

# **NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL SECURITY SURVEY**

## **COMPILED BY THE NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION**

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The events of Newtown, Connecticut, have brought public school safety back to the attention of state officials and lawmakers. In considering policy options to enhance security and student safety in North Carolina's public schools, it is necessary to understand current security conditions. The North Carolina School Boards Association conducted a survey of North Carolina's school districts in January 2013, to assess current security and safety conditions in North Carolina public schools to help guide the consideration of policies moving forward. 114 of North Carolina's 115 school districts responded (Northampton County Schools was the only non-responder). Highlights of what the survey found are below.

### **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS**

82.7% of North Carolina **high schools** have a School Resource Officer.

74.7% of North Carolina **middle schools** have a School Resource Officer.

3.6% of North Carolina **elementary schools** have a School Resource Officer.

108 school districts allow **all** of their School Resource Officers to carry firearms. 2 school districts allow **some** of their School Resource Officers to carry firearms.

### **METAL DETECTORS**

55 school districts have metal detectors at their schools.

#### ***Features of districts with metal detectors.***

5 districts have metal detectors **only** at their alternative schools.

15 districts have metal detectors at only 1 or 2 schools.

8 districts use metal detectors in **all** their schools.

Most ~~other districts~~ have metal detectors at one-quarter to one-third of their schools.

9 districts use metal detectors only for high school athletics or special events.

3 districts use metal detectors only in high schools and use them for non-athletic purposes.

2 districts have centrally stored metal detectors available for schools to use as needed.

1 district uses a walk-through metal detector at their alternative school and uses wands at their high school.

1 district uses metal detectors for high school sports and also allows school administrators at all levels to use hand-helds.

### **GUEST BUZZ-IN SYSTEMS**

49 school districts have systems to buzz-in school guests.

1 district reported that they are looking to add buzz-in systems at some point in the future.

1 district reported a goal of installing guest buzz-in systems at all schools by January 31, 2013.

#### ***Features of districts with buzz-in systems.***

- 18 districts have guest buzz-in systems at only 1 or 2 schools.
- 8 districts have guest buzz-in systems at **all** their schools.
- 9 districts have buzz-in systems at over 50% of their schools.
- 7 districts have buzz-in systems at less than 50% of their schools
- 2 districts have buzz-in systems only at Pre-K/Head Start facilities.
- 1 district has a system by which guests can enter the main door but must be buzzed in to enter hallways or classroom areas.
- 1 district has guest buzz-in systems at their elementary and middle schools and unarmed private security gate guards at main entrances to their high schools.

### **CONSTANT CAMERA SURVEILLANCE**

102 school districts have constant camera surveillance systems at their schools.

#### ***Features of districts with constant camera surveillance systems.***

- 59 districts track **each** entry into schools with their camera surveillance systems.
- 10 districts have cameras at only 1 or 2 schools.
- 34 districts have camera surveillance at **all** their schools.
- 2 districts have cameras at all high schools and middle schools and 1 elementary school
- 24 districts have cameras at less than 50% of their schools.
- 21 districts have cameras at 50% or more of their schools.
- 1 district has indoor **and** outdoor cameras.
- 1 district has cameras that cover front doors at all their schools and cameras that cover the entire campus at some schools.

### **PARENT ALERT MESSAGING SYSTEMS**

107 school districts have parent alert messaging systems.

#### ***Features of districts with parent alert messaging systems.***

- 99 districts have parent alert messaging systems in **all** their schools.
- 4 districts use the AlertNow system.
- 1 district uses the ConnectEd system.
- 1 district uses BlackBoard Connect 5 - an automated message system utilizing telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.

### **STUDENT ELECTRONIC IDENTIFICATION SYSTEMS**

18 districts have some type of student electronic identification system.

#### ***Features of districts with student electronic identification systems.***

- 4 districts use student **electronic** identification at all schools.
- 2 districts use student electronic identification at approximately 73% of their schools.
- 11 districts use student electronic identification at less than 50% of their schools.
- 1 district has identification with media and lunch accounts.
- 1 district has NCWISE number for all students.

### **REINFORCED WINDOW DRESSINGS**

6 districts have schools with reinforced window dressings that preclude intrusions similar to Newtown .

*Features of districts with reinforced window dressings.*

1 district has reinforced window dressings at all schools

Other districts - percentage of schools that have reinforced window dressings: 86%, 55%, 47%, 23%, 19%

**ACTIONS BEING TAKEN BY DISTRICTS TO CREATE SAFE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENTS AND REMEDY IDENTIFIED DEFICIENCIES.**

