

Missouri Governor's School Safety Task Force



Missouri School Safety Strategic Plan

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Missouri School Safety Strategic Plan

Pursuant to EXECUTIVE ORDER 19-04, establishing a Missouri School Safety Task Force and a requirement for the Task Force to submit a plan for school safety across Missouri, the following is the Task Force's "Missouri School Safety Strategic Plan."

PREAMBLE:

School safety in Missouri is not the sole responsibility of any single government organization or other entity. It is the collective responsibility of a network of stakeholders at the state and local level working together to form a broad school safety alliance. This strategic plan is an effort to ensure all K-12 schools in Missouri are as safe as possible by identifying resources at their disposal and recommending basic preparedness actions.

The term 'school,' as used in this strategic plan, includes school districts, charter schools, private and parochial schools.

MISSION

It is the mission of this strategic plan to provide all Missouri schools recommendations for basic school safety planning, as well as a list of resources available to all, to better ensure the safety and security of school children via preparedness, prevention, mitigation, response and recovery.

CORE PRINCIPLES:

Teaching and learning occurs best in safe and secure environments.

School safety is a collaborative effort that requires community engagement including emergency responders, emergency medical services, public and mental health professionals, parents and students.

The collective school safety stakeholder alliance provides resources to foster learning for all students.

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The Federal Commission on School Safety report is laid out in an easy-to-follow and logical manner based upon specific focus areas. This strategic plan follows those focus areas while adding several not covered in the federal report.

Additional background information is contained in the Task Force Report and related appendixes.

There is no formalized governance or coordination structure for Missouri's overall school safety program. There is a Missouri Center for Education Safety (CES) which was established in consultation with the Governor's Homeland Security Advisory Council in 2010, and which is a public/private partnership between the Missouri Department of Public Safety and the Missouri School Boards' Association. CES attempts to promote school safety statewide, and currently supported by a CES Advisory Committee.

GOAL

The goal of this strategic plan is to provide to state and local leaders a roadmap for school safety in Missouri and ensure barriers to safety are eliminated, allowing every child in a K-12 school in Missouri to reach their full potential through a quality education.

FOCUS AREAS

A: Communications & Information Sharing

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Communications and Information Sharing focus area is to promote timely bidirectional exchange of information to support a safe and secure learning environment. Parents, students, communities, law enforcement and leaders are part of an effective communication strategy. Information shared accurately, effectively and efficiently facilitates good decision making, which promotes school safety.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (Recommendations)

State of Missouri:

1. Designate a state level school safety coordinator to harmonize school safety efforts among state departments. This may be an existing entity such as CES. A state level school safety advisory council should be considered to support these efforts.
2. Promote Missouri's Courage 2 Report tip-line, housed in the Missouri Information Analysis Center, for 24/7 threat and tip collection, triage, and disseminating information.

Local Schools/Communities:

1. Participate in information sharing programs such as regional training, annual conferences, weekly school safety updates, and the Missouri Alert Network.

2. Establish a student-led Student School Safety Advisory Council to provide input and facilitation communication between students and staff.
3. Promote and utilize the Courage 2 Report tip-line to students as a safe way to report threats and tips and ensure they are taken seriously.

OUTPUTS (Measurements)

1. Establishment of a state level school safety coordinator to harmonize school safety efforts across state agencies.
2. Number of tips received annually via Courage 2 Report.
3. Number of referrals from Courage 2 Report to schools, local law enforcement, and other community support organizations such as mental health.

RESOURCES - See Section A of “Annex A – Missouri School Safety Resource.”

B. Mental Health/Behavioral Risk

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Mental Health/Behavioral Risk focus area is to better ensure evidence-based mental health and behavioral risk programs are in place and available to students and families in need of these services.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (Recommendations)

State of Missouri:

1. Designate a lead state agency to synchronize mental health, behavioral risk, and other related programs across state agencies.
2. Promote Youth Mental Health First Aid training for stakeholders within and outside state government.
3. Promote Behavioral Risk Assessment Team training for stakeholders within and outside state government.

Local Schools/Communities:

1. Have staff trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid and Behavioral Risk Assessment.
2. Utilize Behavioral Risk Assessment Teams.

