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School Safety Planning:

A Survey of Bond, Fayette and Effingham County Schools
(TITLE)

BY

Teresa A. Wortman

1961-

FIELD EXPERIENCE

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IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
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Abstract

This study was designed to assess the readiness of Illinois public and parochial schools in Bond, Fayette and Effingham Counties to implement school policies, building security strategies, and violence prevention/intervention programs to improve school safety. The study examined current trends in the school safety planning of the respondents. In addition, the study examined the relationship between the schools' implementation of violence prevention/intervention programs and their use of safety grants, the relationship between the array of safety measures implemented by the responding schools and their involvement of school and community groups in their planning, and the relationship between the array of safety measures implemented by the responding schools and the number of different types of violent incidents those school experienced.

School policies were given the greatest emphasis in safety planning by the responding schools, followed by violence prevention/intervention programs, and building security strategies. No significant relationships were found for the following: the schools' implementation of violence prevention/intervention programs and their use of safety grants; the schools' implementation of a broad array of safety measures and their involvement of school and community groups in safety planning; and the schools' implementation of a broad array of safety measures and the number of different types of violent incidents those schools experienced.

Dedications

To my husband Rob and my children Mitchell and Emily - for all their patience.

To the memory of all the children who have lost their lives as a result of school violence.

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I would like to thank Dr. Rick Roberts for chairing the committee that worked with me on this research project. His help in setting up and working through the project with me proved invaluable.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the problem

In light of the highly publicized school shootings which have occurred in the United States over the last several years, student aggression against peers and school staff has become a great concern among those involved with education. The impact of violence in schools throughout this nation has been recognized at even the highest levels of government. Goal 7 of the National Education Goals for the Year 2000 states:

> Safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools by the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning (cited in Gold and Chamberlin, 1996, p. 28).

Those involved with education have good reasons to concern themselves with school safety and the prevention of violence. Violence at school, or even the perception of danger, interferes with the process of learning. Furthermore, safer schools tend to be more effective schools than their counterparts, experiencing higher academic achievement and fewer disciplinary problems (Fager and Boss, 1998). Because violence and threats of violence within the school setting have devastating and long-lasting effects and reduce the ability of students to learn and teachers to teach, schools have an obligation to ensure the safety of their students and personnel (Cirillo, Pruitt, Colwell, Hurley, & Ballard., 1998; Schneider, 1996).

Unfortunately, there are no simple or easy answers on how to go about making schools safe, or how to prevent school violence. Violence is a complex problem that extends well beyond the school setting. It includes a wide range of behaviors, most of

which are far less sensational than the rare school violence cases that make the headlines. Bachus (1994) reported that violence in this country has become so commonplace that people have grown to expect it. Schools are not immune to violence. Indeed, acts of violence in schools are a reality and schools must plan accordingly.

Following the shootings at West Paducah High School in December of 1997, President Clinton directed the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice to prepare an annual report on school safety. The purpose of the report was to provide parents, schools, and the community with an overview of the nature and scope of school crime, and to describe actions that schools and communities can take to address school safety issues. In the first Annual Report on School Safety (1998), Secretary of Education, Richard W. Riley and Attorney General Janet Reno discussed three priorities toward which schools and communities should work: 1) improving data collection so that schools and communities can develop effective strategies for combating school violence; 2) involving community leaders and organizations in the development and implementation of school safety plans; 3) employing a variety of broad-based policies, programs and strategies that focus on improving the overall quality of the school environment. It is with these priorities in mind that this researcher has designed her study.

Purpose of the study

Of the three priorities outlined by the Departments of Education and Justice (1998), the first priority noted is to gather data that will help schools in developing effective strategies for combating school violence. With regard to this priority, the purpose of the study was to assess the extent to which schools in Bond, Fayette and Effingham Counties in Illinois have implemented policies, programs, and strategies to

improve school safety. The information will provide a description of how comprehensive school safety planning is taking shape in rural Illinois communities. Furthermore, the results of this study will assist schools in Bond, Fayette and Effingham Counties as they continue examining school safety issues, in order to more fully develop and implement their own school safety planning.

The study was designed to answer the following questions: 1) Considering the three categories typically used by schools to promote school safety: a) building security strategies, b) school policies relating to school safety, and c) violence prevention and intervention programs, what do the data show about the relative frequency with which each category is implemented and the emphasis each receives in the schools responding to the survey? 2) Do those schools which have received safety grants report a higher percentage of partially or fully implemented school programs to promote school safety than those schools which did not receive such grants? 3) Do those schools which have involved a greater number of school groups and community groups in their safety planning have a broader array of safety measures partially or fully implemented than those schools which have included fewer school groups and community groups, or none at all? 4) Among Bond, Fayette and Effingham County schools who participated in this survey, is there a relationship between the number of safety measures fully or partially implemented and the number of different types of violent incidents reported?

Hypothesis

Research indicates that many schools are just beginning to recognize the importance of implementing violence prevention programs as opposed to the more typical reliance on implementing school policies and building security strategies to make schools

safer. Therefore, the first hypothesis was that schools in the study would report that they had more school safety policies and building security strategies partially or fully implemented and were just starting to consider the implementation of violence prevention and intervention programs. The second hypothesis was that schools which had received safety grants were more likely to have implemented a broader array of safety measures than their counterparts. The third hypothesis was that schools which had involved more school and community groups and organizations in their safety planning were more likely to have implemented a broader array of safety measures than their counterparts. In addition, this author anticipated that many schools might have adopted safety measures in reaction to violence or the threat of violence that had occurred within their buildings. Consequently, the fourth hypothesis was that a greater number of safety measures had been implemented by those schools which had experienced more types of violent incidents than by those which had experienced fewer types of such incidents.

Definition of terms

Building security strategies are strategies, equipment or technology (such as controlled building access, the use of security personnel, door locks, alarms, metal detectors, surveillance and communication equipment) used by schools to enhance the security of the campus and/or school buildings.

Safe school policies are policies relating to school safety and/or crisis management, which are known and practiced by the administration, staff, students, and/or visitors of the school.

Violence prevention and intervention programs are curriculum, partnerships, strategies or training used for teaching students and/or staff ways to prevent or stop violence.

Safety grant is money awarded to a school or school district by an outside agency to be used for financing equipment, programs, curriculum materials, or training to increase the safety of the school.

School groups are groups comprised of school administrators (i.e. superintendents, principals, deans of students), certified staff (i.e. teachers, counselors), uncertified staff (i.e. cooks, custodians, bus drivers, secretaries), and/or students.

Community groups are groups comprised of law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, mental health care workers, lawyers, health department personnel, parent groups, and/or other non-school groups which might be involved with making schools safer.

Broader array of safety measures is the use of an assortment of building security strategies, safe school policies, and violence prevention and intervention programs.

Violent incident is the occurrence of one of the following incidents in the school setting: bomb threat or incident, weapons violation, assault, fighting, sex offense, theft, vandalism, drug offense, or intruder in the building.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The vast majority of America's schools are relatively safe places. According to the Departments of Education and Justice (1998), a child is more likely to be a victim of a violent crime in the community or at home than at school. Specifically, homicides in school are actually extremely rare occurrences. As cited in the Safe School Kit (Foust, 1998), " a student has only one chance in one-million of being killed by another student - an equation that makes a student twice as likely to be struck by lightning than to be shot at school" (p. 2). However, there are some alarming statistics reported for less serious school crime. According to statistics from the Illinois State Police (1999), the following incidents occur each school day in America's 85,000 public schools: 900 teachers are threatened; 40 teachers and 2000 students are physically attacked on school grounds; approximately 800,000 students take edged weapons to school; approximately 100,000 students take guns to school; approximately 16,000 crimes occur on school campuses. In addition, students are more fearful at school today than they were in the past (Departments of Education and Justice, 1998). So while the rate for being a victim of violent crime in school is relatively low, the rate for being a victim of a lesser crime in school is much higher than previously (Regional Institute for Community Policing, 1998).

When the statistics of everyday school crime are coupled with the high profile school shooting tragedies like those of Littleton, Colorado, Springfield, Oregon, Edinboro, Pennsylvania, Jonesboro, Arkansas, West Paducah, Kentucky, Pearl, Mississippi, and other communities, Americans have legitimate reasons to be concerned

about school safety (Vermeire, 1999). The reality of violence occurring in schools of all types and sizes has forced school personnel to adopt protective strategies aimed at producing safe environments for its staff and students (Foust, 1998). Furthermore, courts have notified schools to either create safe school campuses or be prepared to compensate victims for their losses (Stephens, 1998).

Safe School Mandates

The legal community is in a unique and potent position to help address school safety issues. In 1980, the California Department of Justice became the first state agency to file a lawsuit against all relevant governmental officials and agencies in Los Angeles County to compel them to enforce safety in the schools (National School Safety Center, 1985). The California Constitution now provides the right to safe schools: "All students and staff of primary, elementary, junior high and senior high schools have the inalienable right to attend campuses which are safe, secure and peaceful" (cited in Sawyer, 1985, p. 115). This constitutional right to safe schools was designed to protect students and staff from crime and violence while attending public schools. The safe schools provision mandated that school districts have a duty to make their schools safe. This unprecedented step has led the way for more legislation designed to provide safe, secure and peaceful schools across the nation (National School Safety Center, 1985).

Former President Ronald Reagan pledged his support for providing safe schools on behalf of the United States Government. While speaking to a group of secondary school principals during his presidency in early 1984, he put the school safety issue in perspective:

> As long as one teacher is assaulted, one classroom disrupted, or one student is attacked, then I must and will speak out to give you the support you need to

> enforce discipline in our schools. I can't say it too forcefully, to get learning back into our schools, we must get crime and violence out (cited in National School Safety Center, 1985, p. 3).

