

June 23, 2003

Commissioner Jim Horne
Attention: Office of Safe Schools
Florida Department of Education
325 West Gaines Street, Room 301
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

Dear Commissioner Horne:

Attached you will find an electronic copy in Microsoft Word of our Report of Washington County's Safety and Security Best Practices. It was presented at a publicly noticed school board meeting on June 16, 2003. This provided the opportunity for the public to hear the school board discuss and approve the report. Members of the media, who are always present, utilized information from the report in their newspapers coverage of the board meeting.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Mrs. Jayne Peel of my staff.

Sincerely,

Jerry E. Tyre, Superintendent
Washington County School District

JET:mtw

Washington County School District

Promoting

*A Safe & Secure
Teaching -Learning
Environment*

**Self-Assessment Report
Of
Washington County School Board's
Safety and Security Practices**

Presented to
Washington County School Board
in Compliance with
Section 1006.07(6), F.S. (Safe Passage Act)

District 1

Vann Brock

District 2

Philip Rountree

District 3

Angia Morris

District 4

Francis Hinson

District 5

Gary F. Clark

Jerry E. Tyre, Superintendent
June 16, 2003

Self-Assessment Report

Coordinators

Calvin Stevenson and Beverly Helms

Self-Assessment Team

Jerry E. Tyre, Superintendent
Mike Welch, Deputy Superintendent
Philip Rountree, School Board Member
Beverly Helms, Director of Administrative Services
Calvin Stevenson, Coordinator of Support Services
Sue Porlier, Coordinator of ESE and Student Services
Myra Henderson, Director of Finance
Jenny Strickland, Coordinator of Food Services
Donna Pate, Coordinator of Technical Services
Jayne Peel, Principal - Chipley High School
George French, Guidance Counselor - CHS
Brian Paridon, School Resource Officer - CHS
Olin Gilbert, Principal - Kate Smith Elementary School
Yolanda Kolmetz, Dean of Student Services - KMS
Peggy Ingram, Guidance Counselor - KMS
Phil Flater, Principal - Roulhac Middle School
Susan Roberts, Guidance Counselor - RMS
Bobbie Dawson, Principal - Vernon Elementary School
Joan McLeod, Guidance Counselor - VES
Bill Lee, Principal - Vernon High School
Bill Arndt, School Resource Officer - VHS
Alice Register, Guidance Counselor - VHS
Ozeal Harrell, Principal - Vernon Middle School
Merle Bonner, Teacher - VMS
Heather Miller, Guidance Counselor, VMS
Paul Parker, Director-Washington-Holmes Technical Center
Bill Gunter, Guidance Counselor - WHTC
Billy Baxter, Principal - Dozier I & II
Erla Davis, Program Specialist/Principal Designee - Eckerd
Freida Cook, Resource Teacher/Principal Designee - The Vernon Place
Chuck Stanley, Transportation Specialist
Neal Mixson, Consultant - Panhandle Area Educational Consortium
Gary Snyder, Consultant - PAEC
Roger Dale Hagan, Washington County Emergency Management Director

Meeting of Self-Assessment Team

The meeting of the self-assessment team was held on March 12, 2003. A memo was sent to each with appropriate checklists.

Involvement of Schools in the Self-Assessment

All schools were given the "Best Practices" to review and were asked to complete a self-assessment and submit a report of its findings by February 28, 2003. Principals, assistant principals, guidance counselors, teachers, food service personnel, school resource officers and other staff members were involved in the assessment of best practices at each school site. The reports were submitted to the district office and were reviewed by the self-assessment coordinators. Follow-up was conducted as appropriate. PAEC personnel provided technical assistance and support as needed. The complete assessment reports from each site are on file in the School Board Office.

The Final Report

The overall self-assessment report identifies the Goals and Best Practices, the finding related to these, recommendations to address specific practices and steps that are to be taken to implement the recommendations.

The report is divided into the following seven areas.

- **Section 1:** addresses the need for an efficient and effective Safety and Security Program.
- **Section 2:** deals with Safety Planning
- **Section 3:** covers the Discipline Policies and Code of Student Conduct
- **Section 4:** focuses on School Climate and Community Outreach
- **Section 5:** speaks to the Safety Program and Curricula
- **Section 6:** addresses the Safety and Security of Facilities and Equipment
- **Section 7:** deals with Transportation Safety

Each Section lists the best practices, findings, recommendations and strategies to be taken to implement the recommendations.