OUTPUTS (Measurements)

1. Designated lead to synchronize mental health, behavioral risk and other related programs across state agencies.
2. Percentage of schools having staff member(s) trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid.
3. Percentage of local schools having staff member(s) trained in behavioral risk assessment.
4. Percentage of local schools with behavioral risk assessment teams.

RESOURCES - See Section B of “Annex A – Missouri School Safety Resources.”

C. School Climate & School Culture

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the School Climate/School Culture focus area is to facilitate evidence-based school climate programs, such as the Positive Behaviors Intervention Support (PBIS), Trauma-Informed Restorative Justice, or similar initiatives, to encourage kindness, empathy and character, both in school and beyond.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (Recommendations)

State of Missouri

1. Encourage K-12 schools to implement an evidence-based school climate program such as Positive Behaviors Intervention Support (PBIS) or a comparable program.
2. Encourage K-12 schools to implement appropriate Trauma-Informed programs supported by trained staff.

Local Schools/Communities

1. Utilize trauma-informed practices to improve school climate.
2. Implement a formal program, such as Positive Behaviors Intervention Support or a similar program, to improve school climate. Such a program should include: positive teacher-student interactions, creating an environment where students feel safe, consistent behavior expectations and consequences, parental and community involvement, and expectations for learning.

OUTPUTS (Measurements)

1. Percentage of schools using trauma informed practices to improve school climate.
2. Percentage of schools with a formal school climate/school culture program.

RESOURCES - See Section C of “Annex A – Missouri School Safety Resources.”

D. Emergency Operations Plans

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) focus area is to ensure every school has a high quality emergency operations plan in place to serve as a guide to staff and students on how they should respond to a myriad of potential threats. These high quality emergency operations plans also provide critical information to law enforcement and first responders, as well as parents and community leaders as appropriate.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (Recommendations)

State of Missouri

1. Encourage all schools to have high quality emergency operations plans in place.
2. Require all schools to share relevant parts of their EOPs with local law enforcement and first responders.
3. Permanently establish Sunshine Law protection for school EOPs under the Homeland Security exemption.

Local Schools/Communities

1. Have a high quality emergency operations plan in place.
2. Evaluate EOPs via nationally accepted evaluation methodologies such as EOP Assess and EOP Evaluate.
3. Update EOPs at the start of the new school year and ensure staff are trained on these updates. Special attention should be given to updating emergency contacts in EOPs.
4. Share relevant parts of EOPs with local law enforcement and first responders.
5. Conduct at least two drills annually to test EOPs. One drill should be an active shooter drill as required by state law. Additional drill(s) should be on different aspects of the

EOP. All drills should include first responders and law enforcement, and must be documented.

OUTPUTS (Measurements)

1. Percentage of K-12 schools having a high quality emergency operations plan in place.
2. Percentage of schools evaluating their EOP via nationally accepted evaluation standards.
3. Percentage of schools devoting professional development/all-staff training each year to EOP updates.
4. Percentage of schools sharing EOPs with local law enforcement and first responders.
5. Percentage of schools having conducted and documented two or more annual drills to test their EOPs.

RESOURCES - See Section D of “Annex A – Missouri School Safety Resources.”

E. Physical Security, Technology and Safety Assessments

OBJECTIVE

The objective of Physical Security, Technology and Safety Assessments focus area is to ensure schools utilize physical security and technology to address onsite and campus risks and vulnerabilities identified via risk assessment teams. When physical security and technology improvements are driven by data from assessments, students and staff are safer from threats ranging from an active shooter to weather and natural disasters.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (Recommendations)

State of Missouri

1. Establish standards and templates to evaluate physical security technology products, tools, services, and training to help schools make wise procurement decisions.
2. Encourage schools to create and utilize physical security/risk assessment teams to identify vulnerabilities and risks to be addressed through physical security and technology.

Local Schools/Communities

1. Utilize established evaluation methodologies to evaluate physical security, technology, tools, services, and training prior to procurements.

