

## **Appendix A: Topics Discussed during State School Safety Listening Tour**

- Physical security of schools
- The role of SROs (school resource officers) in schools
- Programs for students
- Training for school officials, law enforcement, and others
- Bullying and cyber bullying
- Mental health
- Collaboration and communication
- Parents and families
- Importance of trusted adult or mentor
- The role of the juvenile justice system

### **Summary of comments for each topic**

#### **Physical security of schools**

Recent school shootings such as Sandy Hook have made parents, teachers, students and administrators very concerned about the physical security and level of safety at their schools; and this topic was discussed at length. Many North Carolina schools are decades old and were not built specifically with physical security in mind, so there are challenges in retrofitting these buildings. Many have open campuses and multiple points of entry. Some of the upgrades to schools that have been made or are in progress include having locked doors, one single entry and exit point, a buzz-in system, cameras, Blackboxes (a digital Blackbox system was suggested), lockdown drills, metal detectors, hallway monitoring, panic bars and buttons in classrooms, and cameras on school buses. At the community forums, proprietors of companies suggested installing bullet resistant glass, though it is unclear if any schools in the state have taken this step.

Also discussed was the delicate balance between providing security and maintaining a comfortable learning environment. Some students commented that when they were in schools that had heightened levels of security, the school did not feel as safe as schools that had less security hardware. Students stated that the relationships with teachers and their SRO coupled with the management/leadership style of the principal made them feel safe more so than the facility itself. Multiple examples were given of the school administration intervening a threat to the school before the threat could materialize. These instances of effective intervention increased students' feelings of safety and security at school.

Assessing school safety was completed in very different manners among the counties visited. Some schools rely on law enforcement to lead the assessment, others are using outside sources for consultation, and lastly, some schools are gathering only their own administrators to determine needed improvements. Overall, the county commissioners and local board of education members were fully supportive of any and all methods of school safety assessments.

## **The role of SROs in schools**

Some who spoke only had positive words to say about their SROs. SROs were mentioned as having many roles within the school community. In addition to their law enforcement duties, several were described as mentors, tutors, and counselors. Many used their free time to serve as sports coaches and club advisors. Furthermore, there was involvement from law enforcement officers not assigned to the school that also fostered positive relationships and community support. One Sheriff was the school's basketball team coach and some police officers helped the school by providing support with evening and after-school activities. One respondent called their SRO "an appendage to the school" and "part of the school family." Students stated that the SRO had helped them see law enforcement as less scary, and that with the SRO in the school every day they felt safe. Overall, students felt very comfortable reporting things to the SRO. Many parents expressed a desire to have SROs in their elementary schools in addition to the middle and high schools. They believe it will create a safer environment for their children.

On the other side of things, parents expressed concerns that having an SRO present led to more students being charged for incidents that in previous years would have been handled internally by the schools. This led to discussion around what some call the "school to prison pipeline". The pipeline is described as youth who end up in the juvenile justice system are more likely to drop out of school and subsequently continue down a less pro-social path. Some respondents were concerned that non-serious complaints were being doled out unfairly which is one causal factor of DMC (Disproportionate Minority Contact) in some juvenile justice systems.

## **Programs for students**

At several of the events, school officials, service providers, and parents mentioned programs they have implemented in their communities and schools to help children. School affiliated respondents most commonly mentioned the PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) program, which is an evidence-based program in the classroom that promotes a predictable and effective environment for learning.

Various school officials mentioned the negative effects of out-of-school suspensions and that more options for troubled students should be available. In places where alternatives are being used the programs described were in-school suspension (ISS), community service, and teen courts. Teen courts in particular were seen in a very positive light from all sides, including judges, as they allow for immediate consequences for infractions without the repercussions of going through the juvenile justice system. Many mentioned the positive effects of the programs funded by JCPCs (Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils) including structured day, mentoring, counseling, among others in their communities. Other programs that were mentioned included those that taught responsibility, resiliency, and sensitivity.

## **Training for school officials, law enforcement, and others**

Several schools mentioned that they have implemented training to law enforcement and school officials on CIT (Crisis Intervention Training) and mental health training. However, others noted that these kinds of training were still needed in their areas. One area of concern was in the limited availability of SRO training. Many felt that SROs needed additional training and the SROs in attendance agreed that such training would be welcomed. However, the challenge they experienced was that trainings were often a week long, and they did not want to leave their schools for that long during the regular school year. It then becomes logistically difficult to accommodate all SROs during the summer months for the training. Participants also stated that they felt teachers needed additional training, as they are often the first to spot the warning signs of mental health issues and/or violence in students. In particular, it was felt that teachers should receive training on identifying mental illness, classroom management skills, conflict management, threat detection, and crisis prevention.

## **Bullying**

Bullying, and more specifically, cyber bullying, was mentioned as a significant concern by many parents, mental health professionals, students, and school officials. Several people noted that with cyber bullying, the abuse can start at school and continue when the child goes home – online, where it can become even more emotionally scarring. In these cases the audience for the harassment is larger and without needed boundaries. Some parents expressed frustration that their child's bullying situations at school were not handled appropriately and effectively by the school and/or school system.

In recent years, the strategies to address bullying have increased in the schools. Many school systems have developed ways for students to anonymously report incidents of bullying, including toll free numbers, anonymous email, and texting. The most effective mechanisms for bullying reporting are those that allow the reporter to be completely anonymous. Anti-bullying student groups and related efforts have also been formulated. One respondent suggested that a survey should be sent to students, asking about the extent of bullying at their schools. Another panelist mentioned that a new word has been created called “bully-cide,” defined as when a child commits suicide because of extensive bullying by their peers.

## **Mental health**

Overwhelmingly, the topic of mental health came up more often than any other. Most everyone who discussed their perceptions felt that mental health services needed to be expanded in their schools and communities. Regarding the schools, there were in-depth discussions around identification strategies and responsibilities for teachers and school administrators of students at-risk or currently burdened by mental health issues. Many felt that there needs to be a “system of care” approach, in which interdisciplinary teams work with the child and their family to provide wraparound services that take into consideration an individualized, culturally relevant care plan. Some expressed concern that with the recent funding cuts, there are not enough counselors, social

workers, and psychologists in the school system. Additionally, there are various barriers to children receiving community-based mental health care, including cost, transportation, and the social stigma of having a mental illness. Many felt that there are also barriers to school support teams working with these providers in the community because of HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) legal restrictions related to confidentiality in patient care. Overall, it was felt that to adequately address mental health we need to improve in all areas; prevention, intervention, crisis response, and recovery.

### **Collaboration and communication**

Another common theme was that everyone needs to work together if we want children to succeed. There needs to be communication between parents, school administrators, support staff, teachers, law enforcement, and mental health providers. Everyone needs to be aware of what others are doing for the children and what services are available to them. With proper communication, potential problems with children can be dealt with in the prevention stage, before it ever becomes a larger concern. Interestingly, several panelists in the western area of NC commented that they already felt they had strong collaboration in their communities.

### **Parents and Families**

A reoccurring theme throughout the events was how important parent involvement is for children to do well in school and develop into healthy young adults. Many parents who attended the forums lamented that they knew of other parents who did not get involved with their child's activities at school, either because of apathy, their own bad experiences at school or due to having to work many jobs to support their families. Some panelists mentioned that with cyber bullying especially the schools need the parents to get involved and be aware of what their children are doing on computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices. One effective strategy incorporated to connect with parents was a requirement of two parent-teacher meetings held off the school grounds, each school year. A particular connection obstacle discussed during the Latino school forum was that Latino parents commonly have their own particular set of challenges when engaging with schools, including but not limited to: a language barrier; not being familiar with the American school system; having to move frequently for family and work; and generally not trusting of the school establishment. In some discussions, invested adults felt that children experience problems at school because there are significant problems with family members in their homes. Some suggested therapy programs that involve the entire family would be most effective to address these issues. School and community stakeholders suggested the evidence-based family skills training program called Strengthening Families is an effective model to best engage parents and improve family dynamics.

One effective communication strategy to engage parents was when the school administrator would provide weekly announcements via recorded telephone messages. This informed the parents of upcoming events, needs of the students, and volunteer opportunities. Another strategy discussed

in multiple locations that specifically helped with academic connectedness was an online system of students' grades updated weekly (or thereabouts) for parents to track their child's progress.

### **Importance of trusted adult or mentor**

Another often repeated topic was the importance of every child having a trusted adult they can talk to and look up to. It was mentioned that many children do not have this at home. People suggested that teachers, SROs, counselors, and even other students should reach out to every child for this mentoring. Some even suggested a formalized mentoring program in the schools. Examples of older student to younger student mentoring relationships were provided in a few locations. Secretary Wos, Department of Health and Human Services, remarked "We heard a repeated theme from the students that they are longing for participation from adults...We shouldn't be bystanders because of policy. Kids' safety is our responsibility and we have to encourage others to act."

### **The role of the juvenile justice system**

The juvenile justice system was mentioned frequently at the forums, in both positive and negative ways. Juvenile court counselors described that when complaints are made on juvenile offenders, the juveniles are thoroughly evaluated for the following:

- Risk of future offending,
- Individual needs,
- Family dynamics, and
- Mental health and substance use.