A. Efficiency and Effectiveness of Safety and Security Program

1. **The district has established and implemented accountability mechanisms to ensure the performance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the safety and security program.**
2. **The district ensures the accuracy of its safety and security related data and reports accurate data to the Department of Education.**
3. **The district regularly reviews the organizational structure and staffing levels of the safety and security program and minimizes administrative layers and process.**

Findings: The district is in compliance with the best practices associated with efficiency and effectiveness.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Strategies: No additional ones needed at this time.

B. Safety Planning

4. The district has implemented a school safety plan that includes districtwide emergency and safety procedures and identifies those responsible for them.
5. The district develops and maintains its school safety plan and emergency response procedures with stakeholder input.
6. The district conducts an annual review of all relevant health and safety issues for each educational facility.
7. The district has developed emergency response procedures.
8. The district has provided each school with emergency checklists.
9. The district and each school regularly practice emergency responses based on potential safety concerns at each site.
10. The district provides emergency response agencies with floor plans and blueprints as appropriate.
11. The district's Master Plan for In-Service Training identifies district and school personnel training needs and provides for appropriate level of safety training for all personnel.

Findings: 1) The district has taken steps to review and update its emergency plan, procedure and coordination with appropriate agencies.
2) The master plan components were developed to identify

Recommendations: None at this time

Strategies: Continue emphasis on review and update of the emergency plan.

C. Discipline Policies and Code of Student Conduct

12. The district and each school have a code of student conduct based on stakeholder input, which is revised on an annual basis.
13. The district's code of student conduct and other polices provide clear procedures for handling disciplinary actions.

Findings: The district is in full compliance.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Strategies: No additional ones.

D. School Climate and Community Outreach

14. The district has a process in place to minimize danger to students from community members, staff, or other students.
15. Each school has a system in place to identify students that exhibit early warning signs of, or pose a threat of future violent behavior.
16. The district identifies and implements parent and community outreach strategies to promote safety in the home and community.

Findings: The district is in compliance with this area.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Strategies: No additional ones at this time.

E. Safety Programs and Curricula

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.
18. The district has an approved Safe and Drug-Free School Plan that has been developed with appropriate stakeholder input.
19. Based on the district's safety assessment process, the district implements scientifically based violence and drug prevention programs and curricula for each school.
20. Each school has a system in place to identify, assess and minimize the risk for students indicating a threat of, or exhibiting suicidal behavior.

Findings: The district is in compliance with these indicators and practices.

Recommendations: Continue emphasis in this area.

Strategies: No additional ones at this time.

F. Facilities and Equipment

21. The district designs educational facilities and sites to enhance security and reduce vandalism through the use of “safe school design” principles.
22. The district has procedures that govern access to each educational facility and its students and access is limited to authorized students and visitors.
23. The district ensures that playgrounds are properly constructed, maintained, and supervised so as to reduce the risk of injury.
24. Each educational facility has appropriate equipment to protect the safety and security of property and records.
25. The district provides appropriate safety equipment and information to prevent injuries to students and others.
26. The district follows environmental and food safety health practices and regulations.

Findings: The District is in compliance with most of the best practices.

a) schools should continue to adhere more closely to written procedures for school safety committees; b) access to each facility has been reviewed. Efforts to better limit access to unauthorized students and visitors are under consideration; c) playground equipment is still in need of systematic review and monitoring in an effort to maintain it for proper functioning; d) the district continues to need better accounting for keys to all buildings, rooms and gates.

Strategies:

1. Each principal will submit the safety committee checklist provided to identify corrective action needed.
2. Minutes of the safety committee meetings will be sent to the district office within one (1) week of the meeting.
3. The district will review the minutes and corrective actions data for needed follow up.
4. Each administrator will submit a written plan to limit access and increase visibility of unauthorized students and visitors.
5. A plan will be developed to address the lack of an adequate key control program. It will identify the keys available, holders of the keys etc, and provide for a proper accounting of all keys.

G. Transportation

27. The district has procedures to create a safe and orderly process for students arriving at or leaving each school campus.
28. The district has implemented policies, procedures, and practices that ensure the safety of transported students.
29. School buses, including buses operated by schools, charter schools, and contractors, are inspected and maintained in accordance with state laws and state Department of Education rules.

Findings: The district is in compliance with best practices.

Recommendations: The district needs to continue the study of the traffic flow at several of the schools in order to reduce intermingling of buses, cars and speed of vehicles in bus loading zones.

Corrective actions taken by each school during 2002-2003 as a result of the 2001-2002 findings, are on file in the district office.

