
SCHOOL SAFETY MANAGEMENT

PRACTICAL APPROACHES, CURRENT THEORIES, AND STANDARDS

Second Edition

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Civic Research Institute

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Foreword

At least four types of climate in a school contribute to its effectiveness: the physical climate, the social-emotional climate, the organizational climate, and the academic climate. For a school's academic climate to thrive, the other three climates must be addressed. Those three climates are the subject of *School Safety Management: Practical Approaches, Current Theories, and Standards*. Just as they say they will in their preface to this book, Richard Glover and Henry Murphy present a comprehensive model that school administrators and school security staff may use to keep schools safe and secure.

First, they introduce the "Definite Dozen," twelve essential components of the model, through definitions followed by realistic examples of tools (forms, strategies, model policies) that are available for use, past incidents, and legal decisions and court citations of appropriate and inappropriate actions. Indeed, a hands-on approach to school safety is presented. This collaborative problem-solving approach is presented as "doable": the steps are short and easy to follow, and educators, students, community stakeholders, and others can easily memorize them and complete the necessary mental checks when determining whether or not users (such as a school safety committee) of the approach are adhering to the steps.

Inherent to use of the collaborative problem-solving approach is a philosophy of "I can" or "We can." Glover and Murphy underscore the importance of individual responsibility (I can) and group accountability (We can) for a team-based approach to school safety to work. The four principles guiding the work of "I can" people are worth repeating here, because of their empowering nature:

- I: Develop an *intolerance* of school violence and disruption.
- C: Make a *commitment* to solving school safety and security problems.
- A: Take whatever *action* is necessary.
- N: Do it *now*. *Network* with other individuals and community groups.

Glover and Murphy advocate the involvement of parents and students as part of the solution to school safety challenges. Six types of involvement, three things necessary to motivate young people to become part of the solution, and benefits to students are defined, and examples of each of these are provided. Students of all ages can be solution people. Involved students, according to the authors, hold the potential for being the missing link in the school safety and security chain.

A victim support section is a valuable addition to this guide. Victims' needs must be addressed in any comprehensive school-planning document. Glover and Murphy cite research that underscores the need to plan for this aspect of

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violence. The risk of violent victimization is greater for a twelve-year-old than for anyone twenty-four years old or older. Juveniles who are victimized or repeatedly witness violence, and who do not receive immediate support in understanding it, are at high risk of using violence as a means of dealing with their own conflict. This fact is worth highlighting to ensure that school administrators understand the magnitude of the violence issue and why solutions cannot be limited to prevention programs. Some special concerns of victimization are discussed: the media; sexual harassment, fraternization, and sexual assaults; and bullying.

The book concludes with implementation and operational procedures for a variety of school safety issues throughout the school year. One of the most valuable sections of the book, the final chapter provides incident-prevention strategies, using the crime triangle model, that may be taught to students, teachers, parents, and others. The wise superintendent, school principal, and school police person will find appropriate food for thought and use here.

I encourage school leaders and school safety officials to add this book to their well-used desk reference volumes. I am confident that this book will prove to be just as useful.

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August 2002

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Preface to the Second Edition

The first edition of this book (entitled *The Essential School Safety Guide for Superintendents, Principals, and School Safety Professionals*) was our initial effort to add a new voice to the discussions about school safety and security. At the time of the book's release in 1998 (and even today), the field of school safety was emerging from the worlds of school administration, law enforcement, and security management. *The Essential School Safety Guide* reflected our attempt to enrich developing approaches by emphasizing the importance of applying a management perspective to the challenges of crime and quality of life that then were beginning to face schools.

We received enough positive feedback on the first edition to know that we had struck the right chord in our approach to school safety. However, our attempt to present a simple, experience-based approach that was both comprehensive and effective still presented too much of a challenge to those who were trying to implement many of the suggested measures we had recommended. So, guided even more by feedback from our readers, research that has emerged from the various fields previously mentioned, and lessons learned from and contemplation of recent events related to school safety, we have revised this guide to truly serve as a roadmap to creating, maintaining, and evaluating an effective school safety program within a school or a district.

In this second edition, now entitled *School Safety Management: Practical Approaches, Current Theories, and Standards*, as Part I, we introduce two new concepts that we feel have the potential to establish a deliberate, more uniform approach to handling security and safety issues. These concepts were first presented in full in a satellite broadcast entitled "School Safety and Security: Professional Development for School Administrators, Security Personnel, and Law Enforcement" that was produced by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice (Glover & Murphy, 2001). The Definite Dozen and the Generally Accepted Minimum School Safety Standards (GAMSSS) are presented as attempts to create a meeting of the minds around the subject of school safety. We present the concepts in this volume in hopes that they will be perceived and received as a starting point from which to blaze a path that can be clearly followed by all those involved in trying to make our schools safer for our children and the communities that support them.

In Part II we present the topics originally covered in the first edition, each carefully reviewed and, where appropriate, expanded and merged to complement the Definite Dozen and in that order. The additions are designed to facilitate a full understanding of both the subject and its application in a school setting. For example, coverage of information sharing has been expanded to include general strategies, along with references to guide decisions about what

information to share, what information to keep confidential, and what information may or may not be available to you. In Part III we provide step-by-step guidelines for year-round safety procedures. The four appendices provide an example of a model student handbook and other tips and topics of interest. Included throughout the volume are sample policies and checklists that may be used as is or adapted to a particular district's or school's situation.

