campus. There are first aid kits in strategic locations on campus as well as one at the nurse station and one in the office.

The district has provided safety equipment to be used in instructional areas that contain dangerous equipment or chemical application. These areas are inspected on an annual basis.

The district ensures that students and adults are trained before they operate dangerous equipment or use dangerous chemicals. Additional training is provided to individuals as needed.

The district provides all necessary protective equipment to minimize the number of injuries at athletic events. Coaches are expected to inspect and verify that equipment meets or exceeds acceptable standards.

Recommendation:

We recommend that our present plan be continued.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There will be no additional cost to the district. This should be a continuous process.

26: The district follows environmental and food safety health practices and regulations.

Strategies and Actions:

The district has contracted the management of the food service program for the Jackson County School District to Armark, a food service provider. Armark has assured the committee that all appropriate food safety health practices and regulations are being followed. All food service facilities are inspected regularly by the Jackson County Health Department. In addition, appropriate personnel have received information and materials pertaining to their safety related duties (MSDS sheets, safety committee meetings, wall posters).

Copies of regulations of the Jackson County Health Department are kept on site. All federal and state requirements are met. Written emergency procedures and plans are distributed and placed in highly visible areas for each cafeteria employee to read.

Recommendation:

We recommend continued training and preparedness of employees to insure the safety of all.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There will be little or no additional cost to the district. This should be a continuous process.

27. The district has procedures to create safe and orderly process for students arriving and leaving campus.

Strategies and Actions:

The district has developed a Safe Driver Plan for Jackson County.

All school bus service driveways meet the requirements of SREF. This is monitored every three (3) years by the Department of Transportation. All schools have procedures to ensure the safety of all children arriving and departing the school campus. This encompasses students who walk or have private transportation as well as those riding the school bus.

Every effort has been made to provide separate drop-off and pick-up areas. When existing schools are renovated or new schools are constructed, these areas are designated as separate areas. Separate vehicular and pedestrian areas are designed if they do not already exist.

Recommendation:

We recommend continued efforts be made to ensure our campus' remain safe in the arrival and departure of the students.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

Improvements or maintenance in these existing drop-off and pick-up areas should be minimal. This is should be a continuous process.

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

Strategies and Actions:

All new school buses purchased by the Jackson County School District have the appropriate and required safety restraints. The Director of Transportation designates school bus routes only after conferring with bus drivers, parents and other interested parties as to potential hazards by conducting reviews of route and stops. All persons transporting students are properly licensed, trained and qualified.

Child safety seat restraints are being purchased with Head Start funds in order to bring the district into compliance with National Head Start Performance Standards governing transportation of young children.

The district has adopted a safe driver plan that defines unacceptable levels and types of violations by persons transporting students and outlines specific consequences for those out of compliance.

School principals report that all students being transported receive instruction in safe riding and rules of conduct. This instruction is given at the beginning of each school year.

All drivers are given a Jackson County School Board Drivers Handbook, which clearly states the steps drivers are to take, and steps that district staff will take in response to transportation accidents/emergencies.

Recommendation:

We recommend continued efforts to ensure the safety of transporting students in Jackson County.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There should be no additional cost of operation to the district.

29: School Buses, including buses operated by public schools, charter schools and contractors are inspected and maintained in compliance with state laws determined by the Department of Education.

Strategies and Actions:

School bus operators perform pre-trip inspections of their assigned bus and ensure deficiencies are corrected before using them in the transportation of students. The inspection forms are on file in the transportation office. Bus inspections are performed every 20 days by trained and certified technicians. Inspection forms are on file in the transportation office. These regulations are monitored by the Department of Transportation.

Buses are returned to service for transporting students only after final safety and mechanical inspection requirements are met by the Florida Bus Inspection Manual.

Recommendation:

We recommend this practice be continued.

Fiscal Impact and Timeline:

There will be no additional cost to the district to continue this policy.