

NOTES

October 5, 2021
1:30 – 3:30 PM
Virtual meeting



COLORADO
School Safety Resource Center
Department of Public Safety

Meeting Attendees:

Advisory Board Members:

Present on Google Meets:

Kelly Abbott
Kevin Armstrong
Michael Dougherty
Carolena Guiral Steen
Rebecca Hall
Lena Heilmann
Craig Hein
Kelly Jacobsen
Jane Lineman
Lorrie Odom
Kathy Plomer
Mark Pokorny
Jenny Schoen
Meghan Shelton
Chris Wilderman

Present on Phone:

Greg Busch
Christina Monaco Larson

Absent

Stacey Jenkins
Sheldon Rosenkrance

Staff Present:

Christine Harms, Director
Brad Stiles, Emergency Response Outreach Consultant
Margaret Ochoa, CSA Prevention Specialist
Ron Lee, School Outreach Consultant
Melissa Rubeo, Program Assistant
Isaac Baah, Resource Specialist
Kati Garner, NW Regional Training Consultant

Welcome and Advisory Board Business – *Chris Wilderman, Chair*

- The meeting was called to order at 1:32 pm by the Chairperson Chris Wilderman.
- Mr. Wilderman requested that all members provide a brief introduction.
- Director Harms thanked the board and introduced the newest member, Ms. Rebecca Hall and gave Superintendent Hall the opportunity to share her background with the Advisory Board.
- The Board reviewed meeting notes from the August 3, 2021, meeting. A motion was made by Officer Kelly Jacobsen to approve the notes as written and was seconded by Mr. Wilderman. The motion was carried by a majority.
- Due to the previously elected Secretary leaving the Board, a vote for the position was required. Officer Kelly Jacobsen volunteered to fill this position. A motion was made by Dr. Jane Lineman and seconded by Mr. Mark Pokorny. The motion was approved.

Updates on the CSSRC - CSSRC Staff

- **Ms. Harms** shared that the Center had officially hired a School Outreach Consultant, Ron Lee, PsyD. Dr. Lee had the opportunity to introduce himself and share his background. Dr. Lee has been very busy completing onboarding requirements, watching training videos and observing virtual workshops as well. Since Dr. Lee comes with a wealth of experience, it will not be long before he is training with the other team members.
- Director Harms also shared that while budget reviews are occurring, the three open positions for the Regional Training Consultants will not be posted. Once there is more information related to the budget, the positions may be opened for hiring.
- Director Harms informed the Board that the Center is holding statewide symposia each month for the remainder of the 2021 calendar year.
- **Mr. Isaac Baah** shared information regarding the Annual Safe Schools Summit that will be held October 21 and 22, 2021. The Center staff has attended many virtual trainings and determined that the Zoom platform would be the most beneficial for our purpose. Mr. Baah has been working diligently to ensure the event will be easily accessible through one landing page with details on all plenaries and breakout sessions.
- **Director Harms** shared that the Youth Suicide Prevention and Intervention Symposium will be held on November 4, 2021, virtually. There will be two plenary speakers in the morning including one from [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services \(SAMHSA\)](#) on minorities and the need for mental health support/services as well as a plenary on postvention in schools. She thanked Lena Heilmann for putting the Center in touch with Mr. Johnson from SAMHSA.
- **Ms. Margaret Ochoa** shared that the Center will be holding the Student Staff Symposium on December 7, 2021. Dr. Lee and Ms. Ochoa have been working with the Center's Youth Engaged for School Safety (YES²) Council to hear what they believe are the topics that would be best for the event. It appears that the students want the focus for the event to be on wellness and what they can do to support themselves and others. The specific topics will be shared with the Board when finalized. Dorothy Espelage will be speaking on climate and culture and how sexual harassment may lead to interpersonal violence later in life.
- **Ms. Harms** stated that the 2020 Speaker Series was so well received that the Center decided to plan another speaker series in January over lunch times. The topics will include cyber security, cyber bullying, and substance abuse. The Center is also working on a hybrid event for February 16, 2022, regarding positive discipline. Workshops are still being considered and more information will be shared when available.
- **Ms. Ochoa** provided some information on the Youth Engaged for School Safety (YES²) Council for 2021 - 2022. In addition to the work the students have been doing for the Student Staff Symposium, they are working on projects to take back to their middle schools that will center around what they wish they had known prior to entering high school. The Council has students from all over the state including the Metro area, northeast plains, and Pueblo.
- **Mr. Brad Stiles** shared an update on the STOP Grant trainings that have been held. The original expectation with the grant was to train a total of 30 schools throughout the state but the Center is on target to surpass that expectation and has already trained 19 sites with multiple schools totaling over 390 individuals trained. Nine sites have already been scheduled through May of 2022. Staff estimate that approximately 90% of Colorado schools will be using the Colorado Threat Assessment Management Protocol by the end of the grant.
- **Ms. Kati Garner** provided an update on the project the Center has been working on with the Governor's Office of Informational Technology (OIT) for threat assessments. As previously shared, the Center is working to create a virtual program that will allow schools and districts to enter their threat assessment information into a secure database. The Center is still in the process of deciding between using a vendor or if the state's OIT can complete this project. However, CSSRC staff want to ensure the program meets all expectations and provides the service as expected at no cost to the schools. An update will be provided when available.
- **Director Harms** shared more information on the School Crisis Response working group. Previously, she reported that John MacDonald, from JeffCo Schools, reached out to the Center regarding the high number of