Based on the intake evaluation findings, juveniles can receive community-based services before there is a need to send the juvenile to court. Juvenile court counselors have the discretion to divert the juvenile to services and programs in lieu of court, and as needed, the referred programs often involve the juvenile's entire family. For juveniles who show a high level of risk they are processed through the court system and then often put under probation or other court-ordered supervision with requirements to attend school regularly, obey parents/guardians and other adults, as well as participate in treatment and/or pro-social programs.

Some people expressed concern that the schools are sending far too many young children into the juvenile justice system for very minor offenses. If those juveniles are adjudicated for a delinquent offense, it can have a devastating effect on their lives, leading them to be more likely to drop out of school and possibly commit more delinquent or criminal acts. In addition as mentioned above, this often happens in a disproportionate way, leading to concerns about DMC. For students who struggle in school academically, the key is to determine the factors affecting the youth's behavior and intervene early so that juvenile or criminal justice system involvement is not necessary.

## Appendix B

### Part 1: Events of Counties Visited

#### Day 1 – Chowan County, April 9, 2013

The Edenton-Chowan school system was a good starting point for the listening tour. The schools visited have enthusiastic and experienced administrators. Law enforcement and the school system have a myriad of relationships and supports. At one school, law enforcement has partnered with 4-H to provide pro-social activities for youth during the summer. The money needed to support the program comes completely from donations. Some respondents during the discussions stated that more access to mental health services was needed.

- 1:30 pm Arrived at Central Office of Edenton-Chowan Schools  
Met with the Superintendent Dr. Smith, Edenton-Chowan Schools and Ben Matthews, DPI from 1:30-1:50 pm
- Discussed county economy, law enforcement, and school safety drills
- 2:00 pm Arrived at Chowan Middle School  
Met with principal and school resource officer  
Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices
- 2:50 pm Arrived at White Oak Elementary and D.F. Walker Elementary School (on same campus)  
Met with both principals  
Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices
- 3:45 pm Arrived at John A. Holmes High School  
Met with principal and school resource officer  
Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices  
Met with a group of 5 students and select school staff after school
- 4:30 pm Stakeholders Meeting at John A. Holmes High School  
The entire State delegation who attended the meeting included representatives from: DPS, DPI, SBI, and DHHS. Delegation met with community leaders, including school superintendent, law enforcement, county commissioner chair, county managers, city council member, mayor, representative from health department, judge, representative from mental health, youth member of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC), and elected officials. Secretary Shanahan led the discussion.
- Discussed school safety needs
- 6:00 pm School Safety Forum at the College of the Albemarle
- 6-7 pm – Presentations  
7-8 pm – Open discussion
- 8:30 pm Forum adjourned at 8 pm. Center staff stayed behind and answered individual questions from the public.

## **Day 2 – Carteret County, April 10, 2013**

The second school system visited provided an example of the tough decision-making that is required when the school budget is tight. Recent budget cuts led to the decision to keep specific teaching positions instead of SROs. In lieu of not having as many SROs in the schools now, law enforcement patrol has increased at the schools and officers are on hand to help with the morning and afternoon pick-ups and drop-offs.

- 2:30 pm Arrived at West Carteret High School  
Met with principal, school resource officer, and 4 selected students
- 3:45 pm Arrived at Morehead City Primary School  
Met with principal  
Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices
- 4:30 pm Stakeholders Meeting at Morehead City Primary School  
The entire State delegation who attended the meeting included representatives from DPS, DPI, SBI, and DHHS. Delegation met with community leaders, including school superintendent, law enforcement, county commissioner chair, county managers, city council member, mayor, representative from health department, judge, representative from mental health, youth member of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC), and elected officials. Secretary Shanahan led the discussion.
- Discussed school safety needs
- 6:00 pm School Safety Forum at Morehead City Primary School
- 6-7 pm – Presentations  
7-8 pm – Open discussion
- 8:30 pm Forum adjourned at 8 pm. Center staff stayed behind and answered individual questions from the public.

## **Day 3 – Watauga County, April 17, 2013**

The third school system visited, like the others, had a cadre of stakeholders attend the afternoon meeting. As with other school systems, SROs are not assigned to the elementary schools. One DARE officer covers 7 of the 8 elementary schools. The state delegation heard about ad hoc created programs to fill gaps of security and mental health resources at the schools, i.e. SAFE and the After School Counseling Center.

- 2:30 pm Arrived at Watauga High School  
Met with principal and school resource officer  
Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices  
Met with a classroom of students and teacher after school
- 4:00 pm Stakeholders Meeting at Watauga High School  
The entire State Delegation who attended this meeting included DPS, DPI, SBI and DHHS representatives. Delegation met with community leaders, including school superintendent, law enforcement, county commissioner chair, county manager, city council member, mayor, representative from health department, judge or district attorney, representative from mental health, youth member of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC), and elected officials. Secretary Shanahan led the discussion.
- Discussed school safety needs

- 5:30 pm School Safety Forum at Watauga High School  
 5:30-6:30 pm – Presentations  
 6:30-7:30 pm – Open discussion
- 8:00 pm Forum adjourned at 7:30 pm. Center staff stayed behind and answered individual questions from the public.

#### **Day 4 – Jackson County, April 18, 2013**

Jackson County’s collaborative infrastructure—mental health, schools, community, law enforcement and families—was discussed at length and with great detail. Although the model Jackson employs might work for them, there are certainly other effective ways to provide a continuum of wraparound services for youth and their families. The state delegation did find it interesting that mental health personnel and providers were physically located in the schools.

- 2:30 pm Arrived to visit an elementary school  
 Met with school principal  
 Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices
- 3:30 Arrived at Smoky Mountain High School  
 Met with principal and school resource officer  
 Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices  
 Met with a select group of students and staff after school
- 4:15 Stakeholders Meeting at Smoky Mountain High School  
 The entire State delegation who attended this meeting included DPI, SBI and DHHS representatives. The delegation met with community leaders, including school superintendent, law enforcement, county commissioner chair, county manager, city council member, mayor, representative from health department, judge or district attorney, representative from mental health, youth member of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC), and elected officials. Secretary Shanahan led the discussion.
  - Discussed school safety needs
- 6:00 pm School Safety Forum at the Southwestern Community College  
 6-7 pm – Presentations  
 7-8 pm – Open discussion
- 8:30 pm Forum adjourned at 8:00 pm. Center staff stayed behind and answered individual questions from the public.

#### **Day 5 – Durham County, April 23, 2013**

The fifth county visited provided the state delegation with a slightly different view of the education and socialization a child can receive in school. The middle and high school students were quite vocal about older students providing mentoring and bullying interventions. They also thoroughly enjoy during- and after-school options that are offered; special interest groups, and various musical and theater groups.

- 2:30 pm Arrived at Durham School of the Arts High School and Middle School

Met with principal and school resource officer  
Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices

3:30 pm Met with 30 students and select staff to discuss school safety concerns

4:30 pm Stakeholders Meeting at Durham School of the Arts  
The entire State delegation who attended this meeting included DPS, DPI, SBI and DHHS representatives. Delegation met with community leaders, including school superintendent, law enforcement, county commissioner chair, county manager, city council member, mayor, representative from health department, judge or district attorney, representative from mental health, youth member of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC), and elected officials.

- Discussed school safety needs

6:00 pm School Safety Forum at Durham School of the Arts  
6-7 pm – Presentations  
7-8 pm – Open discussion

8:30 pm Forum adjourned at 8:00 pm. Center staff stayed behind and answered individual questions from the public.

### **Day 6 – Cabarrus County, April 25, 2013**

In the sixth county the state delegation heard more about dealing with larger schools and a large school system. One school recently raised over \$2,500 to get a national speaker to visit and present on bullying. The students and teachers were emotionally moved by the presentation. Also in Cabarrus, we learned about an advanced configuration of cameras in the schools. Aside from the school having visibility via their cameras, the cameras also stream to an undisclosed remote location.

2:30 pm Arrived at Concord Middle School  
Met with principal and school resource officer  
Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices  
Met with a classroom of students and select staff

3:30 pm Arrive at Concord High School  
Met with principal and school resource officer  
Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices

4:30 pm Stakeholders Meeting at Concord High School  
The entire state delegation who attended to this meeting included DPS, DPI, SBI and DHHS representatives. The delegation met with community leaders, including school superintendent, law enforcement, county commissioner chair, county manager, city council member, mayor, representative from health department, judge or district attorney, representative from mental health, youth member of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC), and elected officials. Secretary Shanahan led the discussion.

- Discussed school safety needs

6:00 pm School Safety Forum at the Concord High School  
6-7 pm – Presentations  
7-8 pm – Open discussion

8:30 pm Forum adjourned at 8:00 pm. Center staff stayed behind and answered individual questions from the public.

