

School Safety Enhancement Committee

Session 4



Goals for today

- Welcome and recap of prior sessions
- Share recent learnings from stakeholder engagement
- Discuss safety staffing in schools
- Review draft ideas to ensure “steady state” school safety

In prior sessions we have discussed intervention levers in the context of “prevention” and “intervention” modes

Prevention mode

- What is needed to proactively identify and redirect students who may be at risk for becoming involved in unsafe activities, including acts of violence?

Intervention mode

- What is needed to address safety incidents that occur in and near schools?

Steady-state baseline mode

- What constitutes a steady state “safe school?”
- What resources and systems are needed as a baseline?

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Stakeholder Engagement Overview

To support generating recommendations that reflect the values and experiences of multiple stakeholders, we've met with several school communities

SCHOOL NAME	CLASSIFICATION	WARD	LEADERSHIP ENGAGEMENT	YOUTH FOCUS GROUP
Cesar Chavez PCS	Charter HS	7	X	
E.L Haynes PCS	Charter MS and HS Campus	4		X
H.D. Woodson HS	DCPS Neighborhood HS	7	X	X
Johnson MS	DCPS Neighborhood MS	8	X	
KIPP PCS	Charter ES, MS, HS	2,5,7,8	X	
Luke C. Moore	Alternative DCPS - Opportunity Academy	5	X	X
Maya Angelou PCS Young Adult Center	Alternative Charter	7	X	X
Ron Brown College Preparatory HS	Citywide, single-gender DCPS HS	7	X	
Roosevelt HS	DCPS Neighborhood HS	4	X	
Roosevelt STAY	Alternative DCPS - Opportunity Academy	1	X	X
Thurgood Marshall Academy PCS	Charter HS	8		X
Washington Leadership Academy PCS	Charter HS	5		X

Stakeholder engagement also includes focus groups with community-based organizations Mikva, PAVE and the SBOE Youth Advisory Council.

What we heard from students, staff and community members

When asked, “ What makes school safe” and “ How would you define a safe school?”

"A safe school allows students to learn, can provide them with proper things they might need, whether low-income – they need food – or a kid that needs a better education." *Ward 5 high school student*

" [Being] emotionally safe and knowing that you won't be harmed when you get here. We spend eight hours a day at school; if that's not true, we wouldn't want to be here." *Ward 4 high school student*

"In this school, you have to press a button to get in, I like that, you have to be buzzed in." *Ward 1 high school student*

"It's the staff that makes me feel safe. Being able to communicate with someone I can talk to if I have an issue or problem, it will calm me down." *Ward 1 alternative school student*

"Functional HVAC systems, clean water, doors that lock if it needs to lock, ADA compliant, children who feel loved, heard, engaged, and valued." *A PAVE parent*

"School is safe...Deans make it to where we're all a family in the school. There's also a mentor program ...If I get triggered or stressed out, I've got other mentors or the wellness suite. I've had a therapist. [These are] programs where they won't judge me and they can help me." *Ward 8 high school student*

What we heard from students, staff and community members

On other things that contribute to school safety

"Police at the school is important. When you are in school you are in [safe] bounds, no one can pull up on or you're not in danger from outside and community threats." *Ward 7 high school student*

"I'd rather have police than safe passage, I'd be a little concerned, but if there is a shooting, safe passage would do the same things we do – run." *Ward 5 high school student*

"Metal detectors are needed to keep weapons out and kids safe- I would not go to any school or event without metal detectors." *Ward 7 high school student*

"The teachers here are amazing. [Not like in my old school.] Here they smile, they talk to us if we're having a bad day, everyone helps each other." *Ward 7 alternative high school student*

"School security because they are the first people that you see and most show that they care by checking in on you and preventing you from getting into drama." *Ward 5 high school student*