- Creation of a cross-functional team that includes school district, operations, law enforcement, and IT to determine best and most practical security upgrades. Attempting to install following items by the beginning of the 2013-14 school year. Identified the following items that will cost district approximately \$40 million:
  - Airphones. Would allow schools to lock the main entrance of a school and install an intercom to keep students/faculty safe while allowing parents and visitors a convenient way of requesting entry. Staff can communicate from the secured side of the door and never have to worry about confronting an angry or abusive individual. Would also allow for visitors to be seen via a monitor mounted in the office.
  - Security fencing around building & mobile clusters.
  - Cameras in all elementary and middle schools. Access to an Instant replay through the Security Camera System. Teachers believe the use of School Surveillance Cameras in classrooms helps improve behavior and boost achievement in many cases.
  - Raptor's V-soft or Identikid. If placed in each school, Raptor V-soft would provide an effective and affordable way to help schools keep unwanted visitors out while tracking those they allow in. Scan a visitor's Driver License (or other state issued ID) and web-based V-soft instantly screens for registered sex offenders, domestic dispute offenders and other trespassers. When a visitor is cleared, V-soft prints a badge featuring their name, photo, date and time, and destination. If a potential threat is identified, V-soft's system instantly alerts designated officials, such as administrators and law enforcement, via email, telephone, text messaging and/or page. V-soft can also be used to track and report faculty and volunteer hours as well as child arrival/departure times and pick up information. And because it's web-based, it's accessible from any workstation with a high speed Internet connection.
- Looking for funding to ensure every school has a surveillance and buzz-in system.
- Emergency Operation Plan in each school modeled on the National Incident Management System through FEMA. Annual trainings are conducted for administrators and district level personnel in partnership with county emergency services. Administrators along with their school-level safety teams provide training for school staff at the beginning of each school year. Every school conducts mandated evacuation, shelter-in-place and lock down drills throughout the year, reporting in writing following each drill. System-level reunification plans and procedures are in place at each school with all necessary forms and documents in place to effectively carry out an evacuation/reunification scenario. A parent's guide to emergency situations is published and available to the public. Each school has a minimum of one state-mandated Critical Incident Response Kit. Reinforcement devices currently being installed for every door in all of the schools.
- Working with a safety consultant to complete a thorough audit of school safety issues and create more thorough safety plans.
- Met with local law enforcement/first responders and continuing to discuss and review procedures with building level administrators. Have conducted safety drills.
- Updated safe school plan in each school specifying how particular emergency situations will be handled. Local police department directed by superintendent to conduct a walk-through at each school to make

recommendations for improving safety. Conversations being conducted with county sheriff department about the possibility of having an additional resource officer in the district.

- Meetings scheduled with Emergency Management & Law Enforcement; meeting held with parent group; Board discussing safety at upcoming meeting; Critical Incident Response Plans in place for all schools (coordinated with Emergency Mgt.).
- Requiring a monthly safety report from each school addressing items such as metal detecting, various drills, training, surveillance system, two-way radios, nuclear evacuation plans, etc; school specific emergency plans and district emergency plans; training in place; updated two-way radios to allow county police to communicate with all schools if needed; updated metal detection equipment and training; establishment of a special task force looking into security and making recommendations to the Superintendent in mid-May, 2013.
- Superintendent, Leadership Team, District Safety Council, Facilities Director, and Technology Director meet regularly to review site surveys, determine security priorities, and develop plans to improve site security. Latest of the recommendations to be presented to local board of education. District Safety Council meets monthly to provide updates, training, and resources to schools regarding multi-hazard planning and crisis response for schools.
- Scheduled a summit with all county law enforcement and emergency management agencies. Auditing facilities for improvements to infrastructure that we can make, i.e. keyless entry, cameras on all entrances, renovations to offices to ensure visual contact with entrances, and methods of immediate communication with law enforcement in the event of an emergency.
- Recently added SROs to all elementary schools. Analyzing and revising safety and security plans for all schools and the central office.
- Continuous review of emergency response plans and promotion of prevention procedures.
- Forming district safety committee and naming a district Safe Schools Coordinator; writing district wide critical incident response plan; organizing individual school safety teams; writing individual school safety plans; updating critical incident response kits for schools; safety tours of each school by the Director of Maintenance, Director of Technology, and county commissioners; working with sheriff's department to hire off-duty deputies as part-time SROs for elementary schools on a rotating basis.
- Additional fencing; push-button entrances; additional SROs for elementary schools; whistles for all teachers.
- Thorough reviews of all campuses. Additional practices for lock downs. Close examination of cameras and their locations. Meetings with local police officers to walk buildings and offer suggestions. Review and update floor plans, keys and access to emergency boxes.
- Install buzz-in systems at front entrance. Improve camera surveillance in schools. Improve inter-com systems. Conduct more frequent safety drills. Beef up at athletic events. Re-key schools. Request security officer at each school.
- Continuing to review emergency plans and improving doorbell system.
- Review of all crisis and safety procedures, officers in all schools until the end of the year (addition of 7 officers).
- Assessing design of entryways at each location. Obtaining information about cost of video surveillance for all schools. Obtaining cost for HID badge system for employee sign-in/out and doorway entry systems. Reviewing Safe Schools Plans.
- Hired individual to oversee safety and security of school district moving forward. Undertook and moving forward with a complete threat assessment.
- Additional security cameras and lighting.
- Continually reviewing school safety plans to make sure all areas of the critical incident model provided by the state are addressed. Recently a district meeting was held with central office staff, local sheriff's department, and a local critical incident instructor. A list of concerns and topics to discuss with school administration was developed and will be shared with principals during their January monthly meeting. School administrators will share this information with each school safety committee for input. School

administrators and resource officers are working hard to involve all stakeholders in lockdown drills, such as fire departments and city police. Fire departments will be invited out to schools in their district for a review of the school grounds. District safety team meetings have been planned to assist school based committees with any needs that they may have regarding to the critical incident plan. One top concern-notification of a lockdown other than an intercom system. Most schools have radios as a backup method but not every staff member in every school has one due to cost. Schools will be investigating funding sources such as grants and assistance from organizations such as PTO for additional support. Focus is also on developing roles and responsibilities of staff members not just during a lockdown, but afterwards.