incidents that require a crisis response team. A working group was formed to review the current crisis response protocols available and what recommendations can be made to schools to prepare, respond and recover from a crisis. The work of the two committees continues.

- Ms. Harms also shared that a meeting was held with school mental health providers recently and it seems staff are already experiencing stress due to the current situations including COVID issues, staff shortages and an uncertain future.
- **Ms. Melissa Rubeo** provided an update on the training that the Center has held from July 2021 - September 2021. There have been six group trainings for the STOP grant with one of the trainings being held in person with 207 people trained. There were 15 virtual trainings with 232 people trained, 22 in-person trainings with approximately 944 people, and one online out-of-state training with 27 people trained. Center staff acknowledged the benefits of in person training including the participation quality and engagement.
- Chris Harms shared a list of TikTok “challenges” that has been made public which include vandalism and violence. The issues the “challenges” have caused already have forced law enforcement to become more involved in schools. Center staff shared that the YES² students also echoed concerns around the “challenges” because their schools responded to the vandalism by locking bathrooms and limiting access to them throughout the day. It appears that the best way to counter these challenges is through emphasizing a positive school environment with the hopes that peer pressure will eliminate the inappropriate behavior. Board members then shared some of the issues their schools are facing.

Advisory Board Members’ Updates

Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) /Adams 12 School Board

- **Ms. Kathy Plomer**, CASB representative and President of the Board of Education for Adams 12 Five Star Schools, shared that they are also tracking the challenges for this academic year. She stated that the most recent Adams 12 Board Meeting she participated in was the hardest one in her eight years on the board due to the behavior at meetings, TikTok challenges, transition from virtual to in-person routines, severe staffing shortages and others. In September it was reported that the staff is currently at the same exhaustion level that they normally experience prior to winter break.
- Ms. Plomer echoed what others had said about political environments that are causing contentious discussions at school board meetings. There have been arguments regarding the science of masks related to COVID-19. It is currently the school board election season and some of the individuals involved are running on their view of the mask requirements in schools. Boards are also hearing discussion regarding critical race theory and district policies regarding transgender students.
- Mr. Wilderman reminded the group that Ms. Plomer’s term is ending on the Adams 12 Board, CASB and the CSSRC Advisory Board. Both Mr. Wilderman and Ms. Harms thanked Ms. Plomer for her incredible service to all three organizations. Her enthusiasm and passion for Colorado students will be deeply missed.