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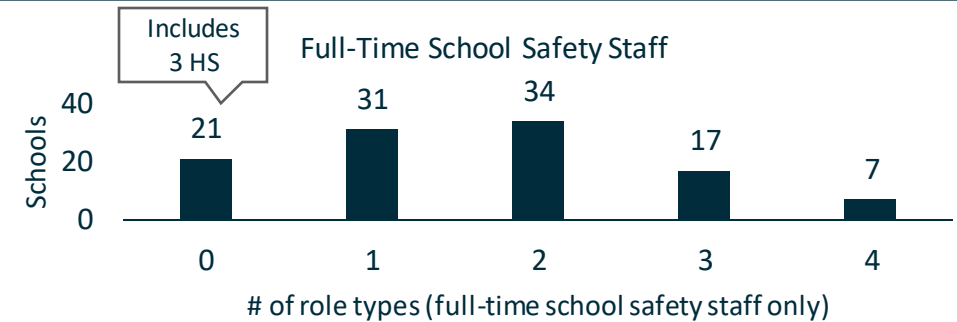
Preliminary DCPS Staffing Insights

100% of DCPS schools have dedicated school security staff:

- School Security (required at each school site)
- DCPS Special Police (23 roving officers)
- School Resource Officers (36 roving officers supporting DCPS and charters)

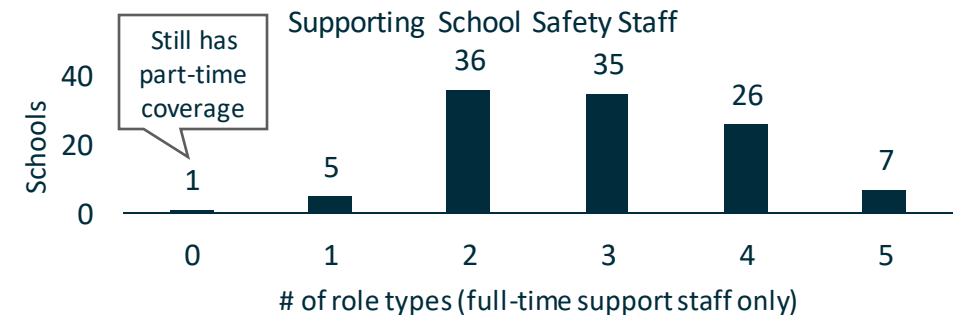
Beyond security, there are full-time school-based staff primarily working on school safety:

- Dean of Students
- Behavioral Technicians
- In-School Suspension Coordinators
- Restorative Justice Coordinators



And, additional school-based staff support safety, including:

- Attendance Counselor
- Social Worker
- School Counselor
- Guidance Counselor
- Psychologist



100% of DCPS schools have at least a part-time Social Worker

97% of DCPS schools have at least part-time Psychologist

FTEs are based on DCPS FY2024 adjusted budgets

*There are many other people in these functional roles with other titles

DCPS Security & School Safety Roles

DRAFT & DELIBERATIVE

Role	Responsibilities	What We See
Security Guard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor entryways and security technology• Receive and direct students and visitors upon entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Required position• Allocated based on grade band• ES: 2; MS: 4; HS: 8
Dean of Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build rapport with students that help prevent and deescalate conflict• Monitor and respond to student behavior/ conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 36% of middle schools have one Dean of Students• 61% of high schools have 1 or more Dean of students
Restorative Justice Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build school wide culture and climate through training for students and staff• Implement school-wide restorative justice practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 35% of high schools have one or more Restorative Justice Coordinators
Behavior Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build rapport with students and respond to behavioral concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 29% of high schools have 5 or more Behavior Technicians
Psychologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct evaluations and provide direct services• Support positive school culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% of middle and high schools have a Psychologist

Charter School Safety Role Insights *Survey Results*

In a recent survey conducted by DC Alliance on school safety, 35 LEAs shared insights on their current safety management and incident response practices.

The top three roles that LEAs cite as a core part of their safety management teams are:

- COO/Operations Lead (86%)
- Dean (or similar title) (69%)
- Principal (58%)

Only 25% of reporting LEAs cite a Security Officer as part of their safety management team.

