



Safety Community Forum MINUTES

October 2, 2024

Agenda

Purpose: *Provide a collaborative forum where students, parents, educators, and community members can discuss and address safety concerns within the school.*

Non-Purpose: *This form is not intended to be a forum to discuss personal/individual issues. Items brought up for discussion must first have been pursued through the appropriate chain of command.*

I. Introductions

Mrs. Sayre introduced herself and Ms. Vagni and Mr. Motsko from NEIU #19. Other individuals present introduced themselves.

II. Goals of the Forum

The goal of a school safety forum is to create a collaborative environment where students, parents, educators, and community members can discuss and address safety concerns within the school. Key objectives may include:

- 1. **Sharing Information:** Provide updates on safety policies, procedures, and resources available to students and families.*
- 2. **Identifying Concerns:** Allow participants to voice their concerns and experiences related to safety, including bullying, mental health issues, and physical safety.*
- 3. **Building Community:** Foster a sense of community and support among stakeholders, encouraging collaboration to enhance safety measures.*
- 4. **Developing Strategies:** Brainstorm and develop actionable strategies and solutions to improve school safety.*
- 5. **Promoting Awareness:** Raise awareness about available resources, such as counseling services and hotlines, and educate attendees on how to respond to safety incidents.*
- 6. **Creating an Action Plan:** Work towards creating a concrete action plan or recommendations that can be presented to school administration or local authorities.*

III. Overview

a. Where are we now?

Fox Enterprises Assessment on each building 2 years ago

We scored very well and overall the evaluators were impressed with our facility and procedures/policies in place.

Upgrades: Cameras, doors

Added Personnel: Services- Social Worker, additional Behavior Specialist, Speech, OT, 2 Nurses, CAAP Counselor, 2 Assistant Principals

b. What are we working on?

*Grants to support physical improvements and M/H Services
Debrief Items- police, Admin, faculty
Educating public
Quarterly review of EOP*

c. Supports in Place

i. Professional Development Priorities

*PD- Trauma-informed, SEL, Differentiation, Master Schedule- relationships/academic
Help, Active Shooter/Safe2Say/Suicide/Childline Reporting/R. Fox presentation; Scranton Counseling expert*

ii. M/H Services

*M/H Services Chart Handout. Also located at:
<https://carbondalearea.org/health-safety/#1729257171993-dc0f8610-e1e3>*

IV. Feedback from Community

Prompt Activity

*Provide positive feedback from what you just heard regarding our safety plan?
What changes/additional measures would increase your confidence in the District's approach to school safety?*

a. Gallery Walk

Use stickers to prioritize top two on Post-it Posters

V. Conclusion

During the meeting, Superintendent Sayre shared information about our safety policies, procedures, and resources available to students and families. Superintendent Sayre also highlighted the results of a safety audit conducted by Fox Enterprises two years ago. Our Emergency Operation Plan and building security were reviewed, and Superintendent Sayre reminded everyone that we scored very high on the assessment. As a result of the assessment, we've implemented several recommendations, including upgrades to our camera system and replacing some doors, to name a few. Additionally, we have expanded our personnel since 2020, adding roles such as a behavior specialist, speech and occupational therapists, nurses, CAAP counselor, assistant principals, and Gittings Security officers.

Many attendees were surprised to learn about the extensive mental health services our District offers, along with the professional development topics focused on safety and mental health, such as social-emotional learning and trauma-informed care. Superintendent Sayre provided a handout detailing our mental health services, which include community and school-based behavioral health programs and outpatient counseling.

This information is also located on our website under Safety and Security.

One of the highlights of the forum was our brainstorming session on ways to enhance community confidence in school safety. Parents shared valuable ideas and feedback, including staying ahead of social media, implementing ID badges for students, improving entrance procedures, installing door alarms, utilizing threat recognition software through artificial intelligence for our camera system, managing public use of school grounds during school hours, and addressing open window areas. Dr. Smedley also suggested including metal detectors on the parent list.

After exploring these topics, Superintendent Sayre asked attendees to identify which solutions they believed would be the most impactful. The consensus was that door alarms ranked as the top priority, followed closely by enhanced entrance procedures and ID badges.

We've held meetings with stakeholders and scheduled additional discussions to gather more information on the topics forementioned and some others. For example, in talking with a Vendor about the protective film, it cost \$200/ square foot. In discussions about a Life Alert button, the cost would be around \$40,000 to give every employee a button; however, in this process we also learned of a great alternative of the same type of device on smartphones at a fraction of a cost.

In line with our focus on technology, we will transition to FinalSight at the end of the school year, replacing Blackboard Connect. This new platform will allow us to communicate across multiple channels simultaneously, ensuring timely and effective communication.

You may remember in one of Mrs. Michalek's grant updates that the District submitted a \$250,000 grant to enhance our FOB system, replace some doors, and install door alarms. These safety upgrades are estimated to cost around \$250,000, but we have not received any updates on the grant's status yet.

We also reviewed and enhanced some of our internal emergency response procedures.

Last week, we met with representatives from Raptor Security, our visitor management software provider. They introduced us to additional features for visitor and emergency management, including a kiosk system for signing in visitors—similar to those you might find at McDonald's or Dunkin' Donuts, and an electronic version for parent reunification.

While administratively, we have acted on some of the items discussed such as communication, once we have vetted out all of our stakeholder ideas, we will be putting forth some bills to the Board on items. As a reminder, we met with staff, as well.

Additionally, Superintendent Sayre had the opportunity to meet with Mayor Bannon and Chief Bognatz to discuss school safety. Superintendent Sayre gave a shout-out to our police department for their prompt response times during emergencies. Superintendent Sayre have full confidence in their support whenever we might need assistance.

Thank you again to everyone who participated; your insights are invaluable as we work together to ensure a safe environment for our students.