- At a December 13, 2012, Board of Education meeting, a project to ensure that every school had complete video surveillance was approved.
- Mock drills throughout the year and the principals reinforce the drill assignments in their staff meetings.
- Setting up a buzz-in system and working with commissioners about possibly placing SROs at elementary schools. Locking classroom doors and locking outside doors where feasible.
- Holding multiple meetings with local law enforcement to determine ways to have an increased law enforcement presence. Evaluating and planning possible modifications to school entrances for more restrictive entry. Discussing the need for the State to increase funding for SRO allocations and the most beneficial approach to address the funding issue.
- In addition to current protocols and training for safety procedures, engaging in the following:
  - Working with law enforcement to conduct regular walkthroughs at sites.
  - Addressing schools' entranceways for access control/cameras
  - Increased staff training
  - Conducting site visits with law enforcement personnel to assess any areas for improvement.
- Creation of School Safety and Security Task Force; meeting with every principal to review building safety and security at each site; site visits to each campus to conduct safety review; monitor of locked/unlocked doors to determine best practice; exploring possibility of emergency buzzer system.
- SROs providing a security assessment at all campuses. Evaluating a buzz in system but concerned about the amount of students in mobiles and how to manage those students' mobility.
- Met with Sheriff's Department to review and assess current school safety plans. Principals have reviewed their crisis response plans with staff. Emergency drills have been reviewed and practiced with students. Superintendent has sent letter and automated phone messages to parents explaining procedures for requirement to provide photo identification to check out students. All visitors required to provide identification and sign in and sign out. Requiring vendors to provide photo identification at schools. Superintendent has created a video entitled School Safety 101. Physical plants of all schools have been examined and maintenance has made repairs. Additional signage has been added to inform entrances to be used. Recognizing need for additional SROs and currently working with county commissioners to determine how to provide funding.
- Comprehensive study of security issues and mandated more district crisis drills.
- Reviewing current procedures; creating a Safety Committee; consideration of committee's ideas to improve safety.
- Evaluating existing security and safety procedures to make recommendations to build on these using a strategic plan approach.
- Currently working with Sheriff's Department to give video access, additional keys.
- Reviewing emergency response protocols with input from local agencies, requesting a risk vulnerability assessment be done for schools and administration buildings.
- Additional training for staff coordinated through the Lead SRO and Sheriff's department, safety audits, and enhanced planning resources.
- Sheriff deputies conduct sporadic visits to elementary schools; secured lockers; outside doors remain locked; visitor ID system; cameras; SRO conduct safety assessments in all schools.
- Reviewing plans and have requested outside evaluation by sheriff department.

- Review of the Crisis Management Plan and providing each employee with copy of immediate steps to take during an emergency; assessment of each facility to identify any security weaknesses such as unlocked entrances. It is difficult to lock all doors in some schools when most schools were constructed prior to the 1970's and the layout of the buildings are not conducive to locking down facilities during the school operational hours. Many schools are segmented in layout - such as open, outdoor walkways to gyms, trailers, and to other buildings. Analyzing the cost of construction, ie, enclosing walkways and determining the effectiveness and feasibility of requiring employees to carry keys for unlocking/locking doors when exiting to and from these areas.
- Installation of door buzzer system at each main entrance to all schools; installation of additional security cameras at each main entrance; re-keying of interior and exterior doors to allow all employees access to all buildings and classrooms/other secure spaces.
- Developing a Safety Assessment Check list with local law enforcement for administrators to assess their building. Requesting SROs for all elementary schools. Changing procedures for visitor check-in and vendor deliveries. Requesting capital outlay funds for front door electronic security and additional camera systems.
- School district working with city Police Department and Fire Department, and county Emergency Services constantly to review procedures and practices. Attending relevant trainings that pertain to safety and security. Subscribe to publications and list serves that deal with safety and security to learn best practices and to stay informed on current issues.
- Addressing front entrance areas to be buzzed in at office. Door locks for classrooms changed to lock from inside. Continued review of Critical Incident plan, update Black box, and practice drills.
- Currently working with sheriff's department to review all safety procedures and lock down procedures at all schools. School board has approved appointing SRO at all schools.
- Requesting resource officers at all schools. Adding IP camera systems to all schools. Securing entrances sometime in the future when funds are available. Panic system throughout system.
- Constantly reviewing current plans and protocols and updating when needed. Meeting with local police, fire, and EMS to review and update plans/procedures/protocol when needed. Have added an SRO at middle school.
- Revisiting procedures and modifying them as necessary to ensure planning and execution during a lockdown situation. In the process of adding an electronic door entry system with a buzzer entry at each front door. Meeting with the local law enforcement and county commissioners on other areas to decide additional areas to visit. Discussing with law enforcement additional visitations during the school day.
- Unannounced lockdown drills conducted by Sheriff biannually. District safety committee that works with law enforcement on campus threat assessments and developing from that capital needs requests to present to the board of education and board of county commissioners to try to address all safety concerns and practice best practices for safety at all of campuses.
- New surveillance system at all schools. Increase number of critical incident drills. Frequent visits from local and state law enforcement agencies. Greater agency/ community involvement.
- Putting keys in the hands of all personnel and requiring that all doors be locked.
- Safety task force examining ways to enhance security. Continuing to install additional cameras and exploring physical changes that would require all outside visitors to enter one door and check in with the main office before entering the rest of the building.
- Attempting to add additional cameras and electronic access control. The cost of these projects limits the amount that can be done every year. Working with law enforcement to make sure they have access to district camera systems and school campuses when they need it. Could use more resource officers, but need additional funding for that and the camera and electronic access systems.
- All schools are reviewing their crisis plans. Making all efforts that all schools use the same evacuation plans.