State and Federal Government Programs.

Today, there are numerous federal and state government agencies that provide legal, informational and financial assistance in developing safe schools. One of the leading agencies available to work with schools is the United States Department of Education. This department is ultimately responsible for all federal programs relating to education. One of the safe-school products of the Department of Education is the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program. This program is designed to reduce drug, alcohol and tobacco use, and violence, through education and prevention activities in schools (Departments of Education and Justice, 1998).

The United States Department of Justice also plays a key role in helping to keep schools safe. This department heads agencies such as the Justice Information Center and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). The Justice Information Center provides information on criminal and juvenile justice in the world. The OJJDP's mission is to provide national leadership, coordination, and resources to develop, implement, and support effective methods to prevent juvenile victimization (Departments of Education and Justice, 1998).

The National School Safety Center (NSSC), formed in 1984, is a joint effort of the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education, in partnership with Pepperdine University, whose mission is to bring together public, private and academic resources throughout America. This center provides assistance to school boards, educators, law enforcers and

the public to restore our schools as safe, secure and tranquil places of learning. Specifically, the NSSC promotes a national exchange of information related to school crime and violence prevention through a wide variety of resources including training programs, professional journals, an educational criminal justice network, and a public service advertising campaign (National School Safety Center, 1985).

The federal government also has several school safety resources on line. Safe, Drug-Free, and Effective Schools for All Students: What Works? is an evaluation of programs formulated under the Safe and Drug Free Schools Act. Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools is a document which offers research-based practices designed to assist schools in identifying early warning signs and developing prevention, intervention and crisis plans. Creating Safe and Drug-Free Schools: An Action Guide is a document which outlines steps to take in creating safe schools (Departments of Education and Justice, 1998).

The state of Illinois has also become actively involved in school safety issues. In 1998, the state of Illinois, directed by Illinois Attorney General Jim Ryan put together a plan to make Illinois schools safer. By 1999, the Safe-to-Learn Program was put into law. Aspects of the program include the development of resources and information, the direction of conferences, training, regional meetings and workshops, the contracting of technical assistance providers, and evaluation of the program. Along with the law, a $14 million-a-year school-violence-prevention grant program was put in place (Effingham Daily News, July 10, 2000).

The school-violence-prevention grant program allows all school districts in the state of Illinois to apply for safety grants of up to $50,000. The grants are competitive

and provide money to those school districts which show evidence of a sound violence prevention program based on research and collaboration with community groups and organizations. Up to twenty-five percent of the money awarded to a school district may be spent on building security equipment. The remaining money must be used for violence prevention and intervention, staff training, and/or crisis management expenses (Illinois Violence Prevention Authority, 2000).

Safe School Planning

Safe school planning is now being recognized by school administrators as the first step in creating an appropriate learning environment for children. The goal of safe school planning is to create and maintain a positive and welcoming environment, free of drugs, violence, intimidation and fear, where students and teachers can commit to the education process (Stephens, 1998). In a safe school environment, the academic focus is strong, the parental and community involvement meaningful, the value and potential of every child cherished (Foust, 1998). In addition, a safe school provides an educational climate where behavioral expectations are clearly communicated, consistently enforced, and fairly applied (Stephens, 1998).

A key to the success of safe-school planning is to involve the entire community in the efforts to develop, implement, and evaluate the school's safety plan (Illinois State Board of Education, 1999). School personnel should include teachers, counselors, administrators, school security, maintenance workers, clerical staff, and students, if age appropriate (Stephens, 1998). In addition, parents, business leaders, law enforcement agencies, juvenile justice agencies, community organizations, and government agencies play an important part in preparing a comprehensive plan. And, since every important

school safety issue is embedded in existing law, the school district's lawyer should be involved in reviewing federal, state and local statutes pertaining to student management and school order. The lawyer review identifies what the laws require for safe-school planning (Departments of Education and Justice, 1998).

The Departments of Education and Justice (1998) reported seven basic steps for developing and implementing a comprehensive school safety plan: 1) to establish school-community partnerships; 2) to identify and measure the problem; 3) to set measurable goals and objectives; 4) to identify appropriate research-based programs and strategies; 5) to implement the comprehensive plan; 6) to evaluate the plan; 7) to revise the plan on the basis of the evaluation.

Components of Safe School Plans

Stephens (1998) noted that all safe school plans should share some of the same features, but no two should be exactly alike. Furthermore, plans and policies for responding to school violence should be developed for each school building. Each school should conduct a site assessment before developing a safe-school plan. The process should begin by determining the specific issues and concerns of the community, and customizing a relevant and meaningful safe-school plan accordingly.

Although safe school planning should include response procedures for various emergencies, including natural disasters (earthquakes, tornadoes, etc.) and technological disasters (fire, hazardous material incident, etc.), this review will focus on safe-school planning with regard to crime and school violence. School districts have used a variety of methods to successfully prevent crime and violence on school campuses. The methods used to create safe schools generally fall into one of three categories: 1) the development

and incorporation of effective school policies; 2) the implementation of violence prevention programs and strategies at all levels; 3) the installation of technological security measures within the school facility (Departments of Education and Justice, 1998).

School Policy

One of the least costly measures recognized to have a positive effect for reducing school violence and vandalism is the implementation of a clear, concise and strictly enforced policy of student discipline (Sawyer, 1985). The Departments of Education and Justice (1998) noted the importance of school discipline policies that are communicated periodically to students, parents, and staff. They found that a common practice for many schools is to require students and parents to sign a document at the beginning of the school year indicating that they have read and agree to follow school policy. They further noted that discipline needs to be consistent for all students. Serious and repeated violent infractions need to carry heavier penalties than less serious or infrequent infractions. Finally, they stressed that school policies need to include provisions for an appeals process.

Several researchers (Baker, 1998; Departments of Education and Justice, 1998; Schneider, 1996) found that involving students in making decisions about school policies proved to be beneficial. When students participated in the decision-making process, they were more likely to support the decisions that were made. In addition, students were found to be an excellent resource for creative ideas when it came to recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of the policies under consideration.

Van Acker and Talbott (1999) reported that schools who professed democratic practices in their mission statements and carried them out were more likely to reduce the

frequency and intensity of violent and aggressive acts in school than those which did not. They reported that many schools in their day-to-day practices violated their professed principles. They also found that many school policies and practices invested heavily in the autocratic use of punitive strategies, imposing aversive consequences, like suspension and expulsion, when dealing with challenging behaviors such as violence and aggression. They found evidence that punishment of aggressive behaviors was unsuccessful in effecting any lasting change in behavior. Conversely, they showed that school-wide discipline procedures which were proactive had a more lasting effect. Use of positive, preventive and problem-solving methods were reported to reduce aggressive behaviors without excessive use of punishment. Van Acker and Talbott concluded that the use of alternative and non-aversive consequences for aggressive and violent behaviors provided students with increased knowledge and skills in the use of pro-social, problem-solving strategies.

Baker (1998) argued that even violence-prone students were less likely to commit violent acts in school when they felt a sense of community and psychological membership to their schools. She recommended discipline strategies which foster a sense of affiliation to the school by the student. She suggested that a personal commitment of each student be established through cooperative rule setting. Furthermore, these rules should be based on virtues like kindness and fairness, which are connected to respect for the school community. In this way, students can see rules related to a social purpose rather than imposed arbitrarily by those in authority. She cautioned that many schools are closing off an important avenue of violence prevention and intervention by not giving violence-prone children the ability to participate meaningfully in the community of the school.

Likewise, the Departments of Education and Justice (1998) contended that school policy should include provisions which help create a climate of tolerance in which all students can feel comfortable and secure. They went on to say that schools should encourage students to be more accepting of diversity through school policies which prevent harassment and discrimination, and by offering support groups.

In their research, Astor, Meyer, and Behre (1999) interviewed students, teachers and administrators about violence in their schools after giving them maps of their schools and asking them to identify the locations and times of the most violent events and the most dangerous areas in and around the school. Results suggested that violent events occurred primarily in spaces such as hallways, dining areas, and parking lots, at times when adults were not typically present. The most effective violence interventions described by the participants in the study (including students, teachers, and administrators) were the physical presence of a teacher who knew the students and was willing to intervene, coupled with clear, consistent administrative policies on violence. The consensus among students was that teachers who were willing to intervene were considered caring teachers. Caring teachers were the teachers who saw their role as going beyond the classroom. They knew about the children's home circumstances, after school activities, and their long-term hopes. Students expressed the desire for direct supervision and consistent consequences by teachers and administrators in all dangerous school contexts. Based on the findings of this research, the authors recommended that interventions be designed to increase the role of students, teachers, and other school community members in reclaiming unowned school territories.

School Programs

A key component of increasing school safety is selecting programs that can be combined as part of an effective plan for preventing violence in the schools (Departments of Education and Justice, 1998). The history of efforts to reduce the prevalence of violence in schools has largely been one of dealing with problems after they have arisen. For the most part, school-based efforts have relied heavily on reactive strategies and aversive consequences in dealing with challenging behaviors. Past ideas of preventive measures have been to increase security by using metal detectors, student identification cards, controlled access, and other such measures. Although these measures may increase the safety of schools, they do little to address the underlying issues leading to aggressive behavior in students. Grant, Van Acker, Guerra, Duplechain, & Coen (1998) wrote that the real answer lies in implementing meaningful educational programs that intervene early or totally prevent the development of aggressive behavior and support the development of pro-social behavior. Today, many schools are giving proactive, preventive efforts more emphasis.

Cole (1995) categorized prevention approaches into three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary prevention programs target all students. They are intended to maximize the educational progress and personal development for each student through the promotion of pro-social skills. Examples of primary prevention programs include peer programs (buddy system, peer tutoring), staff mentoring (students are assigned to staff members for support), conflict resolution programs (peer mediation and anger management), and school-wide pro-social curriculum (social skills, equity concepts and critical thinking skills).

