Gangs in Schools: Recognizing Street Gangs
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

This presentation is for information and training purposes only.

The information should not be used as the sole means of determining a student’s involvement in gangs or in criminal street gang activity or the need for administrative/disciplinary action.

The existence of one or more of the gang indicators does not constitute disciplinary or criminal activity in itself. Please remember that being a member of one of these groups does not, in itself, constitute a crime.

Remember, too, in the context of school, they are students first.

The totality of the circumstances surrounding an individual or event must be considered before a final determination or course of action takes place.

If you feel circumstances are present that warrant action, you should immediately contact the proper personnel and strictly adhere to all appropriate school policies.
What's the difference?
What is a street gang?

- Common definition:
  - 3 or more persons
  - Engage in criminal activity collectively
  - Identifiable leadership
  - Ongoing relationship
  - Common name, signs, symbols, or colors
  - Exclusivity
  - Turf or territory
  - Typical age 14-24 years

RCW 28A.600.455
Cultural Influences

- Music
- Movies
- Magazines
- Internet
- Video Games
- Peers
- Family
Cultural Influences

Celtics’ Paul Pierce was fined $25,000 for throwing up a gang hand sign (Piru) at a loud spectator in 2008.
Multi-Generational Gangs

- Children raised in a gang culture
- Gangs become the “norm” for youth
- Washington has third-generation gang families
- Older siblings
- Children emulating gang behaviors
Mobility

Washington’s gangs were originally imported from other areas, and more recently have been gangs that develop locally.
Chicago-Origin Gangs:
- Associated with gang “nations”
- Formal hierarchy and organization
- Territorial
- Strongly segregated by race
- Long history

California-Based Gangs:
- May associate with prison gangs
- May associate with gang nations
- Rather loose organization
- Generally segregated by race
- Territorial
Gangs can be hard to recognize ... 

unless you know what you are looking for.
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

“All is well.”

Bloods
Latin Kings
Vice Lords

“All is one.”

Crips
Gangster Disciples

Dress “left”

Dress “right”
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Dressing “left”
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Crip:
- Holly Blocc Hellraisers
- Rollin’ 60s
- Young Oriental Troops
- Thug Life
- Lakewood Hustlers

Sureño:
- Little Valley Lokotes
- Bell Garden Lokotes
- Vatos Lokos
- South Side Locos
- El Monte Flores
- Brown Pride Mexicans
- South Side Playboys
- Logan Heights Clicca
- Old City Panama
- South Side Kings

Norteño:
- Rosmere Nortenos
- North Side Locos
- Norte Mafia
- North Side Varrio

Blood:
- East Side Piru
- Low Profile
- Oriental Loko Boyz
- East Side Mafia Bloods
- West Side Street Mobb

Gangster Disciples:
- Deuce Eight
- Tillicum Park Gangsters
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

“Black” Street Gangs

- Crips
- Bloods
- Piru
- Hoover Criminals
- Black Gangster Disciples
- Vice Lords
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Crips

- Associated with Folk Nation
- Turf-oriented, active in drug traffic
- Origins:
  - Los Angeles
  - 1970s
  - Compton HS
- Rivals:
  - Bloods, Latin Kings, Vice Lords
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Crips

- Identifiers:
  - Color Blue (primary)
  - Also Light Blue, Gray, White, Purple
  - May dress “left”
  - Letter “C”
  - Six-pointed star
  - Number 6
  - “Sox” hats
Crips

- Identifiers:
  - Pitchforks “up”
  - Don’t write “CK”
  - Examples –
    - “write bacc”
    - “write bak”
  - Word “slob” or “sloop” as a put-down to Bloods
  - Graffiti includes “BK”
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Bloods and Piru

- Associated with People Nation
- Turf-oriented, active in drug traffic
- Origins:
  - Los Angeles
  - 1970s
  - Response to Crip gang
  - Piru is a subset or a separate gang
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

**Bloods and Piru**

- Identifiers:
  - Colors Red (primary)
  - Also Burgundy, Green, Brown, Tan
  - Letter “B” or “UBN”
  - Word “damu”
  - Number 031 (“I am blood”)
  - Boston Red Sox Hats
  - Local sets may use other letters
  - Tattoos – blud or MOB are common
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Bloods and Piru

- Identifiers:
  - Five-pointed star
  - Cross out letter “C”
  - Replace “C” with “B” (example “class” becomes “blass”)
  - Graffiti may include “CK” or “Crab”
  - Pitchforks “down”
  - May dress “right”
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Hoover Criminals

- California Street Gang
- Originally “Hoover Crips” but now a separate gang
- Continued allegiance to Crips and Folk Nation
- Origins:
  - Los Angeles
  - Hoover Avenue
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Hoover Criminals

- Identifiers:
  - Colors Orange and Blue
  - Letter “H”
  - Number 74 or 52 (83 and 92)
  - “H” handsign
  - Otherwise similar to Crips
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Hoover Criminals