2. Establish and utilize physical security/risk assessment teams to identify specific vulnerabilities and risks that can be mitigated through physical security or technology.
3. Utilize performance-based best practice clauses in procurement proposals.

OUTPUTS (Measurements)

1. Percentage of schools using established evaluation methodologies in advance of physical security and technology procurements.
2. Percentage of schools utilizing physical security/risk assessment teams to conduct safety assessments on at least an annual basis.

RESOURCES - See Section E of “Annex A – Missouri School Safety Resources.”

F. Training & Drills

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Training & Drills focus area is to facilitate a systematic approach to ensure schools, first responders, and law enforcement personnel have both the theoretical and practical skills to respond to a broad range of school safety and emergency situations beyond active shooter, fire, tornado and earthquake. A systematic approach includes planning, documentation, evaluation and correction. Training and drills validate existing EOPs, identify gaps and weakness, and illuminate necessary improvements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (Recommendations)

State of Missouri

1. Create and maintain a catalog and calendar of available school safety-related training across state and federal programs.
2. Synchronize school safety-related training programs to reduce duplication and make school safety training more efficient statewide.
3. Make available templates for training, planning and documentation.
4. Coordinate an annual statewide school safety conference as well as regional training to equip schools for a systematic approach to training and drills.

Schools/Local Communities

1. Utilize a single catalog and calendar of available school safety related training across state and federal school safety related programs.
2. Explore creative new approaches to training and drills in support of staff professional development.
3. Document training and drills via standardized methodology. This documentation should be kept for a minimum of 5 years, but in accordance with state and federal law.

OUTPUTS (Measurements)

1. Number of trainings offered annually via a centralized training catalog and calendar.
2. Percentage of schools participating in regional School Safety Coordinator Training.
3. Percentage of schools participating in annual Safe Schools & Colleges Conference.
4. Percentage of schools documenting training and drills via standardized methodology.
5. Percentage of schools performing and documenting two or more drills annually.

RESOURCES - See **Section F** of “**Annex A – Missouri School Safety Resources.**”

G. SRO/School Safety Coordinator Programs

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the SRO/School Safety Coordinator Programs focus area is to ensure every school has a designated, trained and competent school safety coordinator to provide guidance on school safety-related training, drills, physical security, and other school safety-related decisions. Additionally, where economically feasible and embraced by local governance, schools should have the benefit of an armed School Resource Officer (SRO) or an armed School Protection Officer (SPO) in every school to provide an immediate response in the event of an active shooter situation. Missouri statutes authorize schools to choose to arm staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (Recommendations)

State of Missouri

1. Formally establish responsibilities and duties for school safety coordinators.
2. Promote synchronized training, drills, and information sharing between school safety coordinators, SROs and SPOs.

3. Promote Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for school safety coordinators, SROs and SPOs.
4. Promote behavioral risk, mental health first aid, and trauma-informed training for school safety coordinators, SROs and SPOs.

Local Schools/Communities

1. Ensure school safety coordinators, SROs and SPOs are coordinating and synchronizing their efforts to protect schools and promote school safety.
2. Allow and encourage school safety coordinators, SROs and SPOs to attend training on crisis intervention teams, behavioral risk, mental health first aid, and trauma-informed approaches.
3. Use formal MOUs with SROs to govern the relationship between the district and the sponsoring law enforcement agency (LEA).
4. Where there is one or more SROs or SPOs in addition to a school safety coordinator, the collective group should avail themselves of training opportunities as a team.

OUTPUTS (Measurements)

1. Percentage of schools with an SRO or SPO on every campus.
2. Percentage of schools that have a formal MOU governing the role of SROs.
3. Percentage of schools with school safety coordinators/SROs/SPOs trained in mental health first aid, behavioral risk, or trauma-informed approaches.
4. Percentage of schools with school safety coordinators/SROs/SPOs trained in CIT.

RESOURCES - See Section G of “Annex A – Missouri School Safety Resources.”

