District Crisis Team Meeting  
Tuesday, Nov. 5, 3:30 p.m. - Windsor

Present:  
Orlando Thomas, Windsor  
Amy Magers, Windsor  
Lisa Milkereit, Dr. Howard/CFT  
Todd Hitt, CFD  
Erin Ewoldt, parent/Carrie Busey  
Jonathan Kosovski, Int’l Prep Academy  
Joe Williams, Central  
Laurie Scott, Mellon  
John Lyday, Windsor  
Lindsay Aikman, Centennial  
Jeanne Smith, Windsor  
Nancy Lorey, Windsor  
David Brauer, Windsor  
Jenelle Thompson-Keen, parent/JE & CI  
Michael Sitch, Central  
Amy Dean, Garden Hills  
Jessica Hines, Jefferson

Celebrations:  
Jonathan stated IPA has completed all its drills for the year!

ALICE Drills:  
Only two campuses remaining for completing active shooter drills. After reviewing data, Orlando will share with this team in December. No injuries have occurred in drills. Joe stated Central’s drill went smoothly – no problems.

Frequently Asked Questions Review:  
Orlando shared the ALICE FAQ’s and asked team members to offer input/suggestions.

- Do other campuses have multiple evacuation sites? Some have multiple.
- Please add “state-required” to active shooter drills verbiage in first question.
- Do we want to add questions to parents about updating their contact information? Maybe in the section that says, “How will I be notified….” We could stress the importance of having accurate information there.
- Jonathan asked about the components that are being practiced. There’s no mention of lockdown. We may need to reflect that in next year’s document.
- Orlando notes he has received questions asking where the research comes from supporting us doing ALICE drills. ALICE is not the prevention, it’s the response. Orlando has done much research. He has invited parents to offer other ideas. Should this be in the Q and A section? Not a bad idea. Could include a link showing where ALICE was used successfully.
- Mike asked where the list of ALICE Strategies That Work originated. Orlando stated it came from the ALICE website. Could ask Mattoon for ideas.
- Joe stated ALICE is implemented nationally. Will include this under FAQs. Will ask for updated parent/guardian phone numbers and list this school website.
- Jonathan has been asked where the research is behind the practice. Does the State have any? Amy states no need to provide this.
High School Safety Initiatives/Survey:
Orlando indicated high interest and suggestions for assessing high school safety. At the last meeting we talked about radios. We currently have a request for proposal (RFP) out and will purchase radios for whole district.

- Survey goes to staff and students at high schools. Need to have translated to distribute to students. Trained security staff could be contracted or district folks. Orlando reached out to Decatur which has safety officers for information.
- Dr. Zola shared there are 55 students who have multiple incidents who are on our radar now. What are our thoughts about having those students checked often and using student IDs as a useful tool for staff? This would tier students. Do we purchase clear backpacks for the 55? There would be pushback from students. Are we eliminating personal privacy? Orlando showed clear backpack samples to team.
- Should K-9 searches be done? Might randomly select a specific hallway for dogs to search backpacks. This could send a message that the search is real.
- Jessica stated that Kankakee implemented many of things on the list and saw drastic improvements as a result. Is there a way we could start implementing in middle schools, before high school?
- Lindsey stated this was not the kind of preventative work she meant when asking if we would discuss preventative measures. Orlando responded that this was not what he meant either, that we would get to that work, and that these were just reactionary measures brought up at a recent safety meeting. She said that she ran some of these safety measures past her social justice students and their responses were overwhelmingly negative. They felt that all of these measures imitated incarceration and made them feel unnecessarily surveilled. More than one of my students said that they felt safe coming to school-safer than they felt in their neighborhood. The roots of these issues are in our oppressive systems, and we see them in our communities. She has a transcription of the conversation if people want to know what some young people feel about these measures.
- Orlando reported that Susan Zola met with a group that included high school principals, administration, CFT, and city officials and generated this list of safety responses/initiatives. This group wants to survey high school staff to get their feedback. Mike asked how final decisions will be made and whether it will be a “democratic” process.
- Amy assumes we can then do research on initiatives. Sara believes some of these should be options. Some are inherently biased and shouldn’t even be an option for consideration.
- Laurie asked if there is a way to do a test of this survey with a small group of teachers? How will this be shared? If it totally blows up, it’s not good.
- Joe read first paragraph aloud that introduces survey. What if we just give this to staff first? Then we can determine what we put out to students. We had meeting but didn’t really talk about implementation.
- Mike indicated Centennial is feeling desperate for safety measures to happen; many important considerations regarding direction in getting the ball rolling. It’s a much bigger conversation than what the school can do. Lindsay stressed they want to feel safe. Staff differs in how to respond. Student voice is interesting and voices should be considered. We have a very diverse group of students.
- Joe stated he’ll take this feedback to his group next week.
• Amy stated she likes the idea of removing the items from the list that are discretionary.
• Orlando noted there are school districts that check their target group every single day. Backpacks and searches are very different things. Amy Dean discouraged using clear backpacks.

