

School Safety and Student Well-Being Advisory Committee

September 24, 2020 Meeting Notes

Summary

On Thursday, September 24, 2020 the School Safety and Student Well-Being Advisory Committee (SS-SWAC) met for the 1st of 4 meetings scheduled for the 2020/2021 year. The meeting was held via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to social distance.

An agenda was set prior to the meeting and the notes below reflect conversation related to agenda topics but not necessarily in the noted order.

Attendees

Members: **Dana Anderson**, Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD). **Kathy Hicks**, Archdiocese of Spokane. **Nancy Bernard**, Department of Health (DOH). **Rose Spidell**, Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC). **Enos Mbajah**, Health Care Authority (HCA). **Brianne Ramos**, Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (CAPAA). Nancy **Chamberlain**, Washington State PTA. **Sandy Hunt**, Washington Education Association (WEA). **Andrew Rauch**, Washington Federation of Independent Schools (WFIS). **Abigail Westbrook**, Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA). **Karen Davy**, Washington School Safety Organization (WSSO). **Teresa Fewel**, Archdiocese of Western Washington. **Terran Gufler**, State Fire Marshal's Office.

Members of School Safety and Student Well-Being Youth Advisory Council (SS-SWAC-YAC): **Katherine**, Vashon Island School District. **Lily**, University of Washington. **Sadie**, Okanogan School District. **Isaac**.

Participants: **Larry Wright**, Forefront Suicide Prevention. **Jill Patnode**, Kaiser Permanente. **Amber Garriott**, Washington Schools Risk Management Pool (WSRMP). **Shanna McBride**, Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF).

Presenters: **Chris Weedin**, ESD 105 SSOCC.

Observers: **Ailey Kato**, Nonpartisan staff for the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education. **Terran Gufler**, Deputy State Fire Marshal.

OSPI Representation: **Ann Gray**, **Ella DeVerse**, **Joshua Lynch**, **Kristin Hennessey**, **Lee Collyer**, **Martin Mueller**, **Mike Donlin**, **Tammy Bolen**, **Tayler Burkhart**.

2020/2021 Meeting Schedule

The meeting schedule for the 2020/2021 has been set and integrates the Annual School Safety Summit into the calendar for the committee.



The intersection of the Safety Summit and the advisory committee is mapped out in the legislation establishing that members of the SS-SWAC are participants in that summit, as well as others, including legislators. The intent is to utilize the SS-SWAC meeting process as a vehicle to identify issues and begin framing up recommendations to move forward to the summit and align with the state's policy and funding cycle. By utilizing the SS-SWAC meeting structure, the group can identify possible recommendations, work on them over the course of the year, and then utilize the summit to set priorities and identify the recommendations around policy and funding we wish to move forward.

This cycle moving forward will include the four (4) required meetings over the course of the year culminating in the School Safety Summit in June. The SS-SWAC is set to meet on September 9, December 10, February 18, and April 15. The 2021 Annual School Safety Summit will be held on June 10.

2019/2020 SS-SWAC Legislative Report

Review and Discussion

SSHB 1216 (2019) requires the SS-SWAC to submit a report to the legislature by November 15, 2020 and every even year thereafter, summarizing the committee's activities during the biennium. This report provides strategies for the improvement of school safety and student well-being, prioritized recommendations for state policies, and the estimated cost for each recommendation.

Attendees were provided a draft of the legislative report to review prior to the meeting. This report outlines the operations of the committee during the 2019/2020 school year, implementation of HB 1216, and the legislative recommendations that came out of the 2020 Annual School Safety Summit. Please see the [2020 Annual School Safety Summit Report](#) for further information about these recommendations.

The report was reviewed by attendees at the meeting and the opportunity to ask questions was provided. Attendees were asked to provide feedback by October 1 related to the current content. The quick turnaround was necessary to ensure the final report could be routed through the appropriate channels and submitted by November 15, 2020.

Board Policy - Presented by WSSDA

Learning Session

Abigail Westbrook of WSSDA provided attendees with an overview of Board Policy including its origins and the process related to its creation. As many attendees of the SS-SWAC are from organizations and sectors outside of education, grounding the group in understanding of educational processes and procedures is of great importance.



Washington is a local control state meaning that all 295 of the state's school districts are considered separate local government entities and their school boards are comprised of elected officials. The school boards are the governmental entity that is authorized to adopt policies and govern the district. Adoption of a board policy represents the process by which a school district governs itself to create a legally binding system. Policy needs to address the elements that are legally required and the discretionary elements that are up to the board. WSSDA was created by statute to support school boards in the creation of these legally binding processes.

WSSDA may be directed to create or update policy through legislation which may also indicate the partners they must work with. For example, the WSSDA Policy 3225 related to School-Based Threat Assessment Programs was created last year and members of the SS-SWAC and other stakeholders called out in legislation were included in this process. WSSDA ensures that stakeholders are included in these processes even when not specifically called for in legislation.

Policy provides school boards with the legal requirements and allows them the flexibility to govern their district.

School Resource Officers (SROs) and Policing in Schools

Learning Session and Q&A

This learning session was based on the request of attendees to discuss school resource officers and policing in schools. The information was provided by Martin Mueller and members of the SS-SWAC SRO Workgroup Mike Donlin, Karen Davy, and Chris Weedon, Program Manager SSOCC ESD 105. The intent of the learning session was to ground attendees in the requirements for SROs as noted in HB 1216 and the current understanding and status of SROs in Washington state and then lead the SS-SWAC into discussion and deliberation.