LEAs also report utilizing physical infrastructure enhancements that support safety:

- Internal security systems (72%)
- Secured alarmed entryways (66%)
- External cameras (58%)

Charter School Safety Roles *Examples*

Multi-site Charter LEA

Staffing

- Full Time contract school security on campus
- Hired off duty MPD
- Campus Safety Managers per campus
- Regional safety director role (Operational Managers) – covering traffic safety work, coordinating with DDOT
- Dean of Student at HS, one per grade level
- Restorative Practice Teachers and intervention coordinators at MS sites
- In school violence interruption services at the high school
- School-based community engagement team to support families

Physical Security

- Controlled entry with visitor management technology
- On-site weapons abatement

Single site Charter HS

Staffing

- Campus Directors/Assistant Directors, monitoring operations and staff
- At least one, school-wide, Dean of Students
- Student support coordinators respond directly to incidents
- Social worker supports highest need students
- Part-time contract security, monitoring students and staff at a single-entry point to the building

Physical Security

- Varied weapons abatement technology

Questions for Consideration on Staffing

- Where do we want to see **consistency in roles** and/or responsibilities as we think about our entire system of schools (DCPS and charter)?
- What **kind and level of training** is needed to ensure safety teams and school staff more generally are effective in conflict prevention and response?
- How do we create **strong pipelines** and hire the right people?
- What **qualifications** will ensure we get the right people in the role? (i.e., For Deans of Students, consider # of years of relevant work experience in a behavior related field, community-based work, juvenile justice etc. not just education)
- What is the best use of resources when it comes to **strengthening the capacity** of school safety teams?

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What we've heard on the need thus far

The safest place for our children to be is in school.

- Some core things have changed over the last few years, though, so we must adapt too:
 - The pandemic stalled **social and emotional development** of our youth
 - The role that **social media** plays on relationships has risen
 - How families perceive the **importance of attending school** has deteriorated
- Violence in DC is on the rise, and our youth are impacted, including as they commute to and from school
- And, as a result, our schools feel they have had to manage more, and with limited tools

Get more kids back into the school building

Keep the small stuff from becoming big stuff by doubling down on prevention

Improve coordination between schools and public safety agencies so resources follow need

Use appropriately tiered consequences for unsafe and inappropriate actions

Getting more kids back into the school building

Approach	What We Know	Ideas we've heard
<p>Play the “ground game” well by making sure schools are able to provide truly substantive supports to families facing barriers to attending school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools feel overburdened by the number of School Support Team (SST) meetings they need to hold for chronically absent students SSTs, when done well, are highly effective for re-engaging families and students in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reform DC regulations on when an SST needs to occur, so they can focus on the most critical situations (e.g., concentrated absences) Add capacity of agencies to respond to referrals and connect families to services
<p>Make sure kids feel safe commuting to and from school, and protected from violence happening in the community, so that they aren't deterred from attending school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students may miss school, or bring weapons to school, because they are concerned about their safety in the community Some schools have concerns about the “open air drug markets” and other illegal activity in close proximity to school buildings Some schools do pay for transportation, as part of a safety plan, when they are concerned about a student's physical wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue additional microtransit options for youth, particularly those facing higher threats of violence Increase penalties for crimes committed in school zones Increase funding available for infrastructure security in and around school buildings

Keeping the small stuff from becoming big stuff by doubling down on prevention

Approach	What We Know	Ideas we've heard
Flood the system with opportunities for mentorship , positive adult relationship building, and productive activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children need strong relationships with adults inside and outside of school The District is invested in pursuing universal afterschool programming, through the My Afterschool DC initiative DPR's late night and weekend programming is meant to fill gaps we see in our OST system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand of OST and DPR programming, particularly in Safe Passage areas and for older students Expand of paid internship opportunities for high school students
Train the right school staff appropriately , so that they can teach students appropriate conflict resolution skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We hear from students and staff that there is varied quality of delivery of conflict resolution skill-building to students OSSE's upcoming climate survey will help us better understand how schools are performing today School wide trainings would improve staff alignment Ideal candidates for conflict resolution roles may not meet qualifications for DCPS Dean of Student roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer "certifications" for conflict resolution training and/or restorative justice training Mandate conflict resolution training by approved providers for some or all schools (or staff roles) Require LEAs to adopt a conflict resolution approach as a part of their school discipline practices Modify qualifications and requirements for senior behavioral staff (e.g., Dean of Students) Create incentives for community-based, qualified behavioral staff
Incorporate the reality of social media into our policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media is having significant impact on student emotional wellbeing nationally Social media is often a driving factor in creating and escalating conflicts and violence that takes place on or near school grounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrict phone usage in school buildings Better enforce discipline policy when it comes to cyber bullying and social media-driven conflicts Increase MPD's monitoring of social media activity Increase social media training as part of MS curriculum
Reduce the prevalence of weapons among young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are concerned about their safety to and from school and sometime feel the need to be armed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement more severe consequences when students bring a weapon into the school (e.g., make possession of a weapon on school grounds a criminal offense) Enforce interventions for gun possession, such as mandatory court diversion Ensure that weapons abatement (e.g., metal detectors) function