Hoover Criminals

Courtesy nwgangs.com
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Black Gangster Disciples

- Associated with Folk Nation
- Origins:
  - 1960s
  - Two gangs joined to form BGDN
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Black Gangster Disciples

- Identifiers:
  - Colors Black, Blue
  - Also Grey, White
  - Letters “BGD” or “GD” or “G”
  - Pitchforks “up”
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Black Gangster Disciples

- Identifiers:
  - Six-point stars
  - Number 360
  - Number 274 or 74
  - Pitchfork Hand signs
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Vice Lords

- “Conservative Vice Lords”
- “Almighty Vice Lord Nation”
- People Nation affiliation
- Rivals:
  - Folk Nation gangs
  - Crips, BGD
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Vice Lords

• Identifiers:
  o Colors Red and Black
  o Five-point stars
  o Numbers 5 and 3-22-12
  o Letters VL, AVLN, VLN, CVL
  o Pyramid with eye above, top hat and cane
  o Five-point crown
  o Playboy bunny facing left
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

**Vice Lords**

- Identifiers:
  - UNLV team wear (Vice Lord Nation United)
  - Louis Vitton brand (VL)
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Hispanic / Latino Street Gangs

- Surenos
- 18th Street
- Florencia 13
- Brown Pride
- Nortenos
- Mara Salvatrucha
- Latin Kings
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Sureños

- “Southerners” in Spanish
- Sureno gang is an “umbrella”
- Associated with Mexican Mafia
  - “La Eme” prison gang
  - Local gangsters are “foot soldiers”
  - Local gangs pay taxes to La Eme
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Sureños

• Origins:
  o LA Latino gangs since 1900
  o Maravilla Gangs (1930s)
  o Zoot Suit Riots (1940s)
  o Mexical Mafia (1960s)
  o Sureno alliance in Los Angeles (1960s)
  o South of Bakersfield
Sureños

- Identifiers:
  - Color Blue
  - Number 13 or X3 or XIII
  - Words “south” or “Sur”
  - “trece” and 3 dots
  - Replace “e” with “3”
  - Eyebrow slashes
  - Letter “M” or “S”
  - Tattoos
- Rivals:
  - Nortenos, People
- Call Nortenos “buster” or “sodbuster”
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

18th Street Gang

- 18th Street Gang
- Under Sureno umbrella
- Area of Origin:
  - Los Angeles, CA
- Colors and number:
  - **Black**, **Grey**, and **Blue**
  - Number 18
- Rival: Nortenos and Florencia
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Florence 13

- Florencia Gang
- Under Sureno umbrella
- Area of Origin:
  - Los Angeles
  - 1950s
  - Florence Ave.
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Florenicia 13

- Identifiers:
  - Color Blue
  - Number 13
  - “Effe” and “Effe 13”

- Rivals:
  - Nortenos
  - 18th Street
Brown Pride

- Brown Pride
- Members may deny “gang” membership
- Identifiers:
  - Brown and Blue/Red
  - Number 13/14
  - Letters BP
- Rivals: Depends on alliance
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Norteños

- “Northerner” in Spanish
- Associated with the Nuestra Familia prison gang
- Identify strongly with Mexican heritage
- Area of Origin: North of Bakersfield
  - 1960s (Tennis shoe war)
- Rivals: Surenos
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Norteños

- Identifiers:
  - Color Red
  - Number 14 or XIV
  - Letter “N”
  - “Norte”
  - Tattoos
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Norteños

• Identifiers:
  - Huelga Bird
  - UNLV attire
  - NorCal references
  - NFL and NBA attire
  - Cross out letter “S”
• Call Surenos “skrapa” or “SuRat”
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Norteños

“Flamed Up”
Norteños
Mara Salvatruchla

- Mara Salvatruchla (MS-13)
- Area of Origin:
  - Los Angeles
  - Salvadoran Immigrants
  - 1980
- Extremely violent
- Now widespread around the globe
- Increasing presence in Washington
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Mara Salvatrucha

- Indicators
  - Colors Light Blue & White
  - MS-13
  - Number 13
  - Devil horns handsign
  - Facial tattoos (some)
  - Salvadoran Flag

Rivals: Everyone…
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

**Latin Kings**

- **Almighty Latin Kings/Queens Nation**
- Originally Puerto Rican gang
- Associated with People Nation
- Area of Origin:
  - Chicago
  - 1940s
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

**LATIN KINGS**

Identifiers:
- Colors Yellow (Gold) and Black
- 5-pointed crown
- Lion’s Head
- Number 5
- 5-pointed star
Traditional Gang Identities & Identifiers

Latin Kings

- Identifiers:
  - Number 360
  - Pitchforks down
  - ALKN or ALQN
  - “Amor de rey”