Denver Public Schools

- **Dr. Jane Lineman**, Student Safety Coordinator with Denver Public Schools, agreed with the sentiments shared by Ms. Plomer. Unfortunately, even though school ended in May there were many things that required responses over the summer which caused staff to not be able to “turn off” before coming back to school in the fall. She shared there are currently concerns regarding capacity due to staff shortages in their area as well. The district is trying to identify social emotional needs of the students and staff so resources can be provided as quickly as possible. She also stated that they have confiscated more weapons on school premises than years past at this time of the year.
- Dr. Lineman shared that their schools are currently trying to fill the gap that was created when SROs were removed from the schools. Threat Assessments are up and there is a delay in response due to the lack of capacity of law enforcement. She stated that their schools are working to become proactive instead of reactive by identifying PREPaRE trainers so they can expand the training. They are also working on supporting transition youth between the ages of 19-21 as they recognize this can be an at-risk group. She

stated that the Youth Violence Coalition's leader left in June but they are continuing to power forward while reframing and creating goals. The "We Got You" Summit has been rescheduled to May 2022.

Westminster Police Department

- **Officer Kelly Jacobsen**, School Resource Officer, also shared her district's frustrations with the TikTok "challenges" as they try to address the inappropriate behavior without ticketing students unless absolutely necessary.
- Officer Jacobsen shared that the SRO's are currently facing the challenge of figuring out what the "new normal" really is. She informed the Board that she will be presenting with Commander Reed at the Summit in October on data collection by SROs as a way to capture the positive interactions SROs have with students. She also shared that the Colorado Association of School Resource Officers (CASRO) will not be holding a conference in 2022, as Denver is hosting the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) Conference at the Gaylord of the Rockies over the fourth of July holiday weekend.

Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health

- **Ms. Meghan Shelton**, Program Manager, shared that their office is currently working on outreach to schools with the goal to be able to distribute resources to assist with the challenges they are facing this year. Their office has hired a technical assistance provider to assist with the current year. School-based Mental Health Specialists are filling in gaps throughout the state, but some Community-based Mental Health Clinics have opted out of the service.
- The School-based Mental Health Professionals are being trained in the PREpARE Curriculum. Ms. Shelton is also part of the Statewide School Crisis Response Working Group and will share her School Crisis Response Guidelines with the group.

Cheyenne Mountain School District

- **Dr. Carolena Guiral Steen**, Assistant Superintendent of the Cheyenne Mountain School District, shared that her district has required masks since the beginning of the school year and, although they have had some quarantines, the masks seem to have helped keep classes open, in comparison to neighboring districts without mandates. CMSD has been minimally impacted by the TikTok challenges, but child abuse reports and suicide screens are increasing.

Colorado PTA

- **Dr. Lorrie Odom**, Co-Chair of the Health, Wellness, & Safety Committee for the Colorado PTA, shared a number of resources including the virtual School Mental Health Community of Practice that will launch October 20, 2021. This was also mentioned in the Center's October E-Update. Dr. Odom also reported that there will be monthly virtual workshops on Navigating Substance Abuse in Teens from the Communities that Care group of the JeffCo PTA. The initial workshop will be the first Wednesday of the month in English and the second workshop will be the second Wednesday of the month in Spanish from September through April excluding December. Monthly workshops are planned on Start the Conversation, the third Wednesday of the month will be in English and the fourth Wednesday of the month will be in Spanish from September through April excluding December. The Jeffco PTA will also be hosting QPR Suicide Prevention trainings on October 13, 2021; November 10, 2021; and December 8, 2021.
- Dr. Odom will provide all of these resources to Director Harms to forward to the Advisory Board members.

Gilpin County Sheriff Department

- **Sheriff Kevin Armstrong** stated that the schools in Gilpin County have a new SRO and they too are struggling with the masking issues. The new SRO will attend the NASRO 40-hour training for SROs.

