

2021 Utah School Safety Collaborative Priorities and Recommendations



The Background

The Utah School Safety Collaborative works to coordinate school safety efforts for students across the state. Their priorities and recommendations provide guidance to increase best-practices, training, resources, and policy improvements for all schools and partnering agencies.

Statement

The committee supports the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) Resolution No. 2021-01 for Denouncing Racism and Embracing Equity, and the 2020 Utah Compact on Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, in expanding inclusive and anti-racist actions.

Preventative Information Sharing

The committee agrees to support the procedure of “Handle with Care” as a best-practice communication from local law enforcement to school officials when there has been an interaction with a youth outside of school that may be deemed “traumatic”. The committee recommends that participating agencies increase the awareness and utilization of trauma-informed and protective factor training, including the USBE developed course.

Building Improvements

The committee supports the request for one-time monies for building construction, technology, and network improvements for safety in schools. The funds will be used to remodel existing facilities with physical safety enhancements and communication tools according to individual local education agency (LEA) plans.

The committee requests the USBE School Safety Center work with the Utah Schools Critical Incident Commission to provide LEAs with prioritization strategies and best-practices for safety-related building improvements.

Student Interventions

The committee directs the USBE School Safety Center to prioritize training, guidelines, and models to support the use of the multi-disciplinary teams in schools and increase the utilization of evidence-based threat assessment processes.

Wellness Education

The committee recommends USBE staff develop and implement strategies to support the wellness of all school staff (to address compassion fatigue, burnout, stress, etc.), with consideration to the overall integration of those strategies into daily educational activities.

Standard Response Protocol

The committee agrees that the USBE School Safety Center will increase resources and training concerning Standard Response protocols in the following areas: earthquake and mass casualty response, reunification, and considerations for individuals with diverse communication and mobility needs.

School-focused Mental Health Professionals

The committee requests the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Liaison, in coordination with the USBE School Safety Center, determine the projected graduation rates in mental health professions, and make a plan for recruitment and retention, with an emphasis on services for rural settings.

The committee requests the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Liaison, in coordination with the USBE School Safety Center, provide education/training on community involvement in school-focused mental health, and school-based mental health guidelines (through *Utah's School Behavioral Health Toolkit*), with an emphasis on services for rural settings.

School Resource Officers

The committee requests the USBE School Safety Center, in coordination with local law enforcement agencies, provide technical support and best-practices regarding a model memorandum of understanding (MOU) that includes: definitions of disciplinary actions and criminal acts; clear roles and responsibilities; and measurements for effectiveness.

The committee requests the Department of Public Safety Liaison, in coordination with the USBE School Safety Center, provide on-going training, support, and best-practices to ensure law enforcement coordination on emergency/crisis response and threat management for all Utah schools.