- District has a crisis management team and works directly with Law Enforcement on a regular basis. The crisis management is reviewed yearly and LEO visit schools frequently and participate in drills. District has included safety & security equipment in the capital planning process the previous two years.
- District has asked law enforcement to examine their safety procedures and evaluate. Will address any areas identified.
- District has a student assistance program in middle and high schools. This is a licensed mental health worker. This program has been instrumental in helping the system address the mental health needs of students, conducting family interventions and referrals, and conducting threat assessments on high risk students. District has two full time safety compliance officers that work with local emergency management services to conduct drills, tabletop exercises, and ongoing staff training. District requires all schools to have a safety team that drafts and updates safety plans annually. District has an online document for parents that outlines safety procedures.
- Working with staff and law enforcement teams. Conducting staff development on safety procedures with staff and students, along with follow-up for new staff, bringing about an awareness that everyone is responsible for safety (sessions) students, teachers, administration, etc., locking doors other than main entry; ensuring visitors sign in; reporting any strange or out- of- ordinary occurrences, working on other methods of safety (buzz in monitors, phones in classrooms), con't. Black box and card strategies for emergencies. Biggest plus is AWARENESS by all staff and students.
- Installing panic buttons that can be worn on a person, and located at key areas that will an emergency situation. Installing protective coating on windows near front entrances, and increasing camera surveillance. Locking all classroom doors during instruction and having doors between buildings locked from the outside during class, and having teachers unlock doors during class changes, and locking back after class changes. Four SROs divided between 14 schools. Budgeting for additional resource officers and security measures for the upcoming budget cycle.
- Staff Training/Retraining on evacuations, lockdowns and sheltering in place. Critical Incident Stress Management Team developed for Recovery issues. Visitor Identification System. Keypad locks at specific locations. An area improvement in all our schools is access controls. OCS is currently seeking information and quotes on this technology to improve security at the front door and elsewhere.
- County Sheriff's Department SWAT team was in the process of visiting all district schools to become familiar with the schools and also to do an inventory of needs for each school before the incident in Connecticut. That is continuing. The county schools held workshop on Jan. 22 with all principals, assistant principals and central office staff along with the county police agencies on "critical incident planning" and "active shooter" procedures. Each school has a crisis plan that they have reviewed and have practiced. The schools and law enforcement are assessing needs and determining resources that could be used to begin implementing those suggestions. Attending Safe Schools Conference yearly.
- Reviewing entrance areas to better control access. More security cameras, remote access technology, better classroom door locks.
- Each school is required to perform mock drills periodically and conduct training periodically through the year. Additionally, all extra doors are locked, requiring visitors to enter the building through one door.
- Continuing to evaluate the measures that have been put in place to address school safety. District will be piloting putting buzzer systems at the front entrances and adding cameras for the front entrances of elementary schools. The system is also looking at forming a safety committee that involves school and non school personnel.
- Currently evaluating schools and county commissioners have established a Task Force to make recommendations.
- Conducting multiple drills. Safety plans approved by county fire marshall. Provided cost estimates to Board for door buzzer systems and placing SROs at K-5 schools.
- All classroom doors are locked during the school day. District reviewing emergency procedures with staff at schools. Met with all building principals and compiled a list of security concerns and are prioritizing

items to be addressed. Briefed the local board of education on some security concerns and have informed them fixes and estimates that will be presented at a later date.