H: Access to Grants and Funding Opportunities for School Safety

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Access to Grants and Funding Opportunities for School Safety focus area is cooperative state and local efforts in pursuit of funding opportunities relating to school safety to better ensure schools and departments are not pursuing similar goals via different avenues and absent coordination.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (Recommendations)

State of Missouri

1. Explore designating one entity to coordinate grant applications and funding for school safety among state departments as well as inform schools of new school safety funding opportunities.
2. Encourage a cooperative approach between state and local efforts should additional funding for school safety become available.

Local Schools/Communities

1. Educate elected leadership on school safety needs based upon specific data and assessments.
2. Establish teams to pursue grant funding opportunities in support of school safety.

OUTPUTS (Measurements)

1. Number of combined state and local grant applications for school safety submitted annually.
2. Number of local school safety programs or projects funded by grants or other outside funding streams.

RESOURCES - See Section H of “Annex A – Missouri School Safety Resources.”

I. Legal – Statutory Constraints on School Safety

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Legal – Statutory Constraints on School Safety focus area is to ensure schools understand the real constraints of state and federal statutes such as HIPAA and FERPA on their ability to share information potentially significant to school safety. Many schools are currently beholden to misperceived constraints that hinder timely sharing of important information beyond the letter and intent of the laws.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (Recommendations)

State of Missouri

1. Develop a guidance document for educating stakeholders on the real and misperceived constraints HIPAA and FERPA impose on sharing school safety-related information.

2. Track legal updates and refine HIPAA/FERPA guidance document accordingly.
3. Encourage annual training on HIPAA/FERPA and sharing school safety related information.

Local Schools/Communities

1. Take part in available training related to HIPAA and FERPA and sharing school safety-related information.
2. Ensure teachers, staff, school safety coordinators, SROs and SPOs receive annual legal training and updates.

OUTPUTS (Measurements)

1. Number of HIPAA/FERPA violations committed annually by schools.
2. Percentage of schools providing legal training related to HIPAA/FERPA and sharing school safety-related information as part of staff professional development annually.
3. Percentage of school safety coordinators, SROs, and SPOs who attend legal training related to HIPAA/FERPA and sharing school safety-related information annually.

RESOURCES - See Section I of “Annex A – Missouri School Safety Resources.”

J. Cybersecurity & Risk

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Cybersecurity & Risk focus area is to ensure the security of digital information relating to students, their families and staff. Private personal information, as well as education records, must be protected at all times in the face of an ever-evolving spectrum of cyberthreats.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (Recommendations)

State of Missouri

1. Share emerging cybersecurity threat information with schools in a timely manner.
2. Develop a best practices guide to cybersecurity for schools.

Local Schools/Communities

1. Ensure schools are engaged in cyber threat information sharing via the school safety weekly update, the annual school safety conference, regional school safety coordinator training, and the Missouri School Safety Alert Network.
2. Designate a cybersecurity coordinator to implement best practices, develop data breach plans, and conduct cyber risk assessments.
3. Develop cybersecurity plans that complement high quality EOPs.
4. Evaluate cybersecurity plans via a recognized cyber risk evaluation methodology.
5. Make cybersecurity training a part of ongoing staff professional development.

OUTPUTS (Measurements)

1. Percentage of schools with a designated cybersecurity coordinator.
2. Percentage of schools that have a cybersecurity plan to complement their high quality EOP.
3. Percentage of schools that conduct annual cybersecurity training.
4. Percentage of schools participating in cybersecurity information sharing via the school safety weekly update, the annual school safety conference, regional school safety coordinator training, and the Missouri School Safety Alert Network.
5. Percentage of schools evaluating their cybersecurity plan via a recognized risk-evaluation methodology.

RESOURCES - See Section J of “Annex A – Missouri School Safety Resources.”

K. Other

The following items do not fall directly under the 10 school safety focus areas but came to the Task Force’s attention via public outreach sessions or other input. While they fall outside the focus areas of this strategic plan, they have a potential impact on school safety and are worthy of note. Each of the items have been considered by the Task Force in the overall report, with related resources listed in Annex A.

1. Negative Effects of Press Coverage of Mass Shootings
2. Sexual Predators in Schools & Expanded Background Checks for School Staff, Volunteers and Others

3. Schools as Public Polling Places
4. Responsible Gun Ownership & Gun Storage

(End of Strategic Plan)