### **Day 7 – Cumberland County, April 30, 2013**

The seventh county visited provided the state delegation with a broader view of the different levels of resources available to schools in the same local education agency. Some of the schools were built in the past two decades and have recommended safety features, whereas other schools are facing safety challenges due to old construction and a lack of technological advances. It was reported that 80% of the schools were built before 1985. Regardless of the facility structure, in each type of school there were dedicated leaders providing students with the best educational experience possible.

12:30 pm Arrived at Ferguson-Easley Elementary School  
Met with principal and school custodian  
Extensive tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices

1:45 pm Arrive to visit Reid Ross Classical  
Met with principal  
Brief tour highlighting safety concerns and best practices

3:00 pm Arrived at E.E. Smith High School  
Met with principal and school resource officer  
Met with a select group of students and staff

4:15 pm Stakeholders Meeting at E.E. Smith High School  
The entire state delegation who attended this meeting included DPS, DPI, SBI and DHHS representatives. The delegation met with community leaders including: school superintendent, law enforcement, county commissioner chair, county manager, city council member, mayor, representative from health department, judge or district attorney, representative from mental health, youth member of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC), and elected officials.

- Discussed school safety needs

6:00 pm School Safety Forum at E.E. Smith High School  
6-7 pm – Presentations  
7-8 pm – Open discussion

8:30 pm Forum adjourned at 8:00 pm. Center staff stayed behind and answered individual questions from the public.

### **Day 8 – Guilford County, May 2, 2013**

The eighth county visited provided another strongly connected student body in one school. However, the school recently experienced a violent incident and a separate event which required a lockdown. These, among other factors, had students feeling like they were not as safe as in years past at the same school. However, there was a strong support system as counselors, teachers, and support staff members all know the students by name and have developed relationships over the years. Other adults in the school have helped students via mentoring and helping them to prepare for college.

2:30 pm Arrived at Ragsdale High School  
Met with principal and school resource officer  
Met with 25 students to discuss school safety concerns

- 4:15 pm Stakeholders Meeting at Ragsdale High School  
The entire state delegation who attended the meeting included DPS, DPI, SBI and DHHS representatives. The delegation met with community leaders, including school superintendent, law enforcement, county commissioner chair, county manager, city council member, mayor, representative from health department, judge or district attorney, representative from mental health, youth member of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC), and elected officials.
- Discussed school safety needs
- 6:00 pm School Safety Forum at Ragsdale High School  
6-7 pm – Presentations  
7-8 pm – Open discussion
- 8:30 pm Forum adjourned at 8:00 pm. Center staff stayed behind and answered individual questions from the public.

### **Day 9 – Durham County, Latino Forum, May 7, 2013**

- 5:00 pm Arrived at 5:00
- School Safety Forum at Durham Public Schools’ Staff Development Center  
6:30 - 8 pm open discussion
- 8:30 pm Forum adjourned at 8:00 pm. Center staff stayed behind and answered individual questions from the public.

### **Part 2: Comments from each of the public forums**

#### **#1 - Edenton School Forum Comments**

##### **The Role of SROs**

- It was reported that they had 6 full time SROs in the high schools and middle schools and two temporarily in the elementary school after Sandy Hook.

##### **Programs available to students**

- They implemented the PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) program to build good character at school.
- The Explorers Program: 25 children can shadow police officers and have their own uniforms.

## **Training**

- They have the WATCH D.O.G.S. program, through which dads, grandparents, brothers, etc. volunteer at school. They patrol the halls and eat lunch on campus. They are an extra set of eyes at the school.

## **Bullying**

- Students who spoke mentioned that bullying was a problem.
- An elementary school teacher has encouraged students to report bullying to her. This has gotten a good response since they can see she takes it seriously.

## **Mental Health**

- They have phone lines open 24 hours a day, staffed by trained clinicians that can triage calls. They do an initial suicide and homicide assessment and can deploy a mobile unit.
- Sometimes rules about confidentiality can create obstacles to communication.
- They use a “system of care” approach with a child and family team. All stakeholders are involved to help the child.
- There are duty-to-warn laws in case of violence.
- One company works with the juvenile justice system to do intensive follow-up assessments. They use multisystemic therapy, which is an evidence-based program.

## **Collaboration and Communication**

- Those in the forum noted how important it was to work together and collaborate, especially when dealing with mental health.

## **Parents/Families**

- Many noted that they need more parental involvement in the child’s life.

## **Physical Security**

- The high school has an open campus and has community members help to patrol. The school had over 30 entrances that cannot be closed off.

## **The Role of the Juvenile Justice System**

- The system can only help the kids that come into the system. They try to resolve the problems they see.

## **Other Issues**

- Gang prevention is needed.

## **#2 - Carteret School Forum Comments**

### **The Role of SROs**

- SROs should be introduced to kids at the beginning of the school year so the kids know why the SROs are there.
- SROs need more CIT training.
- One parent wanted SROs back in the elementary school.
- Another parent believes that SROs should be involved earlier in all incidents.
- One suspected that the school's reporting avoidance kept the SRO from knowing about his child's bullying.

### **Programs available to students**

- Teen court
- Smart Start—for kids age 0-5 in Craven County
- Structured day programs
- Community service
- Program to help get children transitioned from YDCs back into society

### **Training**

- SROs need more CIT training.
- Law enforcement needs more mental health training.

### **Bullying**

- Parent of student discussed bullying that he did not feel was handled appropriately.

### **Mental Health**

- More comprehensive system of care is needed.
- Law enforcement needs more mental health training.
- They reported needing more psychologists in schools.

### **Parents/Families**

- Many noted that they need more parental involvement in the child's life.

### **Physical Security**

- In the middle school, the office is centrally located, the doors are locked, and there's a camera.
- At White Oak, they foresee putting in a single entry, locked door, and a buzz-in system with a CCTV to the main office.
- They practice lockdowns in the schools.

## **Other Issues**

- The House Bill to add SROs, counselors, social workers, and psychologists was mentioned. Right now, there are 13 social workers and each handles 3-4 schools in Pitt County.
- A parent suggested implementing uniforms and standard issue backpacks. He also thinks that kids who mess up should have a step before they are sent to the juvenile justice system.

## **#3 - Watauga School Forum Comments**

### **The Role of SROs**

- Student reported that he felt comfortable going to his SRO with problems.

### **Programs available to students**

- Rachel's Challenge
- Sensitivity training
- BATS program—suspended students sent to work at places like rest homes
- PBIS system
- Instead of bystanders, call students “upstanders”

### **Training**

- Classroom management skills training for teachers—2 day workshop
- Security professional offered to provide training to teachers on defense tactics, distractions, and threat detection.
- Stated they needed to train new teachers on what to expect before they begin teaching
- The Justice Academy has a new single officer course, but it's difficult for SROs to attend, as they want to go when school is not in session.

### **Bullying**

- Avery County has a real time reporting app for bullying and suspicious behavior.
- A professor was concerned about gay hate speech in schools.
- There is a rise in bullying due to social media – the attacks happen online.

### **Mental Health**

- Said they needed to increase school-based therapy to improve access to mental health services
- Said they needed a system of care and referral system
- Other responsibilities of counselors take away from their primary purpose
- 20 districts in North Carolina have no psychologists, and 19 have no social workers.

### **Collaboration and Communication**

- The Director of the Safe and Healthy Schools program had great collaboration with the JPCP.

- It was stated that the Western part of the state has great collaboration, but needs to increase it.

#### **Parents/Families**

- We need more collaboration with parents to prevent online bullying.

#### **Physical Security**

- Every school has a Blackbox with critical information on security.
- Developer of Digital Blackbox app discussed his product. It would make information easier to update. Teachers could report their status safely. Allows for file sharing among staff and emergency staff. It was stated that the technology to support this is not available in all schools and maybe just the urban areas.
- Used to have live scenarios at the old high school
- They put cameras on every bus.
- A student wanted to see the Code Red and fire drills increased so the students know what to do in emergencies.

#### **Importance of Trusted Adult/Mentor**

- Student said that every teacher should find a student to talk to. It can change their life.

#### **#4 – Jackson School Forum Comments**

##### **The Role of SROs**

- It was stated that SROs have many functions in the schools. They were called an “appendage to the school” and “part of the school family.”
- Another parent wanted SROs in the elementary schools.
- A poll showed that 77% were in support of having SROs in elementary schools.

##### **Programs available to students**

- Scotch Creek Elementary has peer mediation.
- It was suggested that students need training on appropriate cell phone use.
- It was suggested that we need to teach resiliency in schools.

##### **Bullying**

- Both verbal and online bullying has been seen. School does not want to be the “cell phone police” and remove cell phones from schools.
- The victims of bullying need to learn their options.
- Students should do a school climate survey to look at bullying.
- There was the idea of “social media for social good”—doing positive things online.
- Swain County leads the state in taking an anti-bullying pledge on Facebook.

## **Mental Health**

- Mental health providers are able to collaborate with Jackson City Schools. There is “seamless treatment.” The therapists can talk to the school social workers and psychologists and help in imminent situations. They can help identify risk factors in kids so they can get treatment.
- It was stated that we need school-wide intervention and need to teach social skills.
- Support staff are stretched too thin—the recommendation is 1 school psychologist for every 750 kids, but in Jackson County it is double that.
- FERPA and HIPAA hampers the sharing of mental health information.