- District has electronic security and video in all schools. Regularly practice lock down drills. District has close partnership with local law enforcement. Campuses locked during the day. Currently doing a district wide security review of campuses along with local law enforcement and security consultant. Once areas for improvements are identified, district will put together an improvement plan.
- State legislation allowed district to form its own Police Department. Officers are trained in many areas concerning school safety and they train all of the districts' school personnel. In 2009, district awarded the Exemplary School Safety Award from the School Safety Advocacy Council. Currently in the process of updating Crisis Plan and also having a district wide risk assessment performed on all schools. The assessment is being done by an independent company.
- Schools update School Safety Plans each year. Each School has a Safety Committee, and district has a system-wide safety Committee. District is creating a District Safety Plan, incorporating individual School Safety Plans under one umbrella. Local Highway Patrol Officers have endeavored to be a regular presence in district schools.
- Lock down drills, teacher instruction on alert systems, updating of Parrent /connect system.
- Principals are reviewing plans, and law enforcement will meet with each principal to revisit school safety and make recommendations for improvement to existing plans.
- All doors require a badge or key punch to enter. Doors are automatically opened at 7:00 and locked at 3:30. Entry between those hours requires a badge. This is problematic for movement between buildings during the day but district working to find solutions to eliminate this problem.
- District has reviewed all safety plans with each principal; held simulated active shooter scenarios in the high school; discussing cost to add additional cameras and buzz in systems on front doors.
- Meetings with law enforcement agencies and campus evaluations by them revealed unsecured entries and easy access to some of the school classrooms. Locks were installed or door repaired.
- Comprehensive emergency operation plans for all campuses. Mandatory that all schools complete a minimum of 2 emergency drills (i.e., lockdowns, shelter-in-place) per school year. Currently, nearly all secondary schools have a School Resource Officer. Currently gathering feedback from parents and school administrators at the elementary level to make a determination if district needs to revise how they currently do business. Looking at a possibility of upgrading the security systems (access control, cameras, etc) at all schools through next Capital bond program.
- For a number of years district has had an SRO at each school except two elementary schools that share an officer. Districts conduct drills for security.
- Updating Critical Incident Response Kits each semester; improving window tinting; updating Emergency Flip Charts in classrooms; wind screen on playground fences to obstruct view from street.
- Constantly assessing Safety Plans to ensure that staff, faculty, and administrators have the necessary resources to be fully functional during a crisis. Law enforcement partners are providing assistance in the area of safety and training to ensure district is in sync with protocols and procedures for an emergency response.
- Schools are constantly doing monthly fire drills, semester intruder drills, and speaking with faculty concerning safety plans at the school level. District is also looking at improving outside safety features such as fences and walls.
- Elementary Schools- Placing buzz in systems with camera systems at main entrance. Placing additional security doors at main entrance of schools. Additional training of staff in security measures. Considering placement of SRO's in all Elementary Schools if funding can be obtained.
- Currently working with Hickory Police Department to update Emergency and Crisis Guide. City Police Department is conducting a lockdown drill at each school to give suggestions on needed changes. During the lockdown time, Police Department and district administrators are walking the building and checking for any additional safety concerns such as lighting, locked doors, and access to students.



- Currently reviewing safety plans, and are working with local law enforcement agencies to refine procedures.
- 1) Reviewing and revising Crisis/Emergency Manage Plan; 2) Exploring options for hardware and software to lock more exterior doors; 3) Talking with law enforcement and County Commissioners of adding additional SROs to schools; 4) Working with law enforcement to provide additional patrol and presence of law enforcement officers on school grounds.
- District has identified off campus destinations for students and staff to evacuate to in the event of an emergency. Emergency plans in place, replacing door locks on older schools, practicing lock down procedures, reviewing emergency plans with faculty and staff and providing additional training for our SROs.
- Staff training, drills, stakeholder awareness of processes, parent input/feedback, partnerships with law enforcement, cameras on all buses, cameras included in renovations and new structures, online bully reporting site, All outside doors locked.
- Many steps are in the works including working to immediately get at all front doors buzzers, camera and intercom and to get in front office a panic button to call 911 and sound in the school with one touch; district has met with all law enforcement with schools in their jurisdiction; are now setting up individuals meetings at each school / site for those law enforcement, fire, rescue; County Emergency Management Services is facilitating; School System Communications is organizing; funding is concern of school system and law enforcement; questions continue to be asked if state will be providing some funding to help with security.
- Emergency operations plan for each facility that incorporates safety and security for the students and staff. This plan is reviewed on an annual basis and changes are made periodically. District currently assessing several additional opportunities that include procedural changes and technology upgrades including remote door access and additional cameras.
- Forming a safety committee to look at district safety plan and address areas that need improvement.
- Crisis Communication Handbook, Critical Incident Plan of Action, School Safety Committees Improve Drill Work Facility Improvement (hardware, cameras, etc.).
- 1. SRO's - However, district would like to have fulltime SROs at all schools; 2. Critical Incident Plans; 3. Monthly Fire Drills; 4. Lock Down Drill per semester; 5. Scheduled Walk-Throughs; evaluations by law enforcement and fire department; 6. Scheduled K-9 Searches - drug checks with law enforcement dogs at all high schools; 7. Yearly Round-Table discussion about school safety with community partners (law enforcement, fire officials, city council members, etc.); 8. Camera surveillance at some schools - needed at all schools; 9. Camera surveillance at each entry at some schools - needed at all schools; 10. Buzz-in system at one school - will be looked at for more or all schools; 11. School District Safe Schools Team - one representative from each school is on the team along with community partners and other school district staff members Note - Financing is needed for areas that are in need of improvement.
- District reviewing and strengthening several activities related to safety and security procedures. Specific activities include: enhanced restricted visitor access procedures and signage, refresher training for front office staff with access control responsibilities, internal review of each campus to identify vulnerabilities and needed security equipment, development and implementation of security compliance checklists and walk-through inspections, and coordination of campus information and incident response procedures with local emergency response personnel, including training in our buildings.
- District taking a look at each building to see what steps can be taken to make them safer as it prepares budget for next school year. This means pushing other needed school repairs back, such as a new roof on two schools.
- All principals revised their crisis plans at the beginning of the year and do so every year, schools practice lockdown procedures with staff and students three times per year, all staff are required to complete a Code Blue Lockdown tutorial and test at the beginning of every year, camera systems are being upgraded and have external access capability, local law enforcement has access to all school buildings for training and to improve familiarity with school layouts. Principals routinely make requests after Code Blue drills

when they find security issues that need to be addressed and are currently reviewing their entrance security and will make requests for improvements to central office administration. The school/community crisis team, which has been in place since 2003 but has been inactive for about a year, has been reactivated and will make additional recommendations.

