

# Waterbury Public Schools

## School Safety Task Force

### Situation Appraisal

	<b>See the Issues</b> <i>What are the issues and concerns related to safety in Waterbury Public Schools?</i>  <b>Clarify the Issues</b> <i>What do you mean by...?</i> <i>What tells you this is a concern?</i>	Assess Priorities			Theme	Category
		<b>Serious</b> <i>High, Medium, or Low</i>	<b>Urgency</b> <i>High or Low</i>	<b>Growth</b> <i>Worse, Better, or Same</i>	<b>Communication</b>  <b>Mental Health</b>  <b>Training</b>  <b>Resources &amp; Support</b>	<b>Safety</b> <i>Internal</i> <i>Emotional</i>  <b>Security</b> <i>External</i> <i>Physical</i>
1	<b>Dangerous items come to school</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• weapons, drugs, etc.</li> </ul>	H	H	W	<b>Mental Health Resources &amp; Support</b>	<b>Safety</b>
2	Communication is not timely during a situation vs. after a situation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school, parents, district, police</li> <li>• wait for town to share information</li> </ul>	M	H	S	Communication	Safety
3	Inaccurate/incomplete information is shared <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shared by students, parents, media and staff</li> <li>• information shared via social media</li> </ul>	H	H	S	Communication	Safety
4	<b>Lack of accountability for offenders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• student perception, consequences aren't weighty enough</li> <li>• not just students; staff too</li> </ul>	H	H	W	Communication	Safety
5	Unsecured locations in the school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exterior doors, blind spots</li> <li>• unsupervised areas</li> <li>• arrival and dismissal</li> </ul>	H	L	W	Resources & Support	Security
6	<b>Teacher, staff and substitute shortages</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• students take advantage</li> </ul>	H	H	W	<b>Resources &amp; Support</b>	<b>Safety</b>
7	Lack of student funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• less than state funding</li> <li>• funding is needed to support safety improvements</li> </ul>	M/L	L	S	Resources & Support	Safety
8	Lack of adult presence in student altercations	M	L	S	Training Resources & Support	Safety
9	Unclear of who is responsible for responding to specific student issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teachers, admin, SROs</li> </ul>	M	H	S	Communication Training	Safety
10	<b>Lack of mental health support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 211, community agencies are underutilized</li> <li>• district employees</li> </ul>	H	H	W	<b>Mental Health Resources &amp; Support</b>	<b>Safety</b>
11	Lack of parental support regarding student behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enabling bad behavior</li> </ul>	M/L	H	S	Communication Mental Health	Safety

12	Mixed evidence on the efficacy of safety protocols • No magic solutions	L	H	S	Communication Training	Safety
13	Perceived lack of transparency • school and district • transparency is not the same as fast	M	L	S	Communication	Safety
14	Disruptions in communication between staff and students • staff can be dismissive • no follow up	M	H	S	Communication	Safety
15	Staff are unaware of mental challenges faced by students during shelter in place or evacuation drills • triggers	M	H	S	Mental Health Training	Safety
16	Lack of skills in preventing and de-escalating negative behaviors • connect to mental health	M	H	W	Communication Mental Health Training	Safety
17	Lack of compassion for students • teachers, staff, SROs, social workers, students	M/L	L	W	Mental Health	Safety
18	Students may not feel safe reporting and not all students feel heard • opportunities for student input needed • prioritizing adult voices over student voices • risk from fellow students and staff	M	H	W	Communication Resources & Support	Safety
19	Students and adults communicate inaccurate information during a lock down that creates panic	M/L	L	S	Communication Training	Safety
20	<b>Lack of proactive approaches</b> • <b>preventative and not only responsive</b> • <b>identifying triggers before things escalate</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Mental Health Training</b>	<b>Safety</b>
21	Blame game	L	L	S	Communication Resources & Support	Safety
22	People hide things in bags • contraband • adults and students	M	L	W	Mental Health	Safety
23	Older facilities create safety risks and issues • security of facilities	H	L	W	Resources & Support	Security
24	<b>Implicit biases</b> • <b>causes targeting of specific groups of students</b> • <b>creates blind spots when responding to issues</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Communication Training</b>	<b>Safety</b>
25	Lack of skills in addressing negative behaviors • teachers and admin	H	L	W	Training	Safety
26	<b>Unauthorized access to school buildings</b> • <b>after school and during school</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Communication Resources &amp; Support</b>	<b>Security</b>
27	Easy access to weapons • outside of school	M	L	W	Resources & Support	Security
28	Support staff not provided with important student information	M	H	S	Communication Training	Safety