## **Collaboration and Communication**

- The superintendent serves on a collaborative team with other educational leaders, which is very rare.
- It was stated that they need more communication.

## **Parents/Families**

- Parents need to teach their children appropriate cell phone use.
- It is hard for parents to keep up with the technology to protect their children.
- It was stated that they needed to address the mental health needs of parents.

## **Other Issues**

- Smaller class size can get students the attention they need. Budget cuts have affected their ability to provide this.
- They have software through which SROs and counselors can share information.

## **#5 - Durham School Forum Comments**

### **The Role of SROs**

- Many at this forum raised concerns that the presence of the SRO leads to more juveniles ending up in the justice system as delinquent and about the disproportionate nature of this (DMC).
- It was suggested that SROs wear suits instead of uniforms in schools. The panel felt that the uniform was important in case of emergency. Also, the students see the SRO in other roles already, such as when they serve as coaches or directors of clubs.
- There was worry about the “school-to-prison pipeline,” especially among young black males.
- A 1996 GCC report recommended bringing SROs into schools.
- Many don’t see all that the SRO does.

### **Programs available to students**

- A student suggested to bring back recess, because kids need physical exercise.
- He also suggested that more schools need special clubs that the kids can join.

- There is a video called “Run, Hide, Fight,” done by DHS and the city of Houston. It shows a dramatization of a school locked down with active shooters.
- The schools use positive behavior systems.

### **Training**

- It was stated that more training was needed on trauma and mental health to identify when services are needed.

### **Mental Health**

- People were worried that too much focus on SROs means less focus on mental health.
- It was cautioned that we shouldn’t stereotype or pigeonhole kids. We need to proceed with caution when profiling high-risk students. Sandy Hook and Columbine shooters didn’t fit any standard profile.
- We need to fund safety net programs and anti-stigma programs.

### **Collaboration and Communication**

- It was reported that court counselors collaborate quite a bit with schools.
- Communication is important—need interpreters at these events.

### **Parents/Families**

- It was stated that parents should be involved in school safety.

### **Physical Security**

- In Brunswick County, they have a secure line where visitors type in their name and address and a photo is taken.
- Durham County has metal detectors in schools.
- It was recommended to move around metal detectors so students never know where they are.
- They keep data on all their lockdowns.

### **Importance of Trusted Adult/Mentor**

- It was stated that every student needs an adult in the school they can go to and trust.

### **The role of the Juvenile Justice System**

- Concerns with the “school-to-prison pipeline”
- Concerns with DMC.

### **Other Issues**

- The problem is not crime; it’s poverty. So many kids live in poverty.

## **#6 – Cabarrus School Forum Comments**

### **The Role of SROs**

- Their motto is, “We see, we listen, we care.”
- They serve in many capacities—coaches of wrestling, teach about law, law counseling. The law enforcement component is last a lot of the time.
- They have performance learning centers with SROs, where they talk about staying in school, the effects of alcohol, etc.
- The Vice Chair of the JCPC wanted to see SROs in elementary schools so the kids can feel more safe.

### **Programs available to students**

- Chair of the JCPC in Cabarrus County is proud of their teen court.
- Alternative education program addresses problems before they get too severe.
- They have performance learning centers with SROs, where they talk about staying in school, the effects of alcohol, etc.
- The “Lift Academy” in Charlotte was mentioned.
- They have launched problem-based learning to address learning style needs.

### **Training**

- They would like to see specialized training that is trauma-focused and sex offender treatment focused.
- DPI has online modules to train teachers on becoming aware of students who might be threats.
- NC used to do a Safe Schools Conference with SROs, mental health, and others. It was suggested to bring this back.

### **Mental Health**

- We need to focus on prevention, intervention, crisis response, and recovery.
- There is too much stigma regarding mental health. Mental health treatment is like any other medical problem.
- There are not enough services for prevention and intervention.
- Counselors get too bogged down with testing to do their jobs.
- The Vice Chair of the JCPC wants to see more money for mental health.
- Co-pays can limit services.

### **Collaboration and Communication**

- It was stated that law enforcement interacts with many groups in the community.
- A school board member is also on the JCPC.

### **Parents/Families**

- They don’t see a lot of parent participation, as often the parents are working 2-3 jobs.

### **Physical Security**

- Schools in rural areas might have longer response times for law enforcement.
- Proprietor of company that creates bullet-resistant glass spoke about the cost of installing these in the schools.
- The Vice Chair of the JCPC wanted security cameras in schools and on buses.

### **Importance of Trusted Adult/Mentor**

- Kids need a “meaningful adult” in their lives.
- We need mentoring in schools.

### **Other Issues**

- The JCPC has \$360,000 in grant money that they use to run 5-6 programs in the city.
- The issue was raised of teachers carrying concealed weapons. The district was not in support of this and preferred training of more SROs.
- JCPC funding is very important.
- People learn differently—some by kinetic learning. Need to accommodate that.
- Small class size helps but is very costly.
- Data is also collected on independent schools in North Carolina, and they are included in statewide plans and training.

### **#7 – Cumberland School Forum Comments**

#### **The Role of SROs**

- SROs are aware of gang symbols and can ask other law enforcement officers if unsure.
- SROs can intervene in fights on campus, but other law enforcement deal with off-campus incidents.
- SROs can intervene in class skipping.

#### **Programs available to students**

- Programs for students like Strengthening Families can involve the parents.
- Cumberland County has mentoring
- Cumberland County is bringing in Big Brothers, Big Sisters.
- Cumberland County has a Gang Prevention Partnership.
- The Teens Making a Change (T-MAC) program
- It was stated that students need to learn how to deal with stress and strain better.

#### **Collaboration and Communication**

- The school needs to build relationships with students.

## **Parents/Families**

- They have a PTSA, which helps with parent involvement, but they want to see even more involvement.
- Programs like Strengthening Families can involve the parents.
- Many kids don't have a male figure at home, so we need to provide that at school.
- Another mentioned that they need more parental involvement.

## **Physical Security**

- They make sure doors are locked and teachers monitor hallways between classes.

## **Importance of Trusted Adult/Mentor**

- It was stated that they need more adults who care about kids.
- Many kids don't have a male figure at home, so we need to provide that at school.
- It was stated that they need caring adults in every school in the state.

## **The Role of the Juvenile Justice System**

- The juvenile justice system looks for ways to involve the parents.

## **Other Issues**

- Studies that looked at gangs showed that violence was elevated in schools with gang activity.
- Guilford County data showed that gangs were clustered around schools.
- Half of kids who experiment with gang culture never join a gang, and half who join end up leaving in a year.
- The school has an excellent connection to its alumni. There are scholarships and a reunion and many come back to teach.

## **#8 -Guilford School Forum Comments**

### **The Role of SROs**

- They have crisis intervention training tailored to SROs.
- It was suggested by a community member that SROs could be allocated to only the schools that need them the most, to not waste resources.
- It was stated that SROs have a role in the schools.
- They can move SROs if necessary.
- The SROs teach the school staff about crisis prevention.
- There are COP grants available so the schools can get more SROs.
- It was stated that the SROs build relationships with students and provide leadership; they do intervention and prevention.
- Having an SRO in the school decreases law enforcement response time.

### **Programs available to students**

- One person suggested that North Carolina should have state standards for social and emotional development of children.
- They applied for a grant that would provide counseling to kids that have witnessed a violent crime.
- They have Project Lazarus, which relates to prescription medication misuse.

### **Training**

- They have crisis intervention training tailored to SROs.
- The SROs teach the school staff about crisis prevention.
- A teacher mentioned that it would be good to have a resource list in every classroom so new teachers know who to contact for different situations.
- Law enforcement receives training in identifying mental illness related behaviors.

### **Bullying**

- The term “bully-cide” was mentioned in the forum—someone who commits suicide because of bullying.
- The area has a bully hotline to report bullying. It is advertised and is on their website. The number is provided to teachers, students, and parents. It was suggested that they robocall parents to make them aware of the hotline.

### **Mental Health**

- It was mentioned that they need to have a system of care.
- Their JCPC has funded a court psychologist, which allows kids to get a fast, thorough assessment.
- One person suggested that we are overmedicating our kids with antidepressants and medications for ADHD.
- They applied for a grant that would provide counseling to kids who have witnessed a violent crime.

### **Collaboration and Communication**

- The juvenile justice system wants to collaborate with the school so they are aware of the resources offered.
- It was mentioned that they all need to work together. It is a team effort.

### **Physical Security**

- Representatives from the company Clear Defense discussed installing ballistic glass in schools.
- The school system is replacing cameras, door locks, and looking at access in the schools.
- The school has a school security committee that meets regularly with law enforcement.
- In the summer, the SWAT team can explore the schools. They also have schematics of the schools.

## **Other Issues**

- There was a concern that the school is underreporting incidents in order to make their number of school suspensions look better.