- Safe school committees at each school and a district wide safe school team that meets frequently to address needs and concerns. Each school designs its own safe school plan. All doors locked except front door. Local law enforcement frequently visits each school.
- District working closely with law enforcement and Emergency Management to assess procedures and buildings. Going through assessments at all sites.
- 1- Formal audit of general safety protocols at each school has been performed and weaknesses have been addressed. 2- Visitor safety check sheet (developed to allow an undercover member of the police department to enter a school and report on the safety protocols that were in place and followed. 3- Installed 4 buzzer systems. 4- Met with SROs about safety- questions and concerns addressing the importance of visibility and best practices. 5- Improved attendance/sign-in and sign-out procedures at high school by placing the attendance, sign-in and sign-out station at the front office as you enter the building. 6- Met with city Police Department to brainstorm ways to improve safety as a collaborative effort. Creation of Community Resource Officers assigned to wards, which would include elementary schools within that ward. The CRO would build positive relationships with the community, and establish satellite offices within the schools which would increase police presence. - Rotate extra patrol cars in elementary school parking lots to create the appearance of police presence. - Additional School Resource Officer that would provide added security at the high school's three campus sites as well as circulate to elementary schools. - Police Department will conduct an active shooter drill for staff during the summer to allow staff to become more familiar with shooter protocols as well as provide officers with a live practice drill scenario. 7- District safety coordinator to attend seminar---- Mass Shootings: Threats, Planning and Response Considerations and then report back to District Safety Committee. 8- Lax policy on requiring staff to wear ID Badges at all times has been addressed. 9- Multiple swipe-card entry systems, exterior lights and door-bell systems are being installed for added security at Before and After School Programs and cafeterias throughout the district.
- Considering video linked alarm entry system at entrance doors of all elementary/intermediate schools. Task force of school and first responders will review current plans and protocol as well as explore enhancements including SROs at the elementary level.
- Review with Emergency Management and School Improvement Teams. There are always needs, but the most immediate is state funding for a Resource Officer at each school.
- District reviewing lockdown procedures. Have established a safety committee which consists of Sheriff, principals and central office. Working on ways to identify visitors. Exploring electronic ID machines.
- Have met with County Commissioners requesting funding for 9 SROs for the elementary schools. Also, looking at possibility of electronic entrance doors.
- All schools have immediate contact with law enforcement through police radios in each building; lockdown drill held monthly.
- Placed phones in every classroom. Need secure doors that requires special card to enter. Will try to secure funding from commissioners. Need additional resource officers for schools.
- Need SRO in all schools Funds are not available.
- Having a safety training for administrators and law enforcement. Also doing cameras for high schools and middle schools along with radios for all buses. Buzz in systems are also being reviewed for all schools. Working in conjunction with Sheriff's department to allow Department of Corrections officers to help monitor schools when they are not working.
- District has a thorough crisis management plan that is being implemented and practiced.
- Have asked principals to review their emergency procedures with their staff. Have stressed keeping all outside doors locked during the day if possible. Some schools cannot, due to daily student traffic between

buildings. Looking at different programs and possible changes to all safety needs within district to see what can be done to improve student safety on a daily basis.

- Door buzzers. Adding and updating cameras. Supervision schedules.
- Tightening up procedures such as check/in and check out (picture ID) and implementing buzz in systems for all schools. Primarily, strategy is to tighten up best practices.
- District reviews our safety plans every year to make sure they are current.

#### **STATE LAWS MENTIONED AS AN IMPEDIMENT TO IMPROVING CAMPUS SAFETY OR THAT COULD BE ADDED TO BETTER FACILITATE CAMPUS SAFETY**

- 8 districts cited need for increased funding for various safety and training upgrades.
- 7 districts cited need for more School Resource Officers.
- Funding for ongoing training and staff development.
- Funding for additional security at elementary schools.
- State funding for the student assistance program, which places licensed mental health workers in each middle and high school.
- Allow LEAs to have undercover agents, such as School Marshals, that they can assign to schools.
- Restore Safe School funding.
- Allow each school to have 1 person on campus with a concealed weapon.
- Encourage local law enforcement to establish an office in each school where administrative paperwork could be done. This person could also be a concealed weapons person. This approach would increase safety and not cost more money that placing a SRO would cost.
- More flexibility in spending some funds.
- Inability for select staff to be armed due to current law.
- Increased penalties for trespassing and aggressive behavior on school sites.
- Funding for a second SRO at schools that have large populations. A report done in 2006 by the Governor's office recommended a ratio of 1 SRO per 1000 students. We currently have 14 schools with over 2000 students that have only one SRO.
- Require periodic lockdown drills similar to the system in place for fire drills, Also, it would be helpful to require all new schools to be built with security in mind (i.e., a minimum number of exterior doors, easy lock interior doors, main entrance buzzer and vestibule system to control entrance and egress).
- Special laws that make it difficult for removing dangerous students.
- Recommendations for laws requiring lockdown drills and mandating training requirements for administrators in emergency preparedness and response.
- Modifications to requirements for after hour facility use should be made to support school safety plans.
- Review requirement for exterior classroom doors in elementary classrooms.
- Requirements for locking systems (ie: securing Pre-K doors with interior locks).
- School personnel need some means of protecting students and themselves in the event structural restraints fail to keep intruders at bay.
- The loss of public school capital funds have handicapped some districts from having funds to invest in these type needs. In Forsyth all lottery funds are applied to paying down the bond debt in order not to raise taxes. In many districts lottery is a capital resource.
- Repeal any law that permits firearms or weapons on any school campus include concealed weapons. Schools should be weapon free zones.