Secondary prevention programs are directed toward students at-risk. They are intended to improve the behavior, cognitive, and affective skills of students having difficulties that have not yet led to a crisis. Examples of typical behavior for such students include threats, tantrums, tears, and assaults. Examples of contributing factors for such behavior include grieving over losses, abuse, academic frustration, and social problems. The best secondary prevention programs focus on the strengths of the child and involve multimodal approaches in treatment and curriculum. Treatment may include direct counseling as well as indirect consultation services. Typical aspects of direct counseling include the teaching of anger coping techniques and social skills training. Examples of indirect consultation are collaborative planning of behavior modification reinforcement techniques, behavioral goal setting, contracting and parent management training (Cole, 1995).

Tertiary intervention programs are directed toward students who are in crisis. These students have had a history of repeated aggression which has significantly interfered with their academic progress. Their aggression has often led to the victimization of others. Tertiary interventions are reactive to severe problems with the aim of reducing the frequency, severity and duration of aggressive behavior. Examples of tertiary intervention programs are anger control programs and progressive desensitation approaches (e.g. Stress Inoculation Training). Typical strategies for anger management include relaxation, coping, and skill application techniques (Cole, 1995).

Chandras (1999) suggested the following three considerations when implementing a program of prevention: 1) At what point is intervention to take place? 2) Should preventive measures be provided for all students or are they only for a segment of the

student body? 3) Is intervention to be direct with a particular student or indirect with significant others who could influence the student behavior?

It is important that program selection be based on a thorough assessment of each school's needs. Furthermore, the programs selected should be ones that have been rigorously tested in the field and show solid evidence in their effectiveness (Departments of Education and Justice, 1998). In their research, Hill and Drolet (1999) found the need for age and developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive violence prevention programs. They indicated that in order for programs to be effective, they had to be designed specifically for the people for whom they were targeted, and in the language of those people. In their words: "We must know Harlem to design a program for Harlem; we must know the barrios of Texas to be able to work there" (p. 269). They concluded that any successful program must also incorporate knowledge and skills that can be used into adulthood. With the improvement of interpersonal skills, such as conflict resolution, negotiation, communication and the enhancement of self-esteem, individuals can prevent interpersonal conflicts from escalating into violence.

Grant, et. al. (1998) investigated a three-tier strategy aimed at improving social behavior. Their program was designed to evaluate the comparative efficacy of three increasingly intensive and contextually inclusive levels of intervention. The purpose of the program was to improve social behavior and promote social problem-solving skills in children while advancing important changes in the school, peer group and family social contexts. The program was comprised of three separate but interrelated components: a teacher education program, a social problem-solving curriculum for the students, and an active system of collaboration and support for teachers involved in implementing the new

strategies in the classroom. Although their study is longitudinal and results will not be finalized until data are gathered a number of years after the intervention ends, the preliminary results of the program appear encouraging.

Programs of national acclaim which have been demonstrated or are promising to reduce crime and violence on school campuses continue to be developed (Sawyer, 1985). Programs are now in existence which address issues such as aggression/fighting, bullying, family issues, gangs, racial conflict, sexual harassment, substance abuse, truancy, vandalism, and weapons use (Departments of Education and Justice, 1998).

Profiling

Another important aspect of a comprehensive school safety plan is the implementation of improved systems of screening to identify children who are at risk of developing chronic aggressive and violent behavior. Van Acker and Talbott (1999) noted that screening activities should be implemented routinely each year across all grades. Dwyer, Osher, & Warger (1998) stated that although teachers and support staff are not professionally trained to analyze children's feelings and motives, they are on the front line when it comes to observing troubling behavior. For this reason, they contended that it is important for the entire school staff be trained to understand and identify early warning signs.

In the United States Department of Education's guide to safe schools, Dwyer, Osher, and Warger (1998), summarized research involving early warning signs of violence in schools. The signs include social withdrawal, excessive feelings of isolation and being alone, excessive feelings of rejection, being a victim of violence, feelings of being picked on and persecuted, low school interest and poor academic performance, expression of

violence in writings and drawings, uncontrolled anger, patterns of impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating and bullying behaviors, history of discipline problems, history of violent and aggressive behavior, intolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes, drug and alcohol use, affiliation with gangs, inappropriate use of firearms, and serious threats of violence.

More recent research has focused on a series of "non-traditional" shooting incidents occurring in this nation's middle and high schools. McGee & DeBernardo (1999) gave a behavioral profile of the "classroom avenger" in their qualitative research study. They described the similar characteristics of twelve individuals who had recently participated in premeditated, highly lethal, and vengeance-motivated violent criminal acts. These acts occurred in various Southern and Mid-western school settings between 1993 and 1998. They characterized the classroom avenger as a healthy white male who viewed himself as physically unattractive and was often considered a "nerd" by other teenagers. The classroom avenger was further described as a friendless, immature, and a socially inadequate loner. His IQ was considered average to above average with normal ranges of cognitive functioning (such as memory, attention, concentration and concept formation). His depressed mood was not readily apparent to others, but was often expressed through anger, irritability and seclusiveness. Just prior to the shooting incident, he showed more violent behavior patterns such as temper outbursts, destruction of property, stubbornness, degradation of others and excessive risk-taking. He blamed others for his personal failures and shortcomings. He thought of himself as a victim of unfairness. His motive for attack was vengeance. Shortly before the shooting rampage, the classroom avenger had been exposed to one or more triggering events and often verbalized intent to do something

highly dramatic within the very near future. Although the researchers stated that no single predictor variable given in their behavioral profile should be used to forecast a school shooting, the more characteristics and indicators present for an individual, the greater the probability that he may act violently in the school setting (McGee &DeBernardo, 1999).

Dywer, Osher, & Warger's research (1998) indicated that there are early warning signs in most cases of violence to self and others. The signs, both behavioral and emotional, when viewed in context, can signal a troubled child. However, they stressed the importance of avoiding the inappropriate labeling or stigmatization of individual students because they appear to fit a specific profile or set of early warning indicators. They went on to say that responsible school communities should use early warning signals not to label children, but to address potential problems before they escalate into violence.

Crisis Management

Research by the Departments of Education and Justice (1998) reported that serious but rare events, such as shootings, bomb threats, hostage situations, and other crises, require quick and pre-planned responses. A comprehensive plan for dealing with a crisis situation was noted as an important aspect of safe-school planning. They suggested that the crisis management plan should include the response of a crisis management team with clearly delineated duties; a plan for evacuating students from school; a plan for notifying public authorities who might need to be involved in resolving the crisis; a plan for notifying parents quickly and orderly; a media/communications strategy; and a plan for making counselors available to deal with students in the aftermath of a traumatic event.

Other Strategies

James C. Kressly, a principal of a junior high school that incurred a school shooting, echoed several of the above strategies. He (1994), discussed his school's commitment to strict enforcement of discipline policies, including frequent checks of lavatories, hallways, and lockers. His school district, with the aid of emergency personnel and mental health clinicians inserviced teachers regarding crisis situations. In addition, each school developed profiles of at-risk students in attempts to prevent future violent outbursts. An additional prevention measure taken by his school was the implementation of an orientation process for incoming seventh graders to help these students adjust and feel comfortable in a new school setting. He agreed with other researchers that a caring approach can make the difference for the student prone to violence. He reported that the most effective strategy initiated at his school was the implementation of an advisory (sometimes known as mentoring) program. The purpose of this program is to provide opportunities for teachers to relate to students personally, to help provide the support students may not be getting at home, and to become attuned to potential problems, such as the possibility of violence.

School Facility and Technological Security Measures

Many programs around the country address the issues of bullying, anger management, alcohol and drug abuse, gangs, vandalism, and so forth. Green (1999) has recommended that these programs continue to be tested and implemented in a timely manner. However, many of these programs cannot be successful overnight. A majority of them must be initiated early in a child's life in order to be most effective and therefore,

unfortunately, do not exist in all schools at this time. Meanwhile, security incidents, which must be dealt with now, continue to occur in schools. One such approach which enables school administrators to discourage security infractions involves the use of security technologies throughout the campus.

When facility and technological security is being designed, it is important for schools to understand what they are trying to protect (people/assets), who they are trying to protect against (threats), and within what environmental constraints they must work (physical strengths and weaknesses of the facility). After identifying their risks and concerns, schools need to examine possible solutions for each area of vulnerability (Green, 1999).

Green (1999) categorized school technological solutions into five components: deterrence, detection, delay, response, and consequences. She noted several strategies for each component. Deterrence strategies include the following: use of fencing or other natural barriers to keep intruders out, use of signs clearly pointing visitors to the main office and other main access areas, implementation of policies for random vehicle checks and locker searches, regular weapons screening and student/staff/visitor identification checks, use of anti-graffiti sealers, and the employment of security personnel. Detection strategies noted include the following: use of sensors, duress alarms, and cameras; the implementation of a student hot-line for reporting violence; the placement of staff in strategic locations to detect suspicious activity; and the use of dogs to detect illegal contraband. Strategies listed under the delay component include bolting down equipment, locking doors and installing fences. Response and investigation strategies noted include the use of security personnel and law enforcement agencies in the schools, and the offering

of rewards for information. Finally, strategies listed under the consequence component include the following: using suspension and/or expulsion, requiring community service work on campus, issuing citations or arrest warrants through law enforcement agents, and prosecuting under the Judicial system.