- Rivals:
  - Crips
  - Surenos
  - Folk Nation
Hybrid Gangs and Other Groups

- Asian Gangs
- Native American Gangs
- East European “Gangs”
- Insane Clown Posse
- Straight Edge
- Tagger Crews
Asian Gangs

- Origins in California
  - Tiny Rascal Gang (TRG)
  - Asian BoyZ
- Usually ethnically restricted
- More loosely organized, mostly hybrid gangs
- Highly Mobile (nomadic)
- Not turf-oriented
Asian Gangs

- Tend to be low-profile
- Indicators:
  - Colors green, black, blue, red, purple
  - Cultural tattoos (dragons)
  - 5 dot tattoos (like dice)
  - Burns
  - Scars (intentional)
Asian Gangs

- Indicators:
  - 4 or 5 “Ts” (love, money, prison, crime, revenge)
  - Cultural tattoos (dragons, eagles, etc.)
  - Oakland A’s hats
  - Crip or Blood indicia
Native American Gangs

- Growing problem on reservations and nearby communities
- Tend to be unstructured and informal
- May use LA gang names
- Presence in all Washington reservations
Native American Gangs
Insane Clown Posse

- A rap group that performs hardcore music termed “horrorcore”
- Known for dark & violent lyrics
- Followers called Juggalos and Juggalettes
- Accept use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and promiscuous sex
Insane Clown Posse

• Don’t see themselves as a **gang**
• Little group structure, members see themselves as individuals
• Can be a gang by definition
• Found across the country
• More urban / suburban
• May be violent – known to carry hatchets / axes
• Identifiers:
  • “hatchet man”
  • face paint
Insane Clown Posse

- May 2006: Jacob Robida (18) killed several persons in a Massachusetts gay bar using first a hatchet and then a handgun. His MySpace page indicated was a juggalo and fan of ICP and follower of the “Dark Carnival”
- June 2006: Juggalos armed with axes and machetes, attacked visitors to Fort Steilacoom Park in Tacoma. They injured nearly two dozen people, and threatened to decapitate them.
Straight Edge

- Associated with hardcore punk rock music and anarchy
- Name coined by band “Minor Threat”
- Follow a “clean” lifestyle – No drugs, alcohol, tobacco
- Not a “gang” *per se* but may fit the definition
- Have engaged in criminal activity with ELF and Animal Liberation Front
Straight Edge

- Militant Straight Edge followers in 1990s were violent, but have diminished
- Likely vegan
- Identifiers:
  - Letter “X” or “XXX”
  - Black Bandanas
  - Long sideburns, short hair
  - Piercings
  - Spike bracelets
  - Florida State U (FSU***)
Extremist Gangs and Groups

• Skinheads
• Peckerwoods
• Hammerskins
• SHARPs
• Others
Skinheads

• White supremacist groups
  • Neo-nazi
  • Anti-gay
  • Anti-immigrant
  • Anti-drug use
• Origins in Europe (UK)
• Multi-national distribution
• Widespread in US
• Militaristic, anarchist
Skinheads

- Violent, assaultive, less “criminal”
- Actively recruit Caucasian “fringe” and loner youth
- Raise children in the culture
- Multi-generational
Skinheads

- Identifiers:
  - Shaved heads or short haircuts
  - Swastikas
  - Confederate flag
  - Air Force flight jackets
  - Braces and boots
Skinheads

- Identifiers:
  - Lightning bolts
  - “14 words”
  - Numbers 88 or 1488
  - Greeting “Oi”
  - “Skin” brand clothing
  - Iron Cross

- Book “Skinhead confessions,” TJ Leyden

“We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children!”
SHARPS

- Skin Heads Against Racial Prejudice
- *NOT* racist or neo-Nazi
- Recognize the bi-racial origins of the skinhead subculture
- Dress similar to other Skinheads
- Will fight racist Skinheads
Hammerskins

- Neo-Nazi, etc.
- Originated in Dallas, TX
- Name comes from a Pink Floyd song on *The Wall*
- Identifiers:
  - Crossed Hammers
  - Confederate flags
  - Nazi symbols: swastikas, iron cross, Celtic cross
  - Number 88
  - HFFH
- Otherwise similar to Skinheads
Hammerskins

- Identifiers:
  - Nazi symbols: swastikas, iron cross, Celtic cross
  - Number 88
  - HFFH
  - WP (White Power)
  - Otherwise similar to Skinheads except dress
Other Neo-Nazi Groups

- Aryan Nation
- Volksfront
- White Aryan Resistance
- Nazi Lowriders Aryan Brotherhood
Peace out.
For more information, please visit:

- School Safety Center
  http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/Gangs/default.aspx

- National Gang Center: http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov

- Northwest Gangs: http://www.nwgangs.com
http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/default.aspx
http://www.k12.wa.us/SafetyCenter/Gangs/default.aspx