Office of Adult and Juvenile Justice, CDPS

- **Ms. Kelly Abbott**, the CDPS representative on the Advisory Board from the Division of Criminal Justice, shared that their office is currently reviewing crime rate data and have found that there is an increase in both violent and property crimes during the COVID crisis. She also noted that there has been an increase in weapons in schools this school year and they believe it is a spillover from the current situations that are affecting communities. Ms. Abbott also shared that they have created two juvenile subcommittees that have a nexus with schools. The first committee will address disproportionality regarding the representation of students of color in suspensions and expulsions, and the second will tackle the school to prison pipeline. Director Harms offered to help DCJ staff these committees with school personnel and anyone from the CSSRC Advisory Board that is interested in serving on these committees is welcome to contact Ms. Abbott. (Kelly.abbott@state.co.us)

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

- **Dr. Lena Heilmann**, Suicide Prevention Strategies Manager from the Office of Suicide Prevention (OSP), stated that her office has an ongoing Youth-Specific Initiatives Workgroup. The workgroup is currently identifying opportunities to support young adults ages 19-24. Once students leave high school and are not enrolled in college, the availability of resources is very limited. Often these students in this transition phase have little support. Dr. Heilmann's Office is also revising recommendations to support LGBTQ+ youth in order to prevent suicidal despair, attempts, and fatalities among this community.

Colorado Community College System

- **Mr. Greg Busch**, Emergency Management Director for the Colorado Community College System, shared that most colleges in Colorado have put in a type of vaccine mandate, or negative test protocol. He also shared that attendance is down at some colleges across the state while others are seeing an increase; however, the loss of staff at the facilities could negatively affect the schools and their ability to provide services. He addressed the vaccine mandate as creating potential tension with the need to retain staff.

District Attorney

- **Mr. Michael Dougherty**, District Attorney, stated that he is a proud graduate of the Community College system and gave accolades for its work. He also shared that there is currently a mask mandate in Boulder County. He has been in communication with both the Boulder Valley and St. Vrain School Districts to address some of the same challenges others are experiencing. They are hoping a lower profile about these incidents will help eliminate the inappropriate behavior.

Littleton Public Schools

- **Ms. Jenny Schoen**, a special education teacher in the Littleton Public Schools, stated that her district is also affected by the transition issues, staff shortages and other challenges discussed. She brought up some of the challenges with completing the Healthy Kids Colorado Surveys including the time involved as well as parental objections to some of the questions, given the heightened political tensions. Director Harms reiterated that the surveys are completely anonymous and students do not have to answer any questions they are uncomfortable answering. The data is invaluable to districts and the state as there is no where else most of this data is collected.

Institution of Higher Education

- **Mr. Mark Pokorny**, Environmental & Emergency Preparedness Manager for Metro State University, shared that vaccines and masks are mostly mandatory on campus with testing available. October 19 - 21 is free admission for college so that applicants can apply to any state institution of higher education without paying a fee.

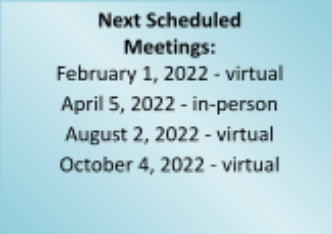
Lake County Schools

- **Ms. Rebecca Hall**, Principal/Superintendent of Hinsdale Consolidated Schools, echoed the concerns for schools within the current situation. She stated that their school is facing a challenge of finding mental health resources to provide at this time in their rural area. Superintendent Hall was also congratulated on the completion of the new school building.
- **Superintendent Hall** shared that Lake County Community School has 77 students with 15 additional home-schooled students.

Having no further updates, Director Harms asked for any final thoughts from the CSSRC staff. Having none, Ms. Harms invited all Board Members to attend the Safe School Summit and all other statewide workshops. She also informed the Board that the decision has been made to hold three of the four Board meetings next year virtually, with the April meeting scheduled to be in-person at the main office in Lakewood.

The meeting was then adjourned at 3:09 pm with thanks to everyone in attendance.

The next meeting on February 1, 2022, at 1:30 will be virtual.



Next Scheduled Meetings:
February 1, 2022 - virtual
April 5, 2022 - in-person
August 2, 2022 - virtual
October 4, 2022 - virtual