In addition, Green (1999) suggested physical security approaches that might be applied in response to various threats. She gave an overview of common school threats: outsiders on campus, fights, vandalism, theft, drugs, alcohol, weapons, malicious acts, parking lot problems, and teacher safety issues. She also suggested physical security approaches for dealing with such threats: posting of a guard at the main entry gate to the campus, requiring vehicle parking stickers, implementing a dress code, locking exterior doors from the outside, installing glass-break sensors, lighting the campus at night, installing a security system, controlling key issuance, removing lockers, using vapor detection of drugs, maintaining a closed campus at lunch time, and leaving classroom doors open during class time. In summary, she stressed the importance of schools customizing strategies for their own situations: schools must examine their issues, assess their situations and choose the appropriate strategies.

Stephens (1998) described some of the same essential components for increasing facility and technological securities: controlling campus access, promoting crime prevention through environmental design, and utilizing technology to prevent crime. Controlling campus access encompasses a variety of methods. To begin with, efforts should be made to minimize the number of entrance and exit points used. These points should be carefully monitored by personnel who know students and staff. In larger schools, students and staff may need to wear picture identification badges. Any visitors

should be immediately directed to the office to check in, state their business, and obtain a visitor's pass to wear while on campus. During the school day, students should be monitored while in the hallways, and rest rooms. Students without proper passes should be challenged about their business.

Incorporating the principles of crime prevention through environmental design can contribute greatly to the control and security of the campus. Some of the basic design issues include the enclosure of the campus with fencing or gates, the removal of shrubbery that interferes with surveillance, restrictive parking (including the use of parking stickers and controlled access of the parking lot), exterior lighting, a clear line of sight within the building, large common areas that do not give the feeling of overcrowding. The school office should be situated with a clear view of who is entering and leaving the school. A well-designed, attractive and well-maintained campus is often the key to deterring vandalism and keeping schools safe (Stephens, 1998).

Security technologies can give added safety features for schools. For example, each classroom should have the capability of two-way communication with the office. This communication may be accomplished with the use of telephones, two-way radios, or an intercom system. At the very least, classrooms should be equipped with emergency buzzers or call buttons. Other technological security measures that might be considered in schools include the use of surveillance cameras and metal detectors which, when used properly, can contribute significantly to the safety of schools (Stephens, 1998).

Hill & Drolet (1999) reported that many school districts have installed metal detectors and video cameras, and hired security personnel in order to increase the safety of their students and staff. They noted that school districts are the largest purchaser of metal

detectors in the United States. Other strategies reported by the pair of researchers were random locker searches and requiring students to use plastic or mesh book bags so that weapons could not be easily hidden.

Green (1999) argued that it is important to remember that safety and security technology should not be used exclusively, but as one tool in a comprehensive program. In order for technology to be effective, it must be used correctly and appropriately.

Conclusion

Several researchers described the process of creating safe schools. Adams (2000) suggested that the best security plans are those that combine building security through policies and technology, with programs to enhance the development of the student. Foust (1998) added that the true test of any safe school program is one that implements not only strategies that make schools safer, but that also make schools feel safer. He reported that in order to produce a safe learning environment, it was necessary to utilize procedures derived from proven systems and strategies. Stephens (1998) reported that in order to create safe schools, schools must evaluate where they are through the use of various assessment tools, plan where they want to be through collaboration with school and community organizations, and implement comprehensive strategies to diminish the differences between where they are and where they want to be. The National School Safety Center (1985) summed up safe school planning in its mission statement: to promote safe schools free of crime and violence in order to help ensure quality education for all America's children.

Safe school planning is the responsibility of everyone who cares about the safety of children. Creating safe schools requires the will and commitment of school personnel as

well as community leaders. It requires teachers, administrators, parents, students and community members to work collaboratively and cooperatively to develop strategies, policies and procedures that will produce the desired results.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study were drawn from school personnel involved with school safety planning in the forty-five public and parochial schools from the counties of Bond, Fayette and Effingham, in the state of Illinois. The principal of each of the schools in Bond, Fayette and Effingham Counties was mailed a letter (see Appendix A) asking the individual to either respond to a school safety planning survey or to pass the survey on to another individual in the building who might be better suited to respond to the survey. One individual from each of thirty-eight schools in Bond, Fayette and Effingham Counties responded to the survey.

Procedure

A 73-item survey (see Appendix B) was developed based upon a review of the literature. A letter, a coded copy of the survey, a results-request postcard, and a return-postage-paid envelope were mailed to the principal of each school in Bond, Fayette and Effingham Counties. The participants were instructed to complete and return the survey within two weeks. They were also advised that the survey should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete and that no individual, school, or district would be specifically identified in any findings concerning the study. In addition, the participants were given the opportunity to receive a summary of the survey results. This opportunity was given by instructing the survey respondent to return a results-request postcard with the survey, or to mail it separately. The surveys were coded so that the principal investigator could keep track of which schools responded and could add additional demographic information to

the information returned from responding schools. All schools who failed to respond to the survey within two weeks were sent a reminder postcard.

Instrumentation

The survey consisted of five sections. The first section included fourteen questions used to gather demographic information about the school. Information was asked about the number of administrators, counselors and teachers assigned to the school; the grade levels housed by the school; the types of violent incidents and the number of expulsions that had occurred within the school during the last five years. Participants were asked to identify all groups who had involvement in the school's safety planning, and whether the school district had a designated security coordinator. They were also asked if their district made use of security grants. In addition, the researcher added information about school and district enrollment size and whether the school was a public or private institution. This information was gathered from a booklet published by the Regional Office of Education for Bond, Fayette and Effingham County Schools (2000).

The next three sections of the survey instructed participants to rate their school's safety planning implementation situation using the following Likert scale: 1 = unknown; 2 = excluded from consideration; 3 = under consideration; 4 = partially implemented; 5 = fully implemented. Section II consisted of twenty-four items pertaining to building security strategies for providing safer schools. Cronbach alpha reliability for this section was .84. Section III consisted of seventeen items pertaining to school policies relating to school safety. After the data were collected, one item was removed from the analysis by the researcher. This particular item pertained to assigned parking places for students. Since elementary schools do not have student drivers, the question caused confusion to

several survey participants in responding to it. Cronbach alpha reliability for this section was .70. Section IV consisted of eighteen items pertaining to school programs relating to school safety. Cronbach alpha reliability for this section was .91. A final, fifth section was included where participants were invited to add any additional comments.

CHAPTER IV

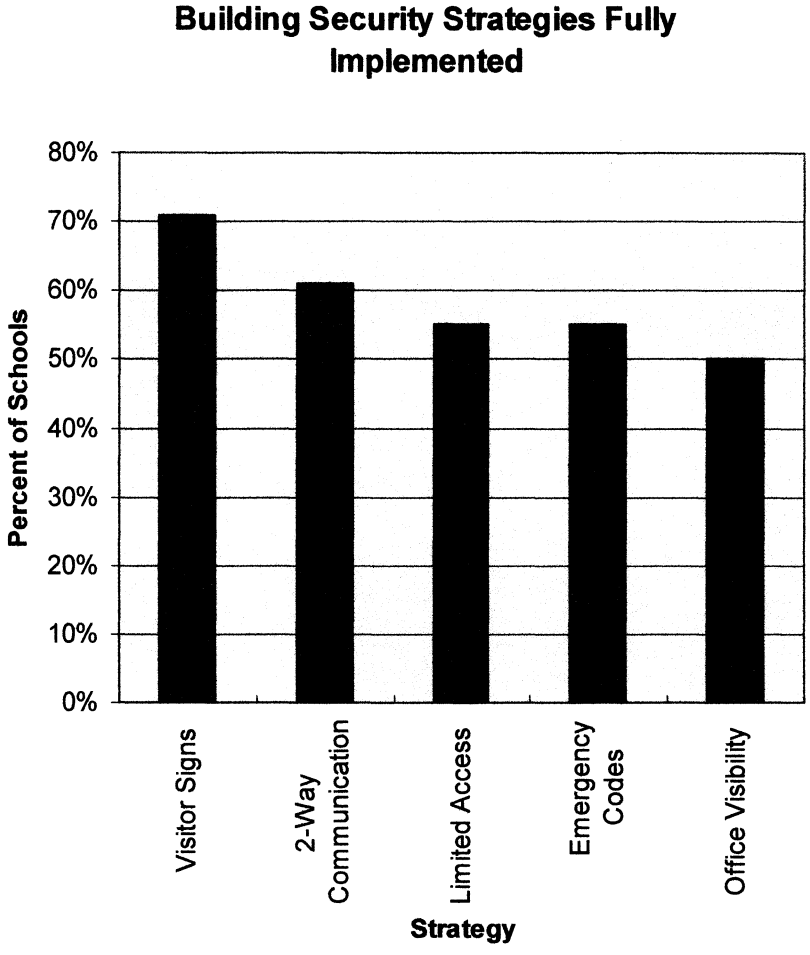
RESULTS

Of the 45 schools in Bond, Fayette and Effingham counties, individuals from 38 schools returned surveys, an 84% overall response rate. Data were analyzed using SPSS, version 10. To determine the current trends in school safety planning for Bond, Fayette and Effingham counties, frequency tables were calculated for survey responses to each of the 24 items in Section II (building security strategies), 16 items in Section III (school policies), and 18 items in Section IV (school programs). These tables show which safety measures were described as "fully implemented", "partially implemented", "under consideration", "excluded from consideration", or "unknown" by the survey respondents (see Appendix C).

Building Security Strategies Data

The implementation plans for building security strategies were examined first. The following building security strategies were reported as being fully implemented by the majority of the responding schools (percent of the respondents that fully implemented the strategy is noted in parentheses): signs informing visitors to report to the office (71%); phone, 2-way radio, and/or 2-way intercom capabilities in each classroom (61%); restricted number of entry points to the building (55%); an alarm system or codes to announce emergencies (55%); and office near main entry with clear visibility of main access door (50%) (see Figure 1). The implementation of an alarm system or codes to announce emergencies was either under consideration, partially implemented or fully implemented by 100% of the responding schools.