Background

The term SRO is often associated with other school safety and security personnel which is inaccurate. As noted in HB 1216, a SRO is a "commissioned law enforcement officer in the state of Washington who has sworn authority to make arrests, deployed in community-oriented policing, and assigned by the employing police department or sheriff's office to work in schools to address crime and disorder problems, gangs, and drug activities affecting or occurring in or around K-12 schools. School resource officers should focus on keeping students out of the criminal justice system when possible and should not be used to attempt to impose criminal sanctions in matters that are more appropriately handled within the educational system."

The actual number of SROs in the state of Washington is unknown. Based on a survey by WASPC in 2019, it is assumed that 180+/- SROs are employed in districts across the state and



often work out of more than one school. HB 1216 directed WSSDA to create an SRO policy, for use by districts which intend to have an SRO program, but did not require districts to have such a program. It did call for districts with SRO programs to create and annually evaluate an MOU with their local law enforcement office. An MOU template can be found on the [OSPI SRO webpage](#).

Districts are not required to have SROs in their schools and HB 1216 has the intent to provide legislative statewide consistency related to training to ensure effective partnerships between law enforcement agencies and the school district for the health and safety of all students. Please see the [OSPI SRO webpage](#) for further information on the training required for SROs. Training materials can also be found on this site. To assist SROs in meeting this requirement, ESD 105 held an SRO Summit in June 2020 and intend to continue this work. It is also the hope of the Workgroup and WSSO to turn the training requirements into basic certification for SROs.

To round out the learning session, Chris Weedin shared his experience working with SROs in schools and with districts. He provided a thorough overview of the summit and the response it received from attendees. Karen Davy offered her own experiences as an SRO and the importance of the role to the students and the community.

Racial Equity and Data Collection

Following the learning session, questions offered by attendees were responded to. Many of these questions related to racial equity and disparities specially for students of color. Response to questions grounded attendees back into the legislative requirements for training which address equity. ESD 105 is creating a website to address these questions and provide tools and resources to districts with SRO programs and for the community looking to find out more about the programs.

The topic of data collection was also highlighted. HB 1216 does require data collection, but it is unclear in its mandate as to who should be collecting the data. Additionally, the data requested extends beyond SROs to other law enforcement duties or situations. The workgroup is currently working to clarify the data collection requirement.

It is the intent that this conversation will be on-going and move towards formal recommendations in June at the School Safety Summit.

Revolving Breakout Sessions

Learning Sessions with Q&A

Attendees were split into 3 breakout rooms and provided an opportunity to build awareness and connection and provide information to ground attendees in topics relating to school safety and student well-being. These learning sessions also provided an opportunity to show the interconnectedness of the work. This section of the agenda was included in response to



requests for more interaction and opportunity to discuss in smaller groups. It will be a part of our agendas moving forward.

Attendees remained in their rooms and the presenters shifted from room to room in 15-minute increments. Each group had equal opportunity to hear from the presenters and ask questions.

SS-SWAC-YAC Presentation

In this session, the members of the SS-SWAC-YAC provided a brief review of their presentations to the advisory committee during the 2019/2020 school year. This included information and surveys taken regarding drills, training, and communication in schools, and the availability and access to mental health supports. The members responded to questions and inquiries from attendees in relation to their presentations as well as topics such as the impacts of COVID on their lives, mental health, and education.

Behavioral Health Navigator Update

This session consisted of an overview of the pilot program that resulted in legislative funding for nine Behavioral Health Navigators in each regional ESD. We discussed the current work of the Navigators and their role in breaking down barriers and supporting access to mental health and suicide prevention resources in schools. Contact list was shared, and questions generated discussion around specific elements of their work.

Mapping Subgroup

Attendees were provided a brief overview of the existing mapping system, its history in Washington state, and a summary of the JLARC study conducted in 2019 as required by 2SHB 1216 (2019). After grounding attendees in the overview of the mapping system, a glimpse into the work of the Mapping System Work Group and what they expect to have ready for the Legislative report that is due November 15, 2020 was provided.

Final Group Discussion

After the revolving breakout sessions, attendees reconvened as a group to discuss the information provided and answer questions that were not responded to due to time constraints.

The majority of these questions were posed to the SS-SWAC-YAC in relation to mental health supports for students. The SS-SWAC had utilized Instagram polls to inquire about mental health supports for Washington youth. While these polls were informal, SS-SWAC-YAC members noted that they would be happy to partner with others to create more official surveys related to mental health concerns and resources to provide to students statewide.



Questions were posed to the SS-SWAC-YAC in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on their day to day lives. Members spoke to loss of connection due to social distancing and the lack of adult support that comes from day to day contact. When students are not in school, there may not be anyone there to notice when something is wrong and provide support. Students are having to rely on their own personal indicators to identify when they need help or are struggling. It was noted that mental health across the board is currently a struggle and supporting others when you are trying to support yourself is an extreme hardship. More assistance and accessibility is needed to assist youth in their mental health needs.

Discussion related to virtual healthcare rounded out this section of the agenda with questions specifically targeted towards SS-SWAC-YAC members and youth in general. The questions were specifically related to access, personal experience, and privacy. Members noted that this is something that they have experience and with youth and families at home, they are having to find creative ways to have private conversations with healthcare providers. While it is a helpful option and appreciated option, they are unsure if the sole option of virtual care is sustainable long term.

Public Comment and Closing Remarks/Next Steps

No public comment was made during the September 24 meeting.

Feedback on the draft legislative report was due Thursday, October 1.

As the SS-SWAC continues its work in the 2020/2021 school year, attendees will be provided read ahead materials and the opportunity to engage in learning sessions with follow up discussion to ensure group wide understanding of these topics.

The SS-SWAC-YAC will be welcoming new members in October and be set to provide a new presentation to the committee at the next meeting.

The SRO conversation will be revisited at the next SS-SWAC meeting.

We will see you all at the next meeting on Thursday, December 10, 2020.