To further add to the usefulness of *School Safety Management*, we have presented each topic in a perspective that will allow readers to conceptualize—easily and immediately—how to integrate the information into their district's or school's routine and special operations. An example of this change is illustrated in Chapter 1, in which we shift the presentation of essential elements of a school's safety program from being options to consider to being twelve components of safety—the Definite Dozen—that definitely belong in every school. In Chapter 2, we introduce the concept of GAMSSS, or Generally Accepted Minimum School Safety Standards, as a set of minimum standards designed to guide the implementation of the Definite Dozen and to further support them with a set of performance indicators to allow for ease in evaluating an individual safety program or set of programs. In this chapter we provide the details of GAMSSS, giving examples and demonstrating how, when merged with the Definite Dozen, the two concepts allow any school to build a strong foundation for an effective safety and security program. Performance indicators are presented in this section to identify observable characteristics of the essential components when they are properly established and maintained.

Chapter 3 provides guidance on key management tools, including policies and procedures, rules and regulations, and the school safety information management system. Often taken for granted, these areas affect all aspects of a school safety operation.

Chapter 4 covers school safety planning in a way that recognizes the mandates currently being presented to an increasing number of school systems. The planning strategies presented here provide further context and guidance for security-related decision making. This section also addresses the plans that emerged from the many tragedies our nation's schools have experienced over recent years. The chapter offers a proactive, comprehensive approach to safety planning that addresses both routine and emergency situations. In addition, the chapter discusses the use of limited resources in meeting school safety needs. The Response Continuum, introduced in the first edition, is further refined to better serve those responsible for a district's or school's security. The curricular approaches to school safety covered in Chapter 4 summarize our take on the common or proven programs that can be made an integral part of security management if they are properly coordinated with other aspects of a school's operation. Too often, effective programs are operated in a vacuum, thus neutralizing or minimizing program effects.

The most recent innovations in school management center around the concepts of inclusion and participation. Approaches such as shared decision making,

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school-based management, and school collaborations reflect the premise that the community at large offers resources that can be vital to school success. These concepts are no less valid when applied to school safety and security efforts and are covered in the section on collaborative problem solving in Chapter 5. In many school districts, security is provided by a sworn police officer. In other districts, sworn peace officers (not having full police powers) provide security services. In still other districts, security is provided primarily by guards or civilians. In all such cases, police play a vital role that must be clearly defined. An effective and efficient working relationship must be developed between police and the principal or his/her designee. This particular relationship can be especially challenging because of jurisdictional concerns. Police officers are sworn to uphold the law regardless of the circumstances. Principals are sworn to provide for the safety and security of the students. Acting in loco parentis, the principal is sometimes caught in an ambiguous situation of having to balance the best interests of an individual child with the best interests of the law. Chapter 5 offers some direction in managing strategically vital police–school relationships.

Chapter 6 covers policies and procedures for weapons prevention programs.

Chapter 7 provides procedures for assessment and implementation of emergency response measures, including fire and bomb threats.

Chapter 8 provides a powerful overview of the extent of victimization in schools, along with a series of strategies to address these issues. The focus is on helping the victims recover.

Chapter 9 suggests strategies for addressing gang problems in schools.

Chapter 10 covers controlling the building and preventing entry by intruders, including travel route and perimeter mapping and visitor screening procedures.

Chapter 11 identifies commonly used technology and its appropriate application to guide the school community in decision making around the amount of resources to devote to technology. New technologies provide invaluable assistance to those responsible for maintaining school safety.

Chapter 12 discusses the use of incident reports as a management tool and outlines some tools for developing effective relationships with the media.

Chapter 13 provides information on legal issues: legality of searches, use of force, and torts and negligence. This chapter covers legal consideration from the lay person's perspective, emphasizing how school administrators can respond to changes in the laws affecting schools without having to themselves become lawyers or paralegals.

Chapters 14 and 15 detail the range of specific procedures for a school year and for various specific incidents, providing guidance on the implementation and operation of school safety procedures. After September 11, 2001, we are all more security conscious. Appendix A suggests possible school responses to heightened security concerns.

Student handbooks (Appendix B) are not usually approached as mecha-

nisms through which to enhance the safety and security of the school environment; however, when properly used, student handbooks can be invaluable tools in an effort to inform and include both students and parents in your efforts.

Often overlooked and underutilized are the observation skills of all members of the school community. A safe and secure environment is one in which illegal, unusual, inappropriate, and unwanted behavior and conditions are noticed, reported, and addressed. Enhancing the ability of students, teachers, other staff, and administrators to observe what is happening in the school can effectively help improve the school climate and maintain a sufficient level of safety and security. These skills are discussed in Appendix C.

Appendix D provides some information on student self agendas.

We hope that with the tools presented in this book, you will find the second edition even more useful than the first. Moreover, we hope that *School Safety Management* proves to be the tool that gives you the guidance and confidence you need to tackle the tough, but manageable, challenges presented in your attempts to establish and maintain a safe and secure teaching, learning, and socializing environment.

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August 2002