Prevention and Response:
ALICE is the response and doesn’t talk about prevention. Many people are giving information on prevention. Orlando showed the sample cell phone holder case which has been shown to really slow down the drama and threats in school. Novak uses it and offered positive feedback.
• Orlando discussed the Sandy Hook website link (sandyhookpromise.org), which focuses on speaking up if you see something. See something, say something. Laurie has ISBE information which she’ll find related to this. Joe has had three instances where students have come forward with information this year.
• Orlando indicated he will share links – just informational. Laurie is aware of effective tip line application where students can communicate.
• Valerie asked if the phone cases would make sharing sensitive information more difficult for students.
• Joe believes we can do a better job of campaigning. We talked about ALICE, stressed social media and the importance of talking about it. Parents are emailing us about students and saying they’re not sure about sharing.
• Sara stated prevention is very deep-rooted. One year Garden Hills had a grant and brought in mental health professionals to work with small groups. It was therapeutic and they were able to share resources with Franklin. They had someone come over to work with students in trauma. It was life changing. Is there any money to bring in folks like that again? Orlando stated Rosecrance (mental health counseling) has had some changes in staffing that previously provided that service. The District is now contracting with HopeSprings Counseling for Garden Hills. A request for proposal for these services would need to be much larger and more comprehensive.
• Sara suggested this support begin at the elementary level. Valerie stated her school has one social worker for 500 students. We know this is an issue; fights start in elementary. An extra social worker would be so helpful. Orlando expressed concerns that social workers are available for hiring.
• Jenelle stated Robeson implemented a social emotional program a few years ago where there was much training. It began at kindergarten and built from there. It was very helpful. Valerie shared that now teachers being told to implement social emotional learning for students.
• Joe stated we need to turn things on their heads. He and Mike discussed our willingness to make changes so that more isn’t piled onto current educators. We need to think outside the box. Telling teachers or administrators does not get it done – need to switch things up. It doesn’t necessarily involve staffing but rather priorities. What if scoring of social emotional components are shared in parent conferences? What is our priority? To get students what they need or push for them to excel in something. Staff can’t do it if they’re battling time. It’s rising up from the ranks in the schools. Academic success will not come before social emotional success. We can talk about mental health. Centennial’s issue was community issue.
• Lindsey stated we are a resource-rich community, and she would like to see us use the channels we already have and pour into them. I want us to pour into AVID and truly, on a large scale, enact a mentorship program that partners juniors and seniors in high school with younger kids. AVID is a natural channel through which to do that because of the community service expectations. We need to rethink the ways that kids get credit for classes--other districts comparable to ours (like Peoria) have experimented with a rethinking of the Carnegie unit (how credit is awarded for coursework) and we should look at those models to think about service-learning opportunities during the day. Perhaps using late start is an easy way for HS students to mentor.

• Sara reiterated the issues are complex. Joe discussed the struggle with our black population; there’s a larger disconnect which needs addressing – big things.

• Orlando knows we succeed academically without a positive environment. Cannot dedicate the time to both. Can we get to point where it’s 50/50? This committee can bring up root cause and solutions different than our current function as district. Maybe it’s not staffing in general but a question of time. If we look at our school day in general maybe the lens could be making our school day a little longer. Would teachers invest in being at school longer? More time might help. Can we come up with a plan to incorporate things?

• Jesse stated teachers desire the time to make impact with students. We’re consumed with the academic achievement gap. She spent two weeks doing social emotional work, it helped minimize discipline referrals.

• Lindsey stated we also have a strong alumni community that is underused. Many of our U4 graduates stay local. How can we better activate that network? Relating to my earlier point, the young people will inherit our communities--we should do everything we can in schools to best equip them for that civic engagement; because we are resource-rich, we need to strengthen our relationships with community organizations that are doing this work on the ground already: CU Trauma and Resiliency group, Community Coalition, Boys and Girls Club, Girls Who Code--we are in a university town with vibrant community organizations. We should think of all that is possible and pour into those opportunities.

• Mike discussed next action steps, asking about groups with whom the district already partners. Can we do more work in elementary with existing groups? Orlando mentioned we could dovetail with the competency grant, which the District was recipient of that allows us to operate outside typical boundaries. Student can spend time in school and also work outside school. It opens up a unique way for students to learn. Students can show they understand and learn in non-traditional ways.

• Valerie noted that Urbana has non-traditional work programs widespread.

• Jenelle stated that, as a parent, she love ideas, but highlights that parents were panicked after the Centennial event. Are students feeling safe? At end of day, we need to feel they are safe. We do need to consider the safety list, too. We need to do preventative work too. Lindsey mentioned that parents all over need to be panicked; it’s about time the whole community invests in these issues. We need to show up at meetings. Students feel lots of fear in their communities. Joe said, while paying particular attention to the technical aspects security and crisis issues is necessary, we should also remember that we need to build in supports for all students and staff from a social-emotional perspective.
The stress students and staff feel is varied, but it is valid. There is no particular demographic focus as social-emotional well-being is necessary for all.

- Orlando reiterates we have to do both. We are aware of the concerns, and we can say, “Here is something that we’re going to do so people can feel safe.” It will take many ears to hear. We want to do something different. We will revise the survey. We want to hear from teachers. Joe indicated the superintendent is very willing to do things to help. We need to start addressing it!

Orlando proposes we meet in December. Need to continue these conversations.