## **#9 - Durham Hispanic Community School Forum comments**

### **Questions/comments from the audience**

#### **Mother of two sons, ages 4 and 9. Social worker and immigrant from Colombia.**

- I feel that in the Latino community, often there is a huge lack of trust and feeling that they do not belong. This is a barrier to them working with their children's school. They need to know how the system works.
- Everyone has a job to do, including the parent, but if the parent doesn't, it's a broken situation.
- Bullying is a big problem. My son is smart and was teased for doing well. He wanted to fail a test so he would fit in and not be teased. As a parent, I felt like I was kept on the side and not able to help because of the school's approach to this.
- If the parent is able to participate in the system, it's a better situation. Every person needs to participate in the child's education.
- School is just an example of what's happening in the bigger world.
- Right now, schools are lacking culture.
- A crisis at school can come from one child being left out or bullied.

#### **Sonny – Are teachers using resources for the Spanish speaking families?**

- I've heard of parents calling the school five times, but no one there speaks Spanish. There aren't enough resources in the school.

#### **Sonny – How can we build trust and make your kids feel safe?**

- Prevention starts at home. Everyone brings in what happens at home. Urban legends are happening. Someone has one bad experience with the school and it creates a huge fear in peoples' minds. They are worried about immigration status.
- The Latino parents have a lack of knowledge of the culture here and a lack of knowledge about their rights, for example the right to running water.
- It goes back to having a sense of worth. Many parents don't want to complain because it will cause trouble and make noise. They are worried about ICE and law enforcement. It's a huge obstacle, the elephant in the room.
- With Latino teenagers, you see a lot of pregnancy and dropping out. They say, "What's the point anyway?"
- They are missing a cultural identity.
- We do have Hispanic Heritage Month in September.
- I'm Colombian. People should be proud of their heritage. Many kids here are not. They have a sense of shame. They don't want to admit where they are from.
- I know that having programs such as dance in school can cost money.
- The Latino community moves a lot. With family and work. Sometimes they work out of state. The school can have a hard time contacting them. They change their phone number.

- Also, often the children speak English but the parents don't. If a letter is sent home from the school, the child tells the parent that it means he is doing well. A child can give a friend's number as his home number, and when the school calls, they answer, pretending to be the parent. Regular mail and a lot of follow-up calls are needed.
- I see problems with parents and with the system. Sometimes parents see their children as just victims of the system. Parents also have two jobs sometimes.
- I see sometimes how unfairly kids are suspended for doing the same thing.
- What programs can we do to help a child before they are out of control? Where is the prevention?
- Parents sometimes are in denial of what their children do and also fear not fitting in. Parents want their kids to fit in and succeed.
- There are a lot of SES issues in Durham.
- I have a 9 and 4 year old. The 9 year old does not always feel safe at school because of bullying. I feel I should have seen the signs that he was being bullied. It made me realize that it can happen to anyone.
- We need to have well prepared teachers that are trained in cultural competence. Speaking Spanish is not enough; they need the cultural understanding too. They need to understand diversity. This needs to be taught to those in social services and law enforcement too.
- In this area, we have few low-cost health care services.

**Sonny – If you had one thing to say to the Governor, what would you say?**

- If we don't embrace change, it will be bad. Change can be scary; that's in human nature. But change is development—moving forward. Maybe then we can see the tools already there. If there is a will, there is a way. Embrace change; analyze it. Every family is a cell in a healthy organism getting better. There are many struggles still every day. We need to help make it better.
- We have a lack of man power. Sometimes situations are not followed up on with a social worker or community liaison.
- Latino parents don't understand the complexities of school. They don't understand consequences of school absences. They have a fear. We need to inform parents of their expectations.
- To work better with the Latino community, you need to go to the local media that report to that community—radio stations, newspapers.
- You need to keep the language simple.
- You need to be seen in the community.

**Sonny – we reached out to the church and schools but not the Hispanic media.**

**PIO – Someone told me that having the Hispanic media here would make parents nervous and afraid to speak.**

- That is not my experience.
- You need to learn the leaders in the community and build relationships with them.
- Your message needs to be simple, clear, and honest.

### **Part 3: Comments from each of the stakeholder meetings**

At each school system visit there was a meeting with a cadre of key stakeholders in the county. The meetings lasted about an hour to an hour and a half each. Secretary Shanahan led the discussions and asked specifically relevant questions of each key leader. Time was also provided for representatives to add to the discussion if they were not called on already. Representatives from the local entities of mental health, the school system central office staff, board of education members, juvenile justice personnel, county commissioners, principals, and volunteers were all on hand.

Each stakeholder meeting presented some inconsistent messaging either about school system violence acts, mental health service provision, or safety and security resources/dispersion. It was difficult to decode the true premises behind the messages. Nonetheless, it was consistently found that no two systems (i.e., MH, schools, LE, or crossover therein) are alike and there is often variation in access to resources even within a given county.

The overall main themes that were heard were:

- Parental involvement is related to student success; and parental involvement could improve at most all schools.
- High-quality mental health services are difficult to access.
- Security of school facilities could be improved in almost all schools.
- Emergency responders should practice and have information to remain familiar with most schools.
- SROs provide qualitative benefits to students and staff and are a needed resource.

#### **#1 - Edenton / Chowan**

##### **Schools**

- Watch D.O.G.S. program—Dads of Great Students. Related male volunteers read to students and patrol the school. The business community can support the volunteers and give community service or comparable leave for the males to participate.
- Emergency Management Plan updated annually
  - Safety committee meets quarterly

##### **Mental Health**

- Getting services is a challenge; it would be helpful to have more counselors and social workers in the schools.
- MST and AMI (FFT) are present.
- “CIT takes a long time to implement.” -Eastern Carolina Behavioral Health representative
- “We heard a repeated theme from the students that they are longing for participation from adults... We shouldn’t be bystanders because of policy.... Kids’ safety is our responsibility and we have to encourage others to act... It is very important to be kind and compassionate.” –Secretary Wos, DHHS

## **Law Enforcement**

- School Board and the Sheriff's Department give money to support SROs
- LE assists with
  - evening/after school activities – was reported by a stakeholder that this means a lot to the kids
  - staff development
  - emergency training
- Sheriff is the coach of the basketball team
- Western campus (LE training center) is tasked with advanced SRO training
  - Already has rapid response training
  - Rapid deployment training provided through a train the trainer model – 900 officers trained to date

## **DARE Program**

- New program is different than the old one
- Hoping to provide DARE in elementary schools

## **Other**

- “The Center for Safer Schools should weed through all of the good and ‘feel good’ information and inform us of effective/best practices.” –Superintendent Dr. Smith

## **#2 – Carteret**

### **Schools**

- Calls have increased since Newtown, Connecticut shooting
- Drug and alcohol education taught in the schools (12-18 hours). We could use more substance abuse services
  - We have a vital need for kids K-12, especially suspended kids
- With new federal bond, we are asking for cameras and other hardware for schools -Ben Matthews
- We are training teachers to be aware of youth with mental health issues, but we are creating a groundswell of pseudo-psychiatrists -Ben Matthews
  - Board of Education member questioned “teaching teachers to be psychologists” and asked if there are legal issues related to that
  - Must have parental permission to assess; teachers are only helping to identify issues
    - If the parents don't cooperate, you can't do much unless you need to involuntarily commit a child
- Would be helpful if the Center could show the quality and degree of partnerships
- 62% of elementary school students 43% county-wide are on free and reduced lunch. We have poverty in schools and homes that are dysfunctional

## Mental Health

- Coastal Care (Mr./Dr. Foster Norman) agency is new to Carteret—became involved in July 2012
- We have a decent mental health structure, just not enough services
  - Good crisis response system, **not so good in terms of prevention**

## Law Enforcement

- “We must have people with arrest power in the school” -Chief Deputy of Sheriff Dept, who gave example of a father who came to pick up a child, but there was a custody order in place and the front office staff couldn’t figure out what was required.
- SROs served by the Sheriff’s Department
- SROs change some kids’ lives
- SROs read to students on Dr. Seuss Day
- When there were SROs, they were teachers, quite involved at the school, and helped with student character-building and other positive outcomes/relationships
- We have gang “wanna-bes”

## Other

County Commissioner said there is a constant shortage of money and providers and that “they are skating on thin ice.”