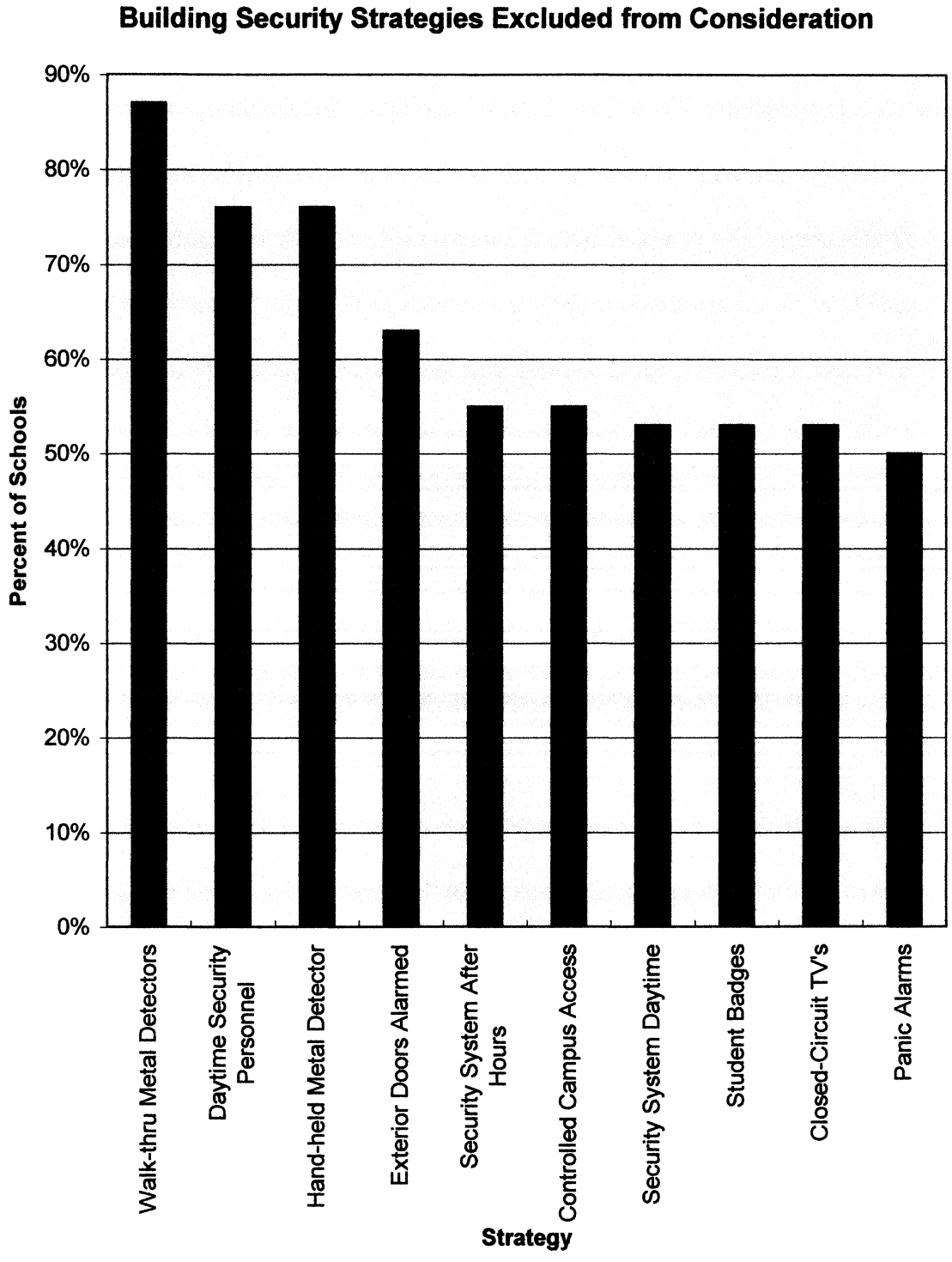
Figure 1



In addition, several building security strategies were reported as being excluded from consideration by the majority of the schools participating in the survey (percent of the schools which excluded each strategy from consideration is noted in parentheses): walk-through metal detectors (87%); use of security personnel during school hours (76%); hand-held metal detectors (76%); exterior doors alarmed and designated for emergency use only (63%); security card system for building access after school hours (55%); use of fencing and gates to control campus access (55%); security card system for building access during school hours (53%); badge system for identifying students (53%); closed-

circuit televisions (53%); and panic alarms (50%) (see Figure 2). One building security measure, walk-through metal detectors, had not been implemented or considered for implementation by any of the responding schools.

Figure 2

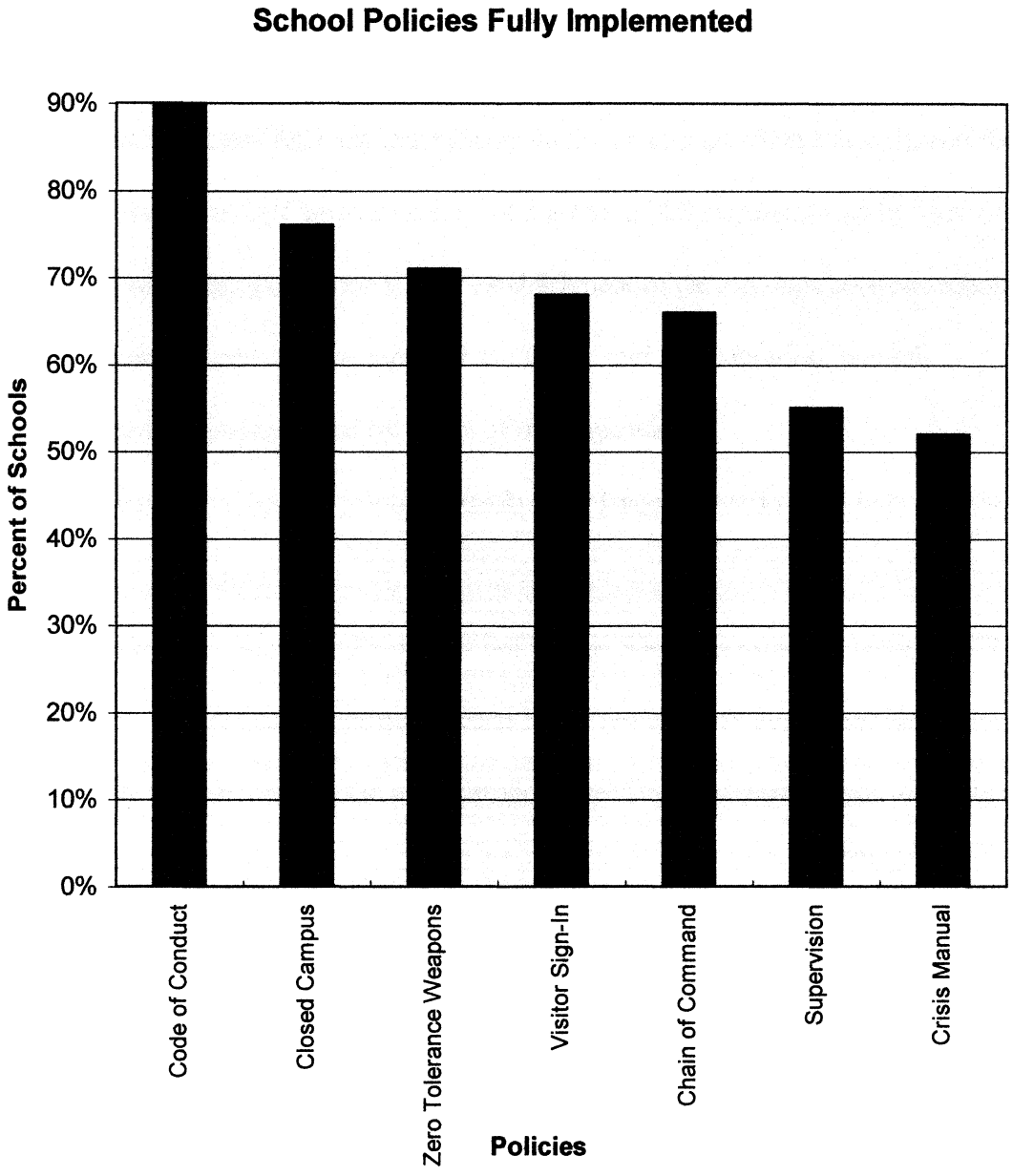

Building Security Strategies Excluded from Consideration
Percent of Schools
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Walk-thru Metal Detectors
Daytime Security Personnel
Hand-held Metal Detector
Exterior Doors Alarmed
Security System After Hours
Controlled Campus Access
Security System Daytime
Student Badges
Closed-Circuit TV's
Panic Alarms
Strategy

School Policies Data

Next, the implementation plans for school policies relating to school safety were examined. Those policies fully implemented by more than half of the responding schools included the following (percent of respondents with the policy fully implemented is shown in parentheses): code of conduct clearly defined and enforced for all students (90%); closed campus (76%); zero tolerance for weapons (71%); visitor sign-in system (68%); defined chain of command for handling emergencies (66%); routine supervision of halls, lavatories, and grounds (55%); crisis manual stating procedures to be used in case of a crisis (52%) (see Figure 3). All of the respondents reported that a defined chain of command for handling emergencies was either under consideration, partially implemented, or fully implemented.

The only policy that was reported as excluded from consideration by at least half of the responding schools was a dress code or uniform policy (excluded from consideration by exactly 50% of the responding schools). Book bag/back pack/carry-in limitations and personal belongings/locker/desk inspections were each reported as being excluded from consideration by almost half of the responding schools. Both of these policies were reported as being excluded from consideration by 47% of the responding schools.

