

THE SCHOOL SAFTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE



BACKGROUND:

The Washington State **School Safety Advisory Committee** and **School Safety Center**, developed in 2001 legislative budget proviso language, address the growing complexities of school safety. In 2012, a revised approach to organizing and funding this effort is needed:

1. The **School Safety Advisory Committee** supports the operations of the School Safety Center by providing input, reviewing program proposals, and providing a forum for discussion of **school safety** issues.
2. The **School Safety Center** functions within the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to provide for consistent, statewide guidance and assistance on **school safety** and related issues to school districts, educational service districts, and community stakeholders.

DEFINITION OF SCHOOL SAFETY:

As defined by the **School Safety Advisory Committee**, the term “**school safety**” refers to and includes the critical and necessary environment in which effective teaching and learning can take place.

School safety supports student learning by creating and promoting a physically, emotionally, socially, and academically secure climate for students, staff, and visitors. A focus on **school safety** helps create a learning environment which has a positive impact on behavior, attendance/drop-out rates, and ultimately, academic achievement. It involves planning for the prevention, intervention, and mitigation of, and recovery from the variety natural, physical, social and technological threats to the school and the entire school community.

Broad categories of concern under the heading of **school safety** include, but are not limited to, negative or risky student behaviors, digital/Internet safety, gang activity in schools, disaster and emergency preparedness and the drills and sheltering concerns accompanying them, threats and threat assessment, other health and safety concerns.

More specific **school safety** issues under these broad categories include harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB), weapons in schools, cyberbullying and digital Internet safety and security, natural disasters, school mapping, weather-related issues, lockdowns, terrorism, epidemics, hazardous chemicals, commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and human trafficking.

SAMPLE BROAD SAFETY CATEGORIES:	SAMPLE SPECIFIC ISSUES: (These often overlap)
Student Behavior	HIB, Discipline; Threat Assessment; Weapons; Truancy/Becca
Digital/Internet Safety	Cyberbullying, Digital Safety, Digital/Network Security
Gang Activity	Gangs in Schools; School Violence, CSEC/Trafficking
Natural Disasters/Emergency Preparedness	Earthquake, Tsunami, Volcano, Flood and other Natural Disaster Preparedness; School Mapping
Safety Drills / Sheltering	Lockdowns; Sheltering in Place; Fire Drills
Threats	Personal; Threat Assessments; Terrorism

Other Health & Safety Issues	Air Quality; HVAC; Mold; Hazardous Chemicals; ATOD; Obesity; Epidemics; CSEC/Trafficking; Youth Suicide
Safe School Planning	RCW 28A.320.125 ; NIMS; ICS

FUNCTION OF THE SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER:

With this definition in mind, the **School Safety Center** supports student learning by assisting districts and schools in creating and promoting emotionally and physically safe schools for staff, students, and visitors. The methods employed include, but are not limited to:

1. Functioning as a clearinghouse for information to assist schools and community organizations to help them address school safety related issues.
2. Providing schools with school safety guidance and assistance to support school-based prevention, preparedness, mitigation, intervention, emergency response, and post-incident recovery programs.
3. Engaging in continuous professional development relevant to, prevention and intervention and school safety.
4. Collaborating with a cross-section of specialists to assist schools in comprehensive school safety planning.
5. Providing technical assistance to schools on reporting and documentation requirements for safety-related programs.
6. Collecting, interpreting, and disseminating relevant school safety data and information to interested stakeholders.
7. Proactively seeking input and advice from stakeholders to promote a dialogue regarding School Safety Center functions and priorities.

THE FUNCTION OF THE SCHOOL SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

The **School Safety Advisory Committee** advises the School Safety Center and the Superintendent of Public Instruction on issues relevant to school safety and the legislature. The Committee is comprised of stakeholders from the K-12 system, from a variety of professional disciplines, and from a variety of agencies and organizations who have an interest in promoting school safety in the K–12 public education system in Washington State.

The Committee meets regularly to consider the ongoing, routine issues that impact school safety, and also holds in-depth, issue-focused meetings to address more specific concerns. The Committee provides input and feedback to the Safety Center, the Superintendent, and indirectly to member organizations on matters related to school safety and the legislature.

OPERATION OF THE SCHOOL SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

I. MEMBERSHIP: Member-ship shall be comprised of stakeholders from the K-12 system, a variety of professional disciplines, and a variety of agencies and organizations who have an interest in promoting school safety in the K–12 public education system in Washington State.

Committee Membership shall include, but is not limited to, representation from the following stakeholder groups: OSPI, AWSP (Principals/School Admin.), WASA (Superintendents), ESD’s, WEA

(Teachers/Other Staff), Emergency Management , Law Enforcement/Security; Fire, Health/Social Services, Higher Ed., Parent/Student Organizations, Private Schools, and the Legislature.

II. GOVERNANCE: As the Committee is comprised of volunteers, role expectations shall be clearly defined in writing. Time expectations shall also be clearly explained so as to not place an undue burden on any person or organization. Committee roles shall include, at a minimum the following:

- A. One (1) Chair, appointed by the Superintendent for a term of two school years (July 1- June 30). There are no limits on the number of terms a Chair may serve.
- B. One (1) Legislative Liaison, who coordinates Committee activities with legislators and legislative staff. The Legislative Liaison functions may be shared by more than one Committee member.
- C. One (1) OSPI School Safety Center staff member.

The Chair will facilitate all meetings, and will designate a substitute if s/he cannot be present at a meeting. The School Safety Center Program Supervisor is the Superintendent’s representative at Committee meetings, and receives all requests for policy, regulatory, or budget proposals for the Superintendent’s consideration.

III. MEETINGS:

- A. **FREQUENCY AND LOCATION:** The committee shall meet monthly on the first Thursday of each month.
 - 1. To the extent possible, meetings will rotate throughout the state at the Educational Service Districts (ESD’s).
 - 2. The K–20 system shall be employed to provide maximum coverage throughout the state, and limit the amount of travel time required of participants.
 - 3. There will be no regularly scheduled meetings in July or September.
- B. **AGENDAS:** Advisory Committee meeting agendas will provide time for:
 - 1. Updates from ongoing committees, programs or safety-related topics,
 - 2. Presentation and/or discussion of a specific safety-related issue,
 - 3. Input and feedback on regional and local school safety concerns.
 - 4. Unless otherwise noted, meeting times will run from 9:00 a.m. until noon.
- C. **INFORMATION:** All pertinent information related to the [School Safety Advisory Committee](#) will be posted on the [School Safety Center](#) web site in a timely manner.