- It would be good to have one or two students and one or two law enforcement officers to funnel youth with needs through—for example, to know when “stuff” has happened on the weekends to be concerned about when students return to school -Eric (DOJ)
  - More incentives should be offered to kids so alerting adults doesn’t seem like snitching -Chase Ferguson
  - We also need to make parents more aware of the vital need to get children help; oftentimes schools file a juvenile petition to get access to services
- County Commissioner mentioned that Carteret is a Tier 3 county and has a hard time getting grant funding, though they really aren’t a wealthy county.
- The formula doesn’t seem fair, we do not have enough \$ for the number of youth who need to be in programs –JCPC member

## #3 - Watauga

### Schools

- Project SAFE – 200 volunteer officers
  - Currently certifies people through: DPS – DAC, Highway Patrol, and Sheriff’s Dept.
  - Certification hours are required
  - Highway Patrol officers spend time on campuses in cars while writing up reports; “We are trying to bridge the gap of schools not having SRO’s.” –SAFE Director

- ASC (After School Counseling/Center): College Graduate students provide counseling to students; SRO coordinates Center
- Appalachian State students are providing a 3-tiered program:
  - Early intervention team for students missing class, sleeping in class
  - CARE team
  - Threat Assessment Team
- Avery County Superintendent– Safety bully patrol on the school system’s website, anonymous reporting
  - Launching smart phone application this week for smart phones to report things that are happening in schools
  - Alts to Suspension Program gave back 1,800 days of community service
  - Starting an ES program of day treatment, hoping to expand to MS
  - “30 seconds in the crisis of life”: The teachers are the ones who will be there when a crisis happens
- DPI assistance:
  - reviews all school floor plans before construction
  - Online modules teachers are taking -
    - “Better understanding of student behavior” (1,800 teachers trained; 6-12<sup>th</sup> grade)
    - “Better understanding of younger students” (6,000 teachers trained; Pre K-5<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Advice from Eric: Anything you can do to invest in [exterior] signage is helpful, especially for emergency responders
  - “A lockdown is not a lockdown if you can’t lock the doors”
    - Someone suggested sensors on the doors to alert an SRO when a door is open that shouldn’t be
- Lottery money is not getting to education as the statute is written
- We do not have SROs in K-8; BOE member would like to have 1 in each school
- Juvenile justice counselors are very involved with the kids; we are small enough so that the JCCs know which kids are at risk; this gets discussed with MH and the schools.

### **Mental Health**

- MH entity (Smoky Mountain MH Center) supervises school counselors and social workers; 9 schools, 1 HS and 8 K-8
  - Almost 1 year into being managed care for Medicaid
  - Manages 5 counties with a care coordination manager
  - Most high risk/high cost driven clinician work with counselors and the schools (used to be funded by JCPC)
  - We provide school-based therapy for Pre K-12<sup>th</sup> grade

### **Law Enforcement**

- Secretary asked: “How is DARE working here?”
  - One officer is dedicated to the schools full-time; we think it is important enough to keep doing it
  - Statistics say DARE is very well received; faculty support it

- 42 deputies in the Dept., only 1 DARE officer that covers 7 of the 8 elementary schools
- Some officers come through the schools on their own because they have kids attending
  - It used to be that LE would come through the schools more formally
- One major concern is communication ability – they are about to transition to VIPER but it is still difficult to use communication devices in all parts of the school; Perkinsville area is tough for communication; and Hardin Park Elementary needs help
  - School told in prior week that they will receive GCC money to get VIPER
  - The infrastructure is still being built
- How many on PD force?
  - 26 officers; 17,500 students in school system
- “Petitions for mental health incompetency”, yet the people are home in 5 days. “We stopped warehousing the mentally ill. We need to have nursing style homes that take care and give the treatment they will need.” - Law enforcement officer

### **Other**

“The possibilities here are endless as he [the SRO] is running a large town with one officer and one gun.” –Principal Gasperson, Watauga High School

“We are kind of complacent. I don’t hear a lot about our safety. We have a great system but still a potential for danger.” -Mayor

### **#4 – Jackson**

SRO Avery: 1996 was a much different vibe, things have definitely changed. Children and parents have different problems. We are starting to see issues develop at the elementary school level, for example 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders with drug and assault issues

### **School**

- BOE member: We are trying to ask all schools what is needed as an assessment. I’m always concerned because of lack of funding.
- Cameras are on every school bus in Jackson County

### **Mental Health**

- “Our mental health system is totally broken.”
- Reclaiming Futures is in all 7 counties [in the district?]
  - “Community fellows” provide mentoring, work experience, and peer support
- Nancy Chastain: We had quite a few kids in our PRTFs. 90% of those in PRTFs were stabilized into local, community-based services. We meet with JCPC’s, we are all system-of-care trained.
- Jackson Psychological Services (Haywood, Jackson and Macon): 9 years in partnership with Jackson County schools providing free consultations. Over the years, we’ve noticed school

personnel are very good at recognizing students with problems. We do suicide and threat assessments.

- Serve 2,500 clients and families with 50 clinicians and a total of 120 employees
- Principal: Jackson Psychological is in the schools. They have become a part of the school community.
- Principal Vance (Cullowhee K-8): We are constantly collaborating. We have committees within the school examining students. If we identify a child, we talk to the parent first, then Jackson Psychological.

### **Law Enforcement**

- Dr. Murray: Response time from here to reservation is unacceptable

### **Other**

“Law enforcement tells you that their priority is children, and they show us every day.”

County Commissioner: “We have limited resources and had to make sacrifices. Our county employees have gone without raises.”

Dianne Whitman (DJJ): We are looking at directing the parents to MH first, then the kids

## **#5 – Durham**

### **School**

- 12 High Schools in the county
- Current “SMART goal”: Every parent to have at least 2 meetings with school staff off campus per school year (schools are trying to reach parents in the community so the parents feel more comfortable)
- Ben Matthews: DPI has received calls for retro-fitting locks (changing them out); there is federal \$ coming to provide same.
- HS superintendent said he doesn’t hear that teachers shy away from identifying youth with issues; it’s the parents who usually shy away. Oftentimes they aren’t educated about how they can get help

### **Mental Health**

- 12 social workers [in the county]; provide “in the moment support” and working to “modernize eligibility for services”
  - Someone later commented, “There’s a need in Durham and NC with larger numbers of kids with MH needs.”
- NCCRI – NC Child Response Initiative (GCC grant)
  - Funding is almost lost
  - Duke and NCCU counselors work with officers to follow up with victims and witnesses of crime

- Partnerships and MH services
  - Mobile crisis response
  - Collaboration with Child and Family Team members
  - Grants that target violence (SAMSHA)
  - Parent navigators: Piloted at Elementary School. When there is an IEP, navigators inform parents about how to get which services from MH.
  - Triage centers
- “Becoming” Durham. 75% of all mental health illnesses manifest by age 24
  - BECOMING stands for **B**uilding **E**very **C**hance **O**f **M**aking **I**t **N**ow and **G**rown up. Currently in a planning year, BECOMING serves 16-21 year olds with mental health conditions who are struggling to make the transition to a productive adulthood and have become disconnected from important community services and supports such as education, families, mentors, and employment opportunities. Beginning in October 2011, youth were to be referred to the project by schools, parents, caregivers or guardians, mental health providers, social services, law enforcement, and the judicial system. Initially they undergo a screening/assessment process and then create an action plan to develop their education and career goals and to navigate clinical and support services. The grant will fund training, tuition assistance, parks and recreation fees, transportation, literacy programs and more.
  - For more on this initiative, see <http://becomingdurham.org/our-plan>

#### **Law Enforcement**

- SROs are in all schools; it is helpful that SROs are in elementary schools as they begin to develop relationships with students early
- GREAT program given to 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders—covers bullying and mentoring
  - GREAT offers a way to have officers in the schools
- “Gun control is something we have no control over.” –Police officer

#### **Other**

JCPC program provider: “Our success is our detriment.”

County needs treatment services as people come out of jail because they don’t qualify for Medicaid.

#### **#6 – Cabarrus**

##### **Schools**

- Principal: 1) “Safety is what occurs in the mind first.” 2) “There is no learning that can occur unless the students feel safe.”
- Cabarrus Superintendent: “We talked with the superintendent in Newtown she said, ‘We had it all,’” regarding safety plans and features.
- Ben Matthews– We worked with TSA and Highway Patrol to have buses be less of a target; the work is not done yet.
- Q: How would you describe parental involvement at your schools? A: It varies. At some schools it’s tremendous, others it’s not; even in the charter schools there is not much parental involvement.

- Principal: Fire Academy—fire fighters teach first period after their night shift. A new academy just started was EMT, and next will be law enforcement. Provides other options for kids to learn that might support their motivation to become these types of practitioners. More information was provided by the principal to Sonny Masso.

## **Mental Health**

- Cardinal Innovations (LME/MCO covers 15 counties)
- Local MCO staff person: “Not much money is focused on prevention; most prevention money is focused on substance abuse issues.”
  - Kids who are identified as not strong in social skills can be ostracized. “We have to identify other ways to let kids reach out. We have to think like the kids do.”
  - Hagan supporting bill entitled “Mental Health Awareness and Improvement Act of 2013.” Last action was April 9, 2013. For more on this, see attached and <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/s689>
- EBP training to be provided by University of Iowa about strengthening families
- “We’ve lost options for long term out-of-home placements. Need to find a way to develop these. We won’t have enough long-term solutions without better options.”
- On the college campus of UNC-Charlotte exists the CBIT (Campus Behavioral Intervention Team), [www.ninercare.uncc.edu/about-us](http://www.ninercare.uncc.edu/about-us)
  - Although staff members may not provide specific information regarding what actions are taken due to privacy considerations, depending on the magnitude of the referral, the case may be reviewed by members of the Campus Behavioral Intervention Team (CBIT) for further consultation and action. CBIT consists of the following members:
    - Dean of Students (Chair)
    - Director of Counseling Center
    - Director of Police and Public Safety
    - Director of Housing and Residence Life
    - Associate Provost for Academic Services
    - Senior Associate Dean of Students
    - Dean of the Graduate School
    - Other University community members deemed relevant to a particular conversation

## **Law Enforcement**

- Monthly meeting among SRO, school personnel, and local law enforcement
- Re: Safety assessments from a SRO, “We feel kind of like we are writing our own book.”
- SRO at a remote location can see all MS and HS cameras. There is one standalone “control room” with all schools streaming.
- 2 SROs are coaches of sports teams at the HS who provide counseling, education, and suppression.
- Schools want a replacement SRO when one is out.