Figure 3



School Programs Data

Next, the implementation plans for violence prevention and intervention programs were examined for frequency. For survey items listed under the program section, more than half of the schools reported each program item as either under consideration, partially

implemented or fully implemented. None of the programs listed was reported as excluded from consideration by the majority of the responding schools. The programs most often reported as fully implemented were the establishment of partnerships between school and law enforcement agencies (fully implemented by 55% of the responding schools), and the establishment of partnerships between school and lawyers (fully implemented by 50% of the responding schools). Furthermore, the establishment of partnerships between schools and law enforcement agencies was reported as either under consideration, partially implemented, or fully implemented by 100% of the respondents.

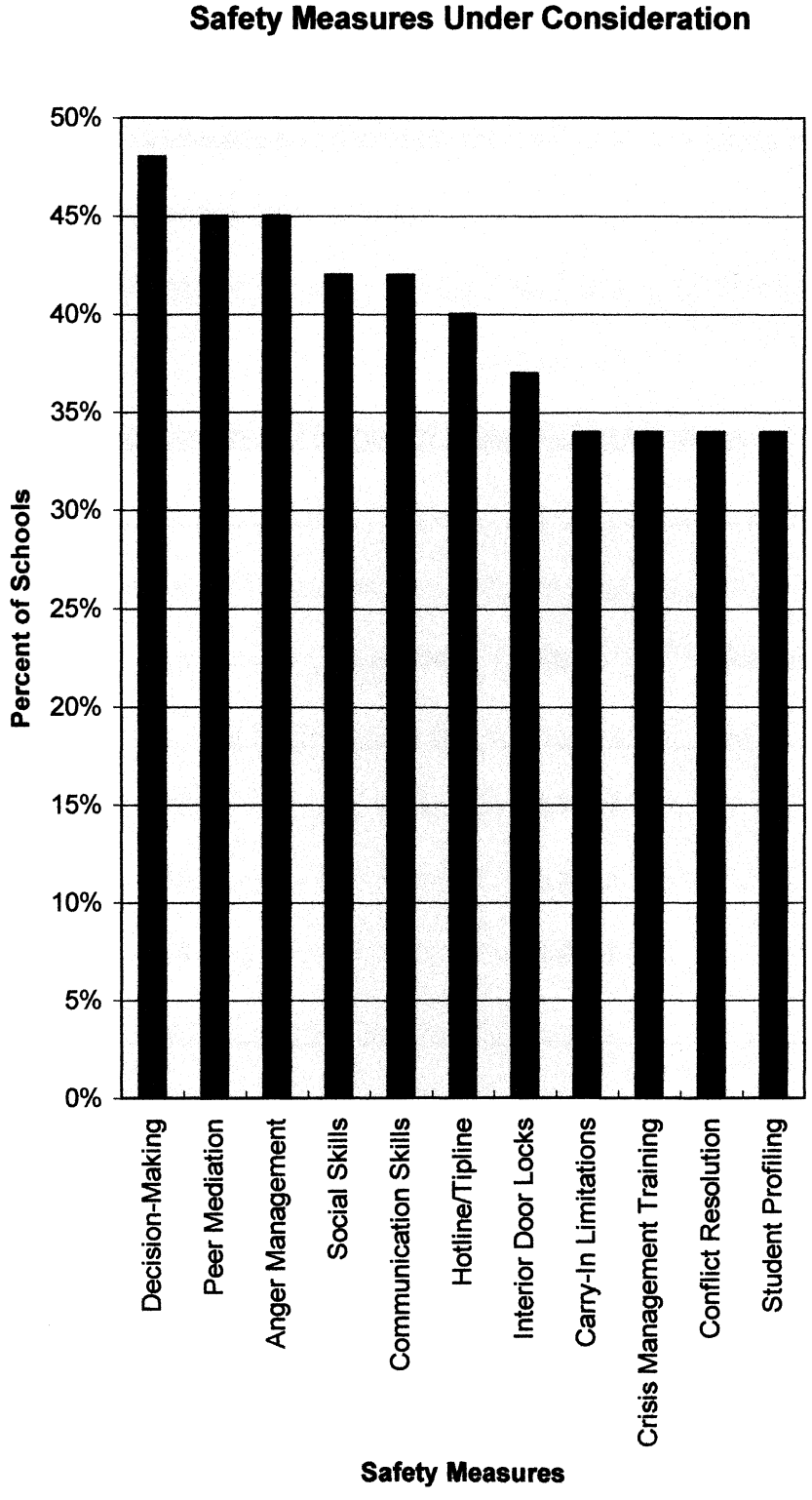
Schools reported less frequently to exclude violence prevention and intervention programs from consideration. In fact, the program reported most often as excluded from consideration (the establishment of a district hot line/tip line) was excluded by only 37% of the respondents. The program reported second most frequently as being excluded from consideration by the schools was the use of student profiling to identify at-risk students. This program was reported as being excluded from consideration by only 26% of the respondents.

Safety Measures Under Consideration

Also of interest were the safety measures reported as currently under consideration for implementation but not yet fully or partially implemented. Safety measures across all three categories (building security, school policies and violence prevention/intervention programs), that were reported as under consideration were examined for frequency. Those measures that were reported as under consideration by at least one-third of the responding schools included the following (percentage of respondents considering implementation is shown in parentheses): decision-making skills training program for

students (48%); peer mediation program (45%); anger management training for students (45%); social skills training for students (42%); communication skills training for students (42%); local school hot line/tip line (40%); interior door locking capabilities (37%); book bag/carry-in limitation (34%); staff members trained in crisis management (34%); conflict resolution program for students (34%); and use of student profiling to identify at-risk students (34%) (see Figure 4).

Figure 4


Safety Measures Under Consideration
50%
45%
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
Percent of Schools
Decision-Making
Peer Mediation
Anger Management
Social Skills
Communication Skills
Hotline/Tipline
Interior Door Locks
Carry-In Limitations
Crisis Management Training
Conflict Resolution
Student Profiling
Safety Measures

Safety Planning Emphasis

To determine which category (building security, school policies or violence prevention/intervention programs) was emphasized most in promoting school safety, the author obtained the mean value for each of the three sub-scales: building security, school policies, and school programs (see Table 1).

Table 1

Mean Values for Implementation Planning of School Safety Measures

Sub-scale	n	# of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
Building Security	38	24	3.1009	0.7702
School Policies	38	16	3.8783	0.7318
School Programs	38	18	3.4971	0.4786

School policy safety measures were shown to be given the greatest emphasis by the respondents, followed by school program safety measures, then building security strategies.

Safety Grants and Program Implementation

To examine various relationships between demographic information and school safety planning implementation, several correlation coefficients were obtained. First, to

determine whether schools which had received safety grants reported a higher percentage of partially or fully implemented school programs to promote school safety than those which had not received such grants, a Spearman's correlation between the program sub-scale and item 14 (the use of safety grants) was obtained. The correlation coefficient ($r = -.236$) was not significant. Schools which had received safety grants were neither more nor less likely to implement intervention programs than those which had not.

School and Community Group Involvement in Safety Planning

Next, to determine whether schools which involved a greater number of school and community groups in their school safety planning had a broader array of safety measures partially or fully implemented than schools with no involvement, a Spearman's Correlation between item 13 (number of school and community groups which were involved in school safety planning) and the combined sub-scales of building security, school policies, and school programs was obtained. Again, the correlation coefficient ($r = .267$) was not significant. Schools involving more school and community groups in their safety planning were not found to have a broader array of safety measures partially or fully implemented than those which involved fewer groups.

Violent Incidents and Safety Planning

Finally, to determine whether schools which had experienced more types of violence incidents had a broader array of safety measures partially or fully implemented than those schools which had fewer types of violence incidents, a Spearman's correlation between item 9 (number of violent incidents occurring in the school) and the combined sub-scales of building security, school policies, and school programs was obtained. This correlation coefficient ($r = .150$) was not significant. The number of types of violent

incidents was not found to be related to having a broader array of safety measures partially or fully implemented.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

As indicated by the percentage of schools responding to the survey, school safety planning continues to be a topic of great concern among schools. Preventing violence in schools continues to be an issue worthy of research. To date, schools have considered or implemented a broad array of safety measures to help insure the safety of their staff and students.

Safety Planning Emphasis

It was predicted that responding schools would report that they had more policies and building security strategies partially or fully implemented than violence prevention and intervention programs. Further, it was expected that schools were just starting to consider the implementation of violence prevention/intervention programs. The results pertaining to the emphasis given to school policies related to school safety were as predicted: survey respondents indicated that school policies were given the greatest emphasis in safety planning in their schools. According to Sawyer (1985), policies are the easiest and the least expensive safety strategy for schools to implement. Furthermore, according to the National School Safety Center (1985), many schools are influenced by the legal system to adopt safety policies. Schools have a choice to adopt and enforce policies that help insure the safety of its staff and students or to suffer the legal and educational consequences when lack of policy implementation results in violence towards staff or students. It was interesting to note that the policies most often excluded from consideration by the responding schools were those that limited the personal freedoms of the students such as dress code/uniform policy, carry-in limitations and inspection of personal effects.

Contrary to expectations, building security strategies were given less emphasis than violence prevention and intervention programs in the safety planning of the responding schools. Research reported by the Departments of Education and Justice (1998) indicated that until recently, many schools have relied heavily on reactive strategies in dealing with school violence. Such strategies often include the use of building security measures to promote the safety of students and staff.