#### **OTHER THINGS DISTRICTS REPORTED WERE IMPORTANT TO NOTE ABOUT SCHOOL SAFETY**

- We are also revising our crisis plan to include the thinking as well as the lessons learned from Newtown.
- The issue is complex because each facility is different with different needs.

- Multiple access points at campuses create challenges.
- We need funding! The majority of our school buildings are between 30 and 50 years old - they were not built for security. Most of our buildings need upgrades for secure access.
- State funded training for schools to enhance our knowledge of DOE school crisis management would be an excellent resource for any school district. Funding to support full time safe schools directors/coordinators to better support school level planning and crisis team training is critical.
- Small rural districts are at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to funding for renovations to infrastructure. Often small rural districts do not have the revenue to provide the latest in campus safety equipment. Also, as vulnerable as schools are, school buses are by far even more vulnerable.
- State or federal funding needs to be provided for additional school resource officers, camera systems, gated entrances to high school, staff safety training, etc.
- The main campus of the high school is very hard to secure. The school is old and many upgrades at this time will be very costly. Construction on a new high school began two months ago.
- State public education budgets to pay for SROs.
- Our High School has multiple buildings which could be problematic in a true emergency and we are working on perfecting that. If there are others with that same issue, we would love to hear some suggestions.
- Funding for Resource Officers have been supported by Federal Grants in years past. Rural areas find funding of SRO's more difficult, especially in the years ahead.
- Rate of incidents are very low.
- Lack of funding has limited staffing of SROs in all middle and high schools in our district.
- We need to be aware of the changing laws that may affect children and adults in every school system in the state.
- We have everyone sign in that is a visitor to our school sites.
- Funding for additional school resource officers.
- The current SRO model is not adequate. Our high schools have a range from 300-2000 students. We only have 1 officer in our schools which is very challenging and prevents a proactive approach. Currently we budget around \$2.2M for sro services.
- A concern is who should be responsible for the financial burden in hiring additional SROs.
- We sorely could use a funding source to be able to afford SRO's at every school in the district.
- Funding is currently provided to offset cost of SROs in high schools. Additional funding is needed to support safety efforts beyond high schools. Statewide standards and best practices should be shared with all districts.
- Our 5 SROs are assigned to the high school but visit all other schools in that attendance zone.
- Funding challenges make the purchase of additional cameras and adding SROs to additional schools difficult.
- State funded SRO in all buildings.
- Is it safe to not require legal identification of a child when that child is enrolled in kindergarten, ie, birth certificate? Is it safe to allow parents to withdraw their children from public education to home school without any oversight from DPI or the State Board of Education? or How safe is it for the public to have access to sensitive information, such as blue prints of the schools. Lastly, NC middle school education is in critical need of reform to provide positive experiences and reinforcement during a critical development phase for youth. Beginning with AIG: in middle schools, students continue to be differentiated between dumb and smart - in the middle school student's mind - due to the AIG identifier, when those same students felt just as capable and accepted in the elementary grades. The AIG set-up is more damaging to students who are not in the program, then helpful to those who are in. That exclusivity for the above average student, which carries a label in some districts all the way through high school, can do untold damage to the average student who has great potential but loses position, confidence and interest in the system by a subtle, yet stark means of rejection of not being a part of AIG - the smart group. Once that

happens, students - especially boys - turn to other alternatives to cope with their sub-standard position in school. There has to be a better way of providing additional resources for above average students at that age - some schools are doing it with blended instruction/learning in classrooms.

- Funding is needed
- Provide sufficient funding for safety improvements without taking the funds from other educational areas.
- Funding....if safety is mandated then poor counties like ours cannot pay for all of the things we need.
- We would love to have more cameras. We currently have cameras at each of schools. However, aside from our high school, we only have two per campus. We would like to add additional cameras but funding is an issue.
- Severe budget cuts have in most districts forced reductions to office support positions. I believe that some of these could be reinstated and funded at the state level and possibly earmarked at the state level to include an office support position for each school that would serve in a dual capacity of school security/clerical as is the case in most governmental buildings including the state legislature and DPI.
- State fund a minimum of one SRO for each school.
- We have older schools that have exterior doors leading outside only. If we secure the windows to preclude an intrusion, then we have eliminated our means of egress. There is not going to be a good way of securing the campus with the majority of our High and Middle school classrooms exposed.
- One of the problems that we have seen is that in years past the school designs had the campuses spread out with multiple buildings. Although the new campuses do not have this issue, we are still dealing with older campuses with multiple buildings that students have to travel between. So, we have to leave exterior doors open so they can get in and out of the buildings. If we were able to have electronic access on all these exterior doors, we could begin locking these doors so that someone from the outside could not walk up and enter the campus.
- All staff members will be trained on crisis plan.
- Our district has a best practice and process with law enforcement and would be willing to share ideas or be part of this planning task force.
- The information that is provided by the Attorney General's office (Critical Incidents Response Kits) are extremely helpful.
- Schools in NC are very old and were not designed with security in mind. They were meant to be warm, inviting places where children can learn and grow. Significant resources are needed to harden school facilities to make them more secure.
- We desperately need the Safe School funding restored.
- As a nation, state, and community, we need for the everyone to take a more aggressive approach to a variety of issues. We need for congress, the general assembly, law enforcement agencies, and the judicial system to take a more aggressive approach to gangs and violence.
- Do not let emotion drive the conversation. The reality is that most small districts/counties do not have the capacity to have officers in K-5 schools.
- After 27 years in law enforcement and over 20 of those working in the school system I consider myself very knowledgeable in school safety issues. The problems we have can be easily corrected. We have 11 full time highly trained police officers in our department. These officers meet all requirements that any law enforcement has to meet, plus many others. Some examples are, rapid deployment, one on one active shooter training, school resource officer training, C.I.T or crisis intervention training, lockdown plans and procedures training, 2nd chance program (project alert), alive at 25, plus many more. We also train them in laws dealing with our special needs population and way to handle those students. These student require more services and other officers from outside agencies should have to receive some additional training when dealing with these students. The eight hours of BLET training they received years ago is not enough in the event of an emergency at one of our schools. I said all of that to say this, I know the officers that work for me are prepared in the event of an emergency at their school. The problem we have is funding. I would like to see state make monies available to departments like ours so we could have officers at each