## Other

Teen court program requires weekly contact by clients

Can't bill JCPC services through Medicaid

## #7 – Cumberland

### School

- Elementary School Principal: Second & third grade students have been working with SRO which is helping them build positive relationships.
- Student-to-Student and Junior Student-to-Student groups help with academics and orientation to the school.
- 12 schools will have some remodeling done this coming summer.
- All elementary schools have key pads and cameras at the main entrance, but more cameras are needed.
- Commissioner: We just allowed \$500,000 to look at access points to our schools
  - .Tim Kinlaw, Associate Superintendent, Cumberland County Schools:
    - There is a task force with 10 principals this summer to gather info on what is best to make our schools safer.
    - “We are not letting money get in the way of what we need to do.”
    - State pays 60% of SRO cost, the amount is still the same at \$37,000 a year.
    - Lottery money for school construction decreased by 65%.
    - We need to restore resources, not supplant.
- Three months prior to Sandy Hook, the school system did a table-top exercise; they also do active shooter tests.
  - 80% of the schools were built before 1985.
  - There is a 20 minute response time to some elementary schools.
  - Panic buttons are located in every elementary school administrative office and second undisclosed location. Alarm goes directly to security agency where the agency has the view on all video cameras.
- Ben Matthews– Provided “First Observer” training to school bus drivers, done with Homeland Security, trained over 6,000
- Principal: We talk about bullying via twitter and instagram; kids aren't on facebook anymore.
- Superintendent: We were advised by counsel not to be a member of facebook, but we still monitor gang activity and substance abuse.
  - We are rolling out new apps for kids.
  - We are a fast growing school system.
  - Ad Moto used by parents
- At a nearby LEA....
  - We are doing all of the things discussed here.
  - We don't have rapid response.
  - We do have table-top exercises.

- We have SROs but not in elementary schools, but they are accessible to us. in elementary schools, we have GREAT
- Cameras on buses: 4 on each bus—2 on students, 1 on driver, 1 external (i.e. arm violators)

### **Mental Health**

- Psychiatry provider is in the school. We have students with trauma and a rapid response system to help kids with issues.
  - They are employees of the schools, 35 psychologists in all.

### **Law Enforcement**

- Good “rapid responders system. . . . We were second in the nation to have it.”
- Sheriff Department can get access to all school system information—utility locations, hazardous waste, evacuation areas, floor plans, etc.
  - Secretary asked, “Did you design that?”
    - No, it was a federal grant, \$700,000 to set up and \$35,000 a year to maintain
- CIT: 340+ law enforcement officers trained, 40 hour training
  - 3 mobile crisis teams

### **Other**

Juvenile Justice involvement– Services provided: truancy mediation, child-specific team meetings (MH, JCC, parent, school system person, and the juvenile). Secretary asked, “When do these things happen in the continuum?” A: Before or after a complaint, depending on the needs of the juvenile

### **#8 – Guilford**

#### **School**

##### *Security Measures -*

- Technology in Guilford allows for “blackbox” sharing with law enforcement
- One school has a metal detector
- Each school is different
- Cameras are on most buses, but not all, and buses are rotated
- We can improve, and have improved some already, on signage; we are still looking at cheap ways to get this done
- Guilford Sheriff– We put seasoned officers in schools as SROs
- Weekly team meeting with SRO where the topic of discussion is “What can we do to improve safety?”
- SROs are in all schools
- Guilford Co Schools Safety Officer: “We need to get refreshers at the beginning of the school year”
- Suggestions
  - All capital money should be focused on adequate locks & lighting

- Provide first year teachers with a list of who to call for what incident type to have handy in the classroom; “train teachers to be human”
- **Crossing guard** is a key person in the school, as another friendly face
  - Some schools hire a crossing guard to be around for 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours as school lets out

School system received the State Board of Education award for Character Education the day we visited Guilford County (May 2, 2013).

<http://www.gcsnc.com/education/components/scrapbook/default.php?sectiondetailid=289214>

- Teen Court and Structured Day are offered by JCPC's. However, Principal of Page High School (Principal of the Year) said the programs are full.

### **Mental Health**

- School Board member: There are no psychiatrists that are clinicians in our schools
- Special education teacher: “We are very experienced in dealing with MH issues. It is very difficult to get services the kids need; it’s like ‘chupacabra.’”
- Chief of Staff at Guilford Schools:
  - Doctors are refusing to give services
  - Kids are getting younger and younger with serious MH needs
  - Parents have serious MH issues too
    - Increasing stress in communities is taking a toll; sometimes even a loss of life
- Carmen Graves, DJJ:
  - Gaps in services for kids who don’t have private insurance
  - High co-pays
  - MCO, Sandhills just began services in January

### **Law Enforcement**

Secretary asked of school personnel: “When a SRO tells you of an issue, what do you do?”

- Principal: SRO is the first level of info, we squash a lot of incidents because of the SRO
- Another principal: “Our SRO is very approachable. He has a facebook page. He either sees what is going on or it is reported to him.”
- Re: SRO counselor role: “A lot of times students will come to us before they go to a counselor.”

### **Other**

Jamestown Mayor concerned about roads going into the schools, suggests people think about roads before building a school. He gave an example that after a bomb scare and a lockdown at the community college across the street, it took 3 hours to clear everyone out. There is about to be a new highway put in front of Ragsdale High School that could make the problem worse. The mayor suggests there be mock drills. The first traffic study for a school in Jamestown was done when school was not in session.

Sheriff: “People don’t remember the classrooms they were in but they remember the teachers.”

## Part 4: Comments from each of the student focus groups

At one of the schools visited in each forum location, DPS, DPI, DOJ and DHHS staff were given an opportunity to meet and converse with sixth through twelfth grade students (approximately 75 in all) about issues related to safety and security of schools. Across the board, the students we met with are currently in academically gifted classes and/or are strongly bonded and doing well in school. They all sat up straight, spoke clearly, made eye contact, and were respectful of everything said by the adults and their student peers. We were told about some acts of bullying they experienced and incidents that the students heard about but for the most part did not experience themselves. It was not until the final school visit that students described activities that are contributors to threats against an effective learning environment—gangs, fighting, and a large number of students in a large school facility. Some students stated that it feels like the school has gotten less safe over their tenure. A recurring opinion of the students at all of the schools was that SROs are very helpful, should be in uniform, and there should be more of them.

### #1 – Edenton: High school students

Students, although thriving in school, stated they did not have mentor, but they all want to go to college.

Students all agreed they had been bullied at some time. Examples given were:

- Rumors started about one girl; parents helped her through it, and she used music to cope.
- Another girl said she was bullied about her weight and looks and became bulimic. Her mother helped her deal with it.
- A male student stated he was bullied because he couldn't speak English well. He eventually stopped getting bullied because he "didn't give them the energy to keep on."

Some were bullies too. They said it was because it's easy to go along with the crowd. "Some people always push other people around, and teachers can't see all that's going on. It's usually spontaneous and random."

Secretary: "What's the worst behavior you all have seen?" Kids purposely trip one student. The victim tries to shake it off, but it definitely gets to him. One student stated she helped the victim pick his stuff up.

Secretary: "What does it mean to you that we are launching a safe schools initiative?" It's personal to the school; students are in close relationships with other students and teachers.

Regarding school counselors: One student reported having family problems. A counselor came in and helped her through it. The counselor provided planned discussions and action steps for the student between sessions.

Sonny Masso assigned the students the task of designing an application for reporting of school safety issues asked them to contribute to the design and the rules.

Secretary: "What is your relationship with the SRO?" A couple of the students didn't know they had one; others knew him because they had him in middle school.

## **#2 – Carteret: High school students**

A recent real lockdown was required when a student broke up with girlfriend and threatened to shoot people in the school. Principal provided support to students during lockdown with periodic reassurance via PA system that things were under control. Another incident occurred that the principal dealt with before it became serious.

Suggestion: Law Enforcement could have satellite offices in the schools instead of office buildings.

Doors that open to the back side of the school are open at all times. Students hadn't really thought about the back doors being open, but are more concerned now.

## **#3 – Watauga: High school students**

School counselors are always open to talk to us

“Has anyone been bullied?” “One kid would take my book bag.”

“Did you wonder why he did that?” “He had some problems. . . . Everyone's been bullied at some time because of the way they look, or where they came from.”

“Where does the trash talk cross the line?” Some people try and joke, but they take it too far. It crosses the line when it becomes every day. When someone says something and you can't get it out of your head or when you think of the person and all you think of is how they made fun of you.