One possible explanation for the lower mean value of the building security sub-scale relative to the mean value of the program sub-scale is the fact that there were 24 items pertaining to building security, and only 16 items pertaining to violence prevention/intervention programs. The majority of programs which had not been partially or fully implemented by the responding schools were reported as still under consideration. On the other hand, the majority of the building security strategies which had not been partially or fully implemented, were reported as excluded from consideration. These results accounted for a lower mean value for the building security sub-scale than for programs sub-scale.

Even though more than half of the building security strategies listed on the survey were reported as under consideration, partially implemented, or fully implemented by the majority of the responding schools, a little less than half were reported as excluded from consideration by the majority of the responding schools. It is important to note that while schools are implementing building security strategies in their attempts to reduce violence, they are also being selective in the building security strategies they choose to implement. Top building security strategies employed by the responding schools were found to be those strategies less intrusive to the staff and students: codes for emergencies, availability

of two-way communication between office and classrooms, limited access to campus. The building security strategies most often excluded from consideration by the responding schools were those strategies that often give the impression of mistrust towards staff and students: use of metal detectors, use of surveillance equipment, use of security personnel.

The mean value obtained for the violence prevention/intervention programs sub-scale was not surprising. Information published by the Departments of Education and Justice (1998) indicated that many schools were just considering the implementation of programs for violence prevention and intervention. Due to time limitations, the recent nature of school violence has limited researchers' ability to determine which violence prevention/intervention strategies are most effective. It seems likely that as the result of lack of research on effective violence prevention programs, schools are not ready to exclude any of the available violence prevention and intervention programs from consideration at this time. Also not surprising, of the eighteen items included under the program sub-scale, ten of those items had a higher number of survey participants responding as "under consideration" than any other response category.

Perhaps a research design that used a different method for determining the emphasis given to safety planning would produce different results than obtained in this study. This research design obtained a mean value of the survey responses for each of the sub-scales to determine the emphasis given in safety planning among the responding schools. Responses were obtained using a Likert scale which included ratings for "unknown", "excluded from consideration", "under consideration", "partially implemented", and "fully implemented". The results might be quite different using only two ratings: "in the plans" and "excluded from the plans".

Safety Grants and Program Implementation

It was predicted that the use of safety grants would be related to the implementation of safe school programs. According to the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority (2000), the application for a school safety grant is highly competitive and must be based on sound research principles. Therefore, schools applying for the grant have undoubtedly examined a number of programs for violence prevention and are certainly considering their implementation. On the other hand, schools which have not applied for safety grants may well be considering the implementation of a broad array of violence prevention and intervention programs as well. The results of this study do not rule out this possibility.

As school shootings continue to make headlines, school officials are reminded almost daily through the media that schools are in need of violence prevention and intervention programs. Whether schools choose to apply for safety grants or not, they are bombarded with charges that violence in schools must be stopped. According to Grant et.al. (1998), one way to stop the violence is to get to the root of the issues pertaining to violence. Getting to the root of violence issues means schools must consider the implementation of programs to prevent violence from occurring in their schools. Applying for security grants is not a prerequisite for implementing meaningful educational programs that prevent violence.

Another factor which may have an effect on the number of schools that have implemented safe school programs, but have not made use of security grants, is the vast amount of time that must be invested to properly apply for such grants. Given the large amount of responsibility and the lack of time that school personnel have to devote to

activities outside teaching, schools may very well wish to invest their time and energies toward the actual implementation of safety programs rather than toward the application process for a safety grant.

School and Community Group Involvement in Safety Planning

It was predicted that schools involving a greater number of school and community groups in their safety planning would report having a broader array of safety measures in place than schools involving fewer such groups . According to various researchers (Stephens, 1998; Illinois State Board of Education, 1999; Departments of Education and Justice, 1998), a key to the success of implementing a comprehensive safe-school plan is to involve the entire community. In the analysis of the data for item number 13 (number of groups involved in school safety planning), a distinction was not made between which groups were school groups and which groups were community groups. In addition, a distinction was not made between which groups had formal involvement and which groups had informal involvement. One school may have involved four groups in their safety planning in which all groups were school groups (i.e. administrators, certified staff, non-certified staff and students). Another school may have involved four groups which were all community groups (i.e. parents, community members, emergency personnel, lawyers). The group involvement may have been formal or informal. Perhaps a different result would occur if, in the research design, the number of community groups had been examined separately from the number of school groups, and a distinction was made between formal and informal involvement of the group in school safety planning. This researcher suspects that if the research question were restated as "Do those schools which have involved a greater number of formal community groups in their safety planning have

a broader array of safety measures partially or fully implemented than those schools which have included fewer formal community groups, or none at all", the results may be significant. In fact, the results of the analysis for hypothesis #3 approached significance at a .067 level of confidence, when there was no distinction made between school and community groups, formally or informally involved in school safety planning .

Violent Incidents and Safety Planning

The final analysis, which examined whether the number of violent incidents reported by a school would predict a broader array of partially or fully implemented safety measures, also proved to be insignificant. These findings can actually be encouraging. The results could indicate that schools are planning for violence prevention even though they may not be currently experiencing violent incidents. According to the Departments of Education and Justice (1998), the history of efforts to reduce the prevalence of violence in schools has largely been one of dealing with problems after they have arisen. Results of this research may indicate that schools are taking a more proactive, preventive approach to the problem of school violence.

Further research may be helpful in answering the question as to whether the implementation of a broad array of safety measures might actually reduce the number of violent incidents in America's schools. Further research is also needed to determine which strategies have the most impact on reducing violent incidents. For ethical reasons, experimental research cannot be done to determine which strategies have the most impact on reducing violence, but as more strategies in the three areas of this study are developed and implemented, ex post facto studies can be completed to research this question.

Limitations

Some limitations of this study are worth noting. This survey made use of a very small sample. Input from more schools would provide a clearer picture. Another limiting factor was the possible misunderstanding of some of the questions asked of the respondents. Perhaps the information would be more accurate and uniform using an interview format, where respondents would have the opportunity of seeking clarification on some of the questions. The results might prove to be different if "unknown" responses were re-categorized into one of the other four responses ("excluded from consideration", "under consideration", "partially implemented", "fully implemented"). Finally, a shorter survey may have received more accurate responses. Perhaps too much information was being sought in one survey.

Conclusions

Collectively, the results of the survey show much of the picture of what is happening in rural East Central Illinois schools with regard to school safety planning. It is evident that the responding schools are working on the implementation of a comprehensive safety plan for their staff and students. The respondents have indicated that many safe school policies are already in place in Bond, Fayette and Effingham County schools. They have also indicated that the majority of building security strategies have either been put in place or have been excluded from consideration. Finally, responding schools have indicated that violence prevention and intervention programs are either under consideration, or have been partially or fully implemented. For the majority of the responding schools, few violence prevention and intervention programs have been excluded from consideration at this time. There appears to be no significant relationship

between the number of programs implemented and the use of safety grants, or the array of safety measures implemented and the number of school and community groups involved in safety planning, or the safety measures implemented and the number of types of violent incidents that have occurred. What is clear is that the schools of Bond, Fayette and Effingham Counties are very much involved in planning for the safety of their students and staff.

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ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

January 30, 2001

Department of Counseling
and Student Development
Charleston, IL 61920-3099
217-581-2400

Name, Principal
School Name
School Address
Town, State Zip

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

We are conducting a brief survey that seeks to assess readiness concerning strategies, policies, and programs implemented to improve school safety in Bond, Fayette, and Effingham County schools. We would like to enlist your assistance in this project by asking you to take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey. If another person in your building is better suited to respond to the survey, please pass it on to that individual. Your input will provide valuable information on how comprehensive safety planning is taking shape within our schools. We also hope that by filling out the survey, you will gain an appreciation for your school's readiness and learn more about this topic.

Please be assured that the information you provide will be held in strict confidence. **No individual, school, or district will be specifically identified in any findings concerning this study**. If you have any questions about the survey, please feel free to contact Teri Wortman via e-mail at *wortman_teri@ttown.efingham.k12.il.us*, or by phone at (217) 347-0843.

We hope that you will elect to assist us by returning a completed survey, as we believe this study will be helpful in assessing school readiness, and more importantly, assisting schools with the ongoing task of providing safe schools for our children. In addition, all participants will be given the opportunity to receive the results of the survey.

Please complete and return the enclosed survey by February 14, 2001, in the return-postage-paid envelope provided. Your response is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Teri Wortman
Education Specialist Candidate
Dept. of Counseling & Student Dev.
Eastern Illinois University

Richard Roberts, Ph. D.
Committee Chairman
Dept. of Counseling & Student Dev.
Eastern Illinois University

School Safety Planning: A Survey for Bond, Fayette, and Effingham County Schools

This survey is designed to assess the readiness concerning strategies, policies, and programs implemented to improve school safety in Bond, Fayette, and Effingham County schools. The survey should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. Research reports will combine your responses with those of all others participating in the survey. **No individual, school, or district will be specifically identified in any findings concerning this study**. If you would like a summary of the survey results, please fill out the enclosed postcard. You may return the postcard with this survey or mail it separately.

Section I: Demographic Information

Circle or fill in the appropriate response for each question according to your school's current demographic information.