Improve coordination between schools and public safety agencies so resources follow need

Approach	What We Know	Ideas we've heard
<p>Create more porous information sharing between schools, and between schools & public safety agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may be receiving multiple services from different organizations without coordination • When students transfer between schools, schools may not receive a “full picture” of their history • Multi-campus LEAs often have ongoing direct contact with public safety agencies, but single-site LEAs are more siloed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a student behavior case management system, which includes services provided by CBOs or agencies • Establish clear protocols for short- <i>and</i> longer-term crisis response from government agencies when a serious incident occurs in a school zone • Enroll at least one POC from all schools into a centralized emergency alert system
<p>Make sure schools, Safe Passage providers and school crossing guards work collaboratively to support safe and easy student commutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School crossing guards and safe passage services contribute to safe student commutes but do not consistently communicate regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stagger arrivals and dismissals within neighborhood clusters to prevent overcrowding at local transit stops and conflicts • Strengthen communication and agreements between DDOT, schools, and DMPSJ • Clarify criteria for highest need schools from a safety perspective

Use appropriately tiered consequences for unsafe and inappropriate actions

Approach	What We Know	Ideas we've heard
Ensure supports and consequences for persistent truancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools are only referring 12% of cases to CSSD, CSSD is only recommending 2% of cases to OAG, and OAG has filed 0 cases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer more consistent supports & consequences for older students when they are not attending school
Provide resources and programs to families who may be struggling with their teen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When parental influence isn't enough to change behaviors, families need additional support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness and use of the CFSA 211 Warmline
Offer more supportive services that keep students in school, even when there is a severe infraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When students violate the Gun Free Act, they are typically expelled or, in the case of DCPS neighborhood schools, transferred to another school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardize expectations and quality of restorative justice Increase therapeutic in-school suspension models Offer alternative short-term placements for the most severe, persistent infractions Provide case management and intensive, targeted supports for students at the greatest risk of becoming involved in violence Provide after school, employment, and CTE programming to all priority students at minimum
Refine the discipline code to strengthen student accountability for the most serious infraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is increased prevalence of concerning behaviors among middle school students Middle school students can only be suspended for acts of violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail specific infractions that middle school students can be suspended for, in addition to acts of violence (e.g., drug infractions)

Timeline through February



Meeting One

Meeting Two

Meeting Three

Meeting Four

Meeting Five

Nov. 7th

Nov 28th

Dec 19th

Jan 9th

Jan 30th

Kick-off and discuss common **objectives and goals**

Review and discuss **prevention efforts** and procedures

Review **intervention resources** and procedures for addressing safety incidents

Determine what constitutes a **steady state, safe school**

Review **proposed set of recommendations** for submission

----- *Targeted focus groups with youth and school staff* ----->

----- *Community office hours* ----->

Closing

Thank you for your attendance and participation.

School Safety Enhancement Committee
Session Five will be held on January 30th, 2023

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact hillary.desir@dc.gov

Committee Members

1. **Ricky Brown**, Executive Director of School Safety and Security, District of Columbia Public Schools
2. **Dan Davis**, Student Advocate, State Board of Education
3. **John Carlos Green**, Community Engagement Manager, Public Charter School Board
4. **Simaya Hammon**, Banneker High School Student
5. **Nicole McDermott**, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice
6. **Dontrell Smith**, District of Columbia Public School Parent
7. **Mische' Walden**, School Counselor, Johnson Middle School
8. **Deitrich E. Williams**, District of Columbia Public School Parent
9. **Andre Wright**, Assistant Chief, School Safety Division, Metropolitan Police Department
10. **Tatiana Portillo**, Roosevelt STAY Student