“Do you know of anyone who brings weapons to school?” Yes, pocket knives. We've seen and heard about it a lot. Especially in this community, we use them as tools.

“What about guns?” No.

“The Governor wants to ask you now, how would make all NC schools safer?” In a way we feel trapped in some parts of the school.” “In the 'safety stair' area, there really isn't an exit, if there was a shooter we wouldn't be able to flee.” “You have to educate people of the world that things like this can happen, but it is rare. The people who need to be educated the most won't come on Saturdays, so it should be done more during school hours.” “Mental health reform is needed.”

Are you concerned about depressed kids, or people who might not be stable? “I knew someone who was really depressed and wanted to kill themselves, and I saved them. It feels like their emotions were coming on me. Giving them one-on-one support is better than nothing. I talked to my mom about it. I'm not comfortable going to a counselor about it.” “I'm more scared of strangers that I hear say 'I hate this school.'”

## **#4 – Jackson: High school students**

One student reported bullying experienced more often in middle school. “If we were bullied, we would be pretty reluctant to talk about it.” “I've always had the feeling it [a school shooting] can't happen here.”

Students report being closer to teachers than to counselors.

“Why is your school so good?” “We are a pretty tight school, when we have Mustang round-up or a sporting event we are one student body.”

“Why is your school safe?” Teacher involvement and small class sizes.

“How have the cameras around the school helped with safety?” They help support kids’ claims and serve as a deterrent.

Do you all have Goth or other groups of kids that hang out together? “There are groups here that co-exist, they don’t fight.”

What do you think about metal detectors? “It’s kind of hovering when schools have metal detectors. It makes some students want to play games and try to sneak things in.”

“What do you want to tell the Governor about how to make schools safer?” “We need to help the connection between teachers and students.” “Focus less on testing and more on learning and evaluation.” “Focus even more on helping students feel more comfortable.” Balance between comfort and security.

### **Miscellaneous**

“We have an honor system here. We respect the teachers enough to not cheat. I don’t want to disappoint them.”

### **#5 – Durham: 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students (Durham School of the Arts (DSA), a magnet school)**

- “There are a few kids who are definitely different and rejected by kids.”
- “This was the school for misfits.”
- This school is more receptive to individual differences. We have an outlet for self-expression.
- “This school is in a ‘bubble’ more than other schools. There is a very accepting nature [here].”
- “We had a higher level of security at a prior school that had gang problems. I feel safer here.”
- “Shooter at Sandy Hook would have been more likely to discuss how he felt and the turmoil inside him if he had gone to school here.”
- “The teachers want to be here, they don’t feel an obligation to be here.”
- “We do not have a hierarchy of cliques here.”
- Story of a student led intervention: One kid on the bus was bullying a younger kid. The older kids who sit in the back of the bus came to where the perpetrator was and told him to stop. The bully’s behavior stopped—at a minimum around the older kids on the bus.
- Durham School of the Arts has a Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) group with about 30 members

“Can the GSA refer kids to counselors who are having problems?” Yes.

“What happens at the group meetings?” People share what they are going through. “The group keeps up privacy so students feel like they can come and share.”

Durham schools have Gay-Straight Alliances. Durham School of the Arts partnered with other schools recently and had a dance. “We carry with pride being a queer school.”

### **Officer Bond (SRO)**

- “I didn’t know anything about him until I went to talk to him. He’s really interesting. Before talking to him, it seemed like he was just an adult who had a job.”
- “I figured out that he had a heart. He wasn’t just a statute walking around.”
- “We have a good balance. [The SROs] aren’t in your face, but they are there if you need them.”

“What thoughts do you have about safety?”

- “Too many crosswalks across busy streets.” (at DSA)
- “Some schools could have more effort to create a better environment, a more tolerant attitude.”
- “We have a good counselor program, but I still think we don’t have enough.”
- “There is a stigma for kids to see a school counselor.”

### **Stress**

- “[Sixth graders] don’t have as many options with sports, electives, etc.”
- “In the back of the school, it is easy to walk through the gates.”

### **#6 – Cabarrus: 8<sup>th</sup> graders**

“What are some of the good things about this school?”

- 1)-Teachers make it fun. 2) We have a good sports team. 3) Teachers have high expectations. 4) Technology makes the work more interesting (laptops, ipads, Mac & Dell products).

What are some of your reactions to Newtown?

- “I still feel a little scared, even though I feel safe here.”

### **Bullying**

- “Mr. Hallogan’s presentation was extremely moving.”
- “Made me think about bullying in a different way.”
- “Made some bullies apologize to the victims.”

School had pieces of paper outside of classrooms to “anonymously” report bullying, but you had to take the paper to the front office. It didn’t work well.

## **SROs**

- Every student knew the names of SROs.
- SRO's make them feel safe.
- Makes students see law enforcement as less scary
- Kids like SRO. to be in uniform, people know she is an authority figure when in uniform.

## **Fighting**

“There were more fights last year than this year.”

“Why is it different?” Students answered in unison, “Because we have a new principal.” Teachers have increased visibility during class changes. Focus is on the small things which has cut down on the big things happening. “The same kids act out over and over. Regardless of punishment or lack of punishment, the kids will do the same behavior again.” “Some kids like the attention.”

“What do you want to tell the Governor?” “Tell the Governor Concord Middle School says, ‘Hey.’”

## **Recent change in policy**

- “Girls can't go to the restroom unless a teacher goes with her.”

## **#7 – Cumberland: High school students**

“What are some of the positive attributes of your school?”

- Family-style atmosphere.
- “You know someone, and someone knows you.”
- Every counselor knows your name.
- “Education comes first, [and they] make sure we are safe.”
- “Our school is organized, together.”
- “We are all family and all safe in here.”

If someone had a gun at school would you feel comfortable going to a SRO, principal or a teacher?

- All said they would.
- “There was an incident recently, and the principal knew about it before anyone else did.”
- “Last year we had a chemical incident, and I found out when my dad called me.”
- “We have a ‘peer help’ class that provides guidance assistance.

## **SRO**

- “He is always there.”
- “Deputy Singleton, he stays in his car in the mornings and stays calm, but he is looking at everyone.”

## **Mechanisms to Report Bullying/Violence**

- Banner with a link on all school websites
- Posters
- Announcements to students and parents (Ad Moto – school/parent app)
- Formed an anti-bullying group to discuss how to make things better
- Made florescent orange t-shirts
- Make a purple mailbox to report anything

“You all are talking about pride. Where does that come from?” “We have something to prove. Every time we step on a football or basketball field, we know we are the best.”

## **Cyberbullying**

- “Mrs. Chalmers (principal) intervened after finding out, then made an announcement to the whole school that it will not be tolerated and that criminal charges will be filed if it happens again.”
- “I know I will be talked about my whole life, but it doesn’t bother me, so I move on.”

## **ISS**

- “ISS is a good thing, because we can get our work.”
- “Being with someone who can counsel you is better than being in isolation.”

“Alumni are connected to you all. How are they connected?”

- “The ‘scholarship.’ We met with representatives of the alumni association for mock interviews.”
- “It is inspiring that people who graduated 10 or 20 years ago are still [connected to the school].”
- Monthly parent luncheon, “Connect Ed,” and parent coffees.

## **Misc:**

- 300 cadets in Air Force ROTC (One third of the school)
- “There are bad apples and apples without opportunity. . . . I think people are good at picking out the bad apples.”

## **#8 – Guilford: High school students**

- “We have a few knuckleheads, not really bullies.”
- Gangs are formed based on where kids are from – East and West sides of Greensboro
- “The only solution to the East/West side problem is within the kids to change.”
- “I learned from seeing my brother get in trouble and go to jail. I knew I didn’t want to be like that.”

- Before and after school is the most common time for fights because students are funneled into main common area. There is supposed to be more supervision, but it actually brings people too close together.

“Counselors have helped us with college applications and scholarships”

- Mock interviews
- Sending transcripts
- Talk to admissions

One school recently experienced a riot. The main instigator was sent to alternative school. Students felt the punishment was fair. There was no school-wide discussion afterwards. Principal did call the parents with an announcement about the incident.

- “SRO Grant is a big guy and cleared most everyone out.”
- “It was a spontaneous event.”
- “If it wasn’t for the coaches and teachers, I might have been involved.”
- “We have the people, technology and resources to respond quickly.”

Weekly phone call (generic message) to all parents made by principal. Includes announcements for volunteer needs and upcoming events. “Sometimes we have too many volunteers.”

“Parent Assist”—Computer program for parents to see what kids are doing academically

Lots of High Point parents aren’t involved in kids’ lives. “The gang is their [the kids’] family.”

School violence has gotten worse over the past 4 years (reported by students)

School does not have a LGBT club, but is about to.

“What are you most proud of about Ragsdale?”

- Tradition
- Good education
- We join together and support sporting teams
- It’s a place you want to come back to
- Handicapped student: “I truly love this school; it’s the best school I’ve been to.”
- Alumni are really proud
- Principals
- Support by teachers: “They really know you and want to help you graduate.”

###