of our schools. I know there are many different things we could do to make us feel better and even help somewhat, but properly trained police officers are needed to stop someone with a gun.

- School buses need to have digital camera operations. School access points for high schools and middle schools are too available for public driving through the campus.
- We are like any other school. We have plans in place, we practice lockdowns, but we are vulnerable. The best defense is a well-informed public and we look to the public for tips regarding a student or some other person who may intend harm to our schools.
- Money for SROs and security needs to be an allocation from the state.
- We are hoping to get an extra SRO so two schools don't have to share. We are also hoping to obtain extra monies for security measures.
- Cost of updating to electronic surveillance and doors continues to be a problem based on funding sources.
- At a time when schools urgently need capital funds to improve the safety of school sites, the State has greatly reduced funding for capital improvements by redirecting lottery funds and the elimination of the school construction fund.
- We have 14 schools and with the exception of our two middle schools, all campus have multiple building with numerous exterior doors. Capital funds from the State to be used to upgrade campus security would be greatly beneficial.
- Many of our schools have multiple entry ways. It is difficult to police these multiple entry ways, i.e. at RSHS each classroom on the bottom floor has its own outside entrance. Many of our other schools have the same situation. We are looking at ways to secure these entrances with combination locks or biometric locks.
- Some of our older facilities were designed as open campuses which creates additional concerns for safety and security due to the fact that unauthorized personnel have the ability to enter different parts of the campus without consent.
- Increased financing needed to make needed improvements.
- I understand everyone will point to this but it is a question of money. We would quickly add resources officers in more of our schools if we could afford it. Everything we are looking at doing over this next year are the same steps taken in Conn.
- Our district, like many others, have buildings that were constructed without school safety in mind. Many of them provide unimpeded access to main hallways and classrooms. To retrofit these buildings will take a significant amount of resources, which local government does not have. Additional funding to improve the security of the buildings is critically needed if we want to improve the safety of our students.
- We will continue to be proactive in addressing safety concerns at our schools.
- We would love to have funding for more SRO's.
- We would like to see more funding added to SRO and school safety.
- Over 50% of our facilities are over 50 years old. They were not built with safety in mind. We need many upgrades to our facilities, such as electronic doors, cameras at each door, etc.
- It takes \$\$ to operate. Without additional \$\$, we will not be able to operate under maximum secure conditions.
- Additional funds for many of these upgrades would be appreciated, especially funds for additional SROs.
- We have a shared campus with Columbia Middle School and Columbia High School which requires a very open campus for the amount of student movement and shared staff.
- School safety is a constant and evolving challenge and since our clientele are young and small, it can be especially difficult. It is not just our procedures but also training children which has many challenges.

**Appendix A**  
**Individual Responses by School District**

## Wake County Schools

3. Please indicate the number and portion of School Resource Officers in your district.

High schools with a School Resource Officer: - 25

Total # of high schools in your district: - 29

Middle schools with a School Resource Officer: - 32

Total # of middle schools in your district: - 35

Elementary schools with a School Resource Officer: - 0

Total # of elementary schools in your district: - 105

4. Do your School Resource Officers carry guns?

Yes

5. Do you have metal detectors at any of your schools?

No

6. Do any of your schools require guests to be buzzed in?

Yes

Two schools, 1 elementary and 1 alternate school

7. Do you have constant camera surveillance at your schools?

No

8. Does your camera surveillance include each entry into the school?

No Response

9. How many of your schools have parent alert messaging systems for emergency situations?

Yes

169

10. Do any of your schools have some type of electronic student ID system?

No

11. How many of your schools have reinforced window dressings that preclude intrusions such as the type that recently occurred in Connecticut?

No

12. Please explain what steps your district is taking to create a safe campus environment and, if there are any areas you've identified that need improvement, how you plan to address those areas.

We have comprehensive emergency operation plans for all campuses. It is mandatory that all schools complete a minimum of 2 emergency drills (i.e., lockdowns, shelter-in-place) per school year. Currently, nearly all of our secondary schools have a School Resource Officer. We are currently gathering feedback from parents and school administrators at the elementary level to