1. Capacity in which you work the majority of time at the school
   a. Administration
   b. Counseling
   c. Teaching
   d. Other _____

2. Number of full-time administrators (principals, assistant principals, dean of students, etc.) assigned to the school
   a. None
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3 or more

3. Number of part-time administrators (principals, assistant principals, dean of students, etc.) assigned to the school
   a. None
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3 or more

4. Number of full-time counselors/social workers assigned to the school
   a. None
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3 or more

5. Number of part-time counselors/social workers assigned to the school
   a. None
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3 or more

6. Number of full-time teachers assigned to the school
   a. Less than 10
   b. 10 – 19
   c. 20 – 29
   d. 30 – 39
   e. 40 or more

7. Number of part-time teachers assigned to the school
   a. Less than 5
   b. 5 – 9
   c. 10 – 14
   d. 15 or more

8. Circle all grade levels that the school houses
   a. Pre-school
   b. Kindergarten
   c. Primary grades
   d. Intermediate grades
   e. Junior high
   f. High school

9. Circle all incidents which have incurred within your school during the last five years.
   a. Bomb threat/incident
   b. Weapons violation
   c. Assault
   d. Fighting
   e. Sex offense
   f. Theft
   g. Vandalism
   h. Drug offense
   i. Intruder within the building

10. Indicate the estimated number of expulsions from your school during the last five years.
    a. None
    b. 1 or 2
    c. 3 or more

11. Which best describes your school safety planning situation?
    a. The district has a unit-wide school safety plan for all schools in the district.
    b. Each school in the district is responsible for its own school safety planning.
    c. The district and the school share responsibility for the school safety planning.
    d. Other _____

12. Does your school district have a person designated as security coordinator for all schools in the district?
    a. Yes
    b. No

13. Circle all groups who have involvement in your school safety planning
    a. School administration (superintendents, principals, etc.)
    b. Certified staff (teachers, counselors, etc.)
    c. Non-certified staff (secretaries, custodians, cooks, bus drivers, etc.)
    d. Emergency personnel (police officers, EMT, firefighters, etc.)
    e. Parents/guardians
    f. Community members
    g. School lawyer
    h. Students
    i. Others _____

14. Has your school district made use of safety grants to finance any school safety projects?
    a. Yes
    b. No

Section II: Building Security Strategies

Use the key below to indicate the number on the scale that best reflects your school's safety planning implementation situation *(please circle one choice for each question)*.

Key: 1 = Unknown
2 = Excluded from Consideration
3 = Under Consideration
4 = Partially Implemented
5 = Fully Implemented

15.	Use of territorial barriers (fencing, gates, etc.) to control campus access	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Signs on all building entry points informing visitors to report to the office	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Office located near the main entrance, with clear visibility of main access door	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Use of security card system for building access during school hours	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Use of security card system for building access after school hours	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Restricted number of entry points to the building	1	2	3	4	5

21.	Exterior doors that are alarmed and designated for emergency use only	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Personnel monitoring entry points during school hours	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Walk-through metal detectors at entry points	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Routine use of hand-held metal detectors	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Badge system for identification of students	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Badge system for identification of teachers and substitutes	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Badge system for identification of visitors	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Use of surveillance cameras on campus	1	2	3	4	5
29.	Use of closed-circuit televisions	1	2	3	4	5
30.	Strategic placement of panic alarms and/or call boxes throughout the campus	1	2	3	4	5
31.	Strategic placement of first-aid kits throughout the school	1	2	3	4	5
32.	Strategic placement of emergency kits throughout the school	1	2	3	4	5
33.	Phone, 2-way radio, and/or 2-way intercom capabilities in each classroom	1	2	3	4	5
34.	Interior door locking capabilities	1	2	3	4	5
35.	Possession of cell phones by staff and/or administrators for emergency communications	1	2	3	4	5
36.	Use of alarm system or appropriate codes to announce emergencies	1	2	3	4	5
37.	Police officer/security personnel on duty during school hours	1	2	3	4	5
38.	Routine security patrol of campus after hours	1	2	3	4	5

Section III: School Policies

Use the key below to indicate the number on the scale that best reflects your school's safety planning implementation situation *(please circle one choice for each question)*.

Key: 1 = Unknown
2 = Excluded from Consideration
3 = Under Consideration
4 = Partially Implemented
5 = Fully Implemented

39.	Parking space assignments for students	1	2	3	4	5
40.	Visitor sign-in system	1	2	3	4	5
41.	Closed campus policy	1	2	3	4	5
42.	School safety an expressed part of the school's mission statement	1	2	3	4	5
43.	Code of conduct clearly defined and enforced for all students	1	2	3	4	5
44.	Dress code or uniform policy	1	2	3	4	5
45.	Book bag/back pack/carry-in limitations	1	2	3	4	5
46.	Zero tolerance for weapons policy	1	2	3	4	5
47.	Routine K-9 searches	1	2	3	4	5
48.	Use of corridor pass system for students	1	2	3	4	5
49.	Personnel routinely inspect personal effects, bags, lockers and/or desks	1	2	3	4	5
50.	Organized plan for routine supervision of halls, lavatories, and grounds	1	2	3	4	5
51.	Known and practiced staff procedures for handling unauthorized visitors	1	2	3	4	5
52.	Known and practiced staff procedures for handling problem students	1	2	3	4	5
53.	Crisis manual stating procedures to be followed in case of crisis	1	2	3	4	5
54.	Defined chain of command for handling emergencies	1	2	3	4	5
55.	Media or press relations policy for use during emergencies	1	2	3	4	5

Section IV: School Programs

Use the key below to indicate the number on the scale that best reflects your school's safety planning implementation situation *(please circle one choice for each question)*.

Key: **1 = Unknown**
2 = Excluded from Consideration
3 = Under Consideration
4 = Partially Implemented
5 = Fully Implemented

56.	Ongoing planning committee for establishing and reviewing safety issues and procedures	1	2	3	4	5
57.	Partnership between school and law enforcement agencies	1	2	3	4	5
58.	Partnership between school and lawyer(s)	1	2	3	4	5
59.	Emergency training for staff	1	2	3	4	5
60.	First-aid training for staff	1	2	3	4	5
61.	Staff training for recognizing early warning signs of crisis	1	2	3	4	5
62.	Local crisis response team to function in case of crisis	1	2	3	4	5
63.	Current staff member(s) part of wider area trained, crisis-management team	1	2	3	4	5
64.	Peer mediation training program for students	1	2	3	4	5
65.	Conflict resolution training program for students	1	2	3	4	5
66.	Social skills training program for students	1	2	3	4	5
67.	Communication skills training program for students	1	2	3	4	5
68.	Decision-making skills training program for students	1	2	3	4	5
69.	Anger management training program for students	1	2	3	4	5
70.	Local school or district hotline/tip line established	1	2	3	4	5
71.	Education and encouragement of student use of state, local, or other emergency hotline/tip line	1	2	3	4	5

72. Use of student profiling to identify at-risk students 1 2 3 4 5

73. Use of alternative education for high-risk students 1 2 3 4 5

Section V: Additional Comments

We invite you to add any additional comments in the space provided below.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Appendix C

Building Security Strategies
Survey Response Frequencies

	Plans Unknown	Excluded From Plans	Under Consideration	Partially Implemented	Fully Implemented
#15 territorial barriers	4	21	2	7	4
#16 visitor signs	0	3	4	4	27
#17 office visibility	0	8	2	9	19
#18 security card (day)	4	20	10	1	3
#19 security card (night)	3	21	9	1	4
#20 restricted # of entries	2	3	6	6	21
#21 exterior doors alarmed	3	24	4	4	3
#22 personnel at entries	1	15	4	10	8
#23 walk-thru metal detect.	5	33	0	0	0
#24 hand-held metal detect.	5	29	2	2	0
#25 student badge system	2	20	7	2	7
#26 teacher badge system	2	17	9	2	8
#27 visitor badge system	1	12	11	5	9
#28 surveillance cameras	4	18	12	2	2
#29 closed-circuit T. V.'s	2	20	10	2	4
#30 panic alarms	4	19	6	2	7
#31 first-aid kits	0	4	8	16	10
#32 emergency kits	1	6	11	13	7
#33 2-way communication	1	6	6	2	23
#34 interior door locks	2	11	14	4	7
#35 cell phones	0	4	8	10	16
#36 emergency code/alarm	0	0	6	11	21
#37 day security personnel	3	29	4	1	1
#38 night security patrol	3	15	8	8	4

Appendix C

School Policies
Survey Response Frequencies

	Plans Unknown	Excluded from Plans	Under Consideration	Partially Implemented	Fully Implemented
#40 visitor sign-in	0	5	5	2	26
#41 closed campus	0	2	5	2	29
#42 mission statement	1	5	11	10	11
#43 code of conduct	0	0	1	3	34
#44 dress code	0	19	2	5	12
#45 carry-in limitations	2	18	13	3	2
#46 zero tolerance weapons	1	1	6	3	27
#47 canine searches	6	16	6	6	4
#48 corridor pass system	2	15	4	2	15
#49 inspect personal effects	3	18	6	6	5
#50 school supervision	0	2	7	8	21
#51 unauthorized visitor	0	0	6	19	13
#52 problem student	0	1	1	19	17
#53 crisis manual	1	0	8	9	20
#54 chain of command	0	0	4	9	25
#55 media policy	1	2	8	10	17

Appendix C

School Programs Survey
Response Frequencies

	Plans Unknown	Excluded From Plans	Under Consideration	Partially Implemented	Fully Implemented
#56 safety committee	1	4	7	12	14
#57 law enforcement partner	0	0	5	12	21
#58 lawyer partnership	3	3	2	11	19
#59 emergency training	0	1	7	21	9
#60 first aid training	0	1	6	21	10
#61 recognize crisis	1	1	6	24	6
#62 crisis response team	1	2	11	11	13
#63 crisis management team	4	5	13	7	9
#64 peer mediation	3	9	17	3	6
#65 conflict resolution	3	10	13	5	7
#66 social skills	2	4	16	8	8
#67 communication skills	2	9	16	8	3
#68 decision-making	2	7	17	7	5
#69 anger management	2	6	17	8	5
#70 local hotline	2	14	15	0	7
#71 use of state tipline	5	8	11	9	5
#72 student profiling	2	10	13	12	1
#73 alternative education	2	6	6	13	11