School Safety Talking Points

What we know about school safety:

School Safety
- impacts school climate, dropout rates and general academic achievement;
- is an evolving set of 21st Century issues,
- includes traditional and familiar issues such as fire and earthquake drills and other natural and man-made disaster preparation,
- but also includes specific issues such as – but not limited to - terrorism, active shooters, HIB, cyberbullying/digital safety, gang activity in schools, LGBTQ, CSEC/human trafficking, and suicide prevention and intervention.

School Safety must be
- foundational, comprehensive, planned and incorporated in existing School Improvement Plans,
- part of a multi-tiered system of supports, such as Response to Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS),
- revisited and revised regularly,
- funded adequately. OSPI funding for school safety activities has decreased since 97-99 from $21.1M to its current level of $96K from a contract with the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC).

What we have in place in Washington:
As a result of earlier tragic events such as Columbine and 911, several federal and state laws were enacted requiring districts and schools to have in place:
- Comprehensive school safety plans. See: The School Safety Planning Manual,
- A school mapping system as a part of the safety planning process. See: Critical Incident Planning and Mapping System (Rapid Responder),
- A threat assessment process to prevent targeted violence in schools. See: Threat Assessment,
- Model policies and best practice resources for addressing such issues as:
  o Bullying and Harassment,
  o Gang Activity in Schools,
  o Digital Safety and Cyberbullying.
- In addition, there is the School Safety Advisory Committee which provides advice and assistance to OSPI, the School Safety Center which provides technical assistance and resources, and ongoing collaborations with such organizations and agencies as the CJTC, The Department of Health, and the NW PBIS Network, among several others.

What we need and need to do:
The School Safety Advisory Committee is currently looking at all aspects of school safety and current safety resources available in Washington. A preliminary set of recommendations includes:
- Developing comprehensive, multi-tiered systems approach to school safety,
- Examining current resources and planning materials and processes for gaps and needed updates,
- Adequate funding to
  o Maximize cross-agency and community collaborations to ensure a collective impact,
  o The Safety Corps model of service provision,
  o Provide training and to regularly update trainings,
  o Support school security personnel, specifically School Resource Officers (SROs) and Campus Security Officers (CSOs).