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>counselors and social workers</li> <li>medical, behavioral and mental health</li> </ul>				Resources & Support	
29	Social media causes student issues	L	L	W	Communication	Safety
30	Students have phones in schools which contribute to student issues (texting)	H	L	S	Communication	Safety
31	Lack of training for staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>safety and security</li> <li>bias</li> <li>cultural diversity</li> </ul>	M	H	W	Training	Safety
32	<b>Lack of consistency with safety protocols from school to school</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Communication Training</b>	<b>Safety</b>
33	<b>Increased gang violence in schools and in the community</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Resources &amp; Support</b>	<b>Security</b>
34	Lack of information shared with students when an issue happens	M/L	L	W	Communication	Safety
35	Some people come to school with bad intentions	L	L	S/W	Mental Health	Safety
36	Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response time</li> <li>Time in context</li> <li>Time for communication</li> </ul>	M	H	S	Communication Training Resources & Support	Safety
37	Substance abuse	M/L	L	W	Mental Health Resources & Support	Safety
38	<b>Lack of appropriate placement and understanding for students with significant needs</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>W</b>	Training Resources & Support	<b>Safety</b>
39	Lack of training for bus drivers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understanding of safety issues</li> <li>potential triggers</li> <li>communication</li> </ul>	M	L	W	Training	Safety
40	Inconsistent disciplinary actions/responses within the same school	M	H	W	Communication Training	Safety
41	Students don't want to be seen as a snitch	L/M	L	S	Communication	Safety
42	Negative peer pressure	L/M	L	S	Training Resources & Support	Safety
43	Students don't know how to advocate for themselves	M	L	W	Resources & Support	Safety
44	Full profile of the emergency is not obtained in a rapid manner	L/M	H	S	Communication Training	Safety
45	Lack of understanding of school/district protocols in investigating and responding	M/L	H	W	Communication	Safety
46	Lack of understanding of police protocols in investigating and responding	M/L	H	W	Communication	Safety
47	Broken security cameras	H	H	S	Resources & Support	Security

48	Students feel the need to protect themselves with weapons	L/M	L	W	Resources & Support	Safety
49	Lots of factors to consider when intervening in physical altercations between students • adults have to weigh the risks	M	L	S	Training	Safety
50	Lack of training for substitutes	M	H	S	Training	Safety
51	Students are bystanders not upstanders • upstanders are willing to intervene with peers to prevent issues and deescalate	L	L	S	Training	Safety
52	Lack of overall trust and confidence	H/M	L	S	Communication	Safety

*Note: **Bold** indicates issues that the task force rated as high priority based on seriousness, urgency and growth.*

# Waterbury Public Schools

## School Safety Task Force

### *Change Ideas and Recommendations for Progress Monitoring*

Theme	Change Ideas
<b>Communication</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve the communication system for all issues identified under the communication theme</li> <li>● Communication organizational chart by functions with quarterly presentation</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Public awareness of what is allowed to be shared (during shelter in place &amp; lockdown)</li> <li>● Publish standard operating procedures</li> <li>● Utilize parent square</li> <li>● More frequent updates on situations when they occur</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communicate clear and consistent discipline practices that are uniformly enforced throughout the district</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clear backpacks for all students</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consistency in responses to external and inter responses across schools</li> <li>● Transparency between schools so that schools can learn what works and doesn't work from each other and to ensure consistency</li> <li>● Communication on how a student was apprehended should be communicated thoroughly, no gray areas should be left</li> <li>● Communication can come via all intercoms working within the school, texts and notifications to the masses made more efficient by making sure phone numbers are updated, testing these systems constantly to ensure they work</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Control the cell phone use, responding to everything effectively and timely</li> <li>● Standard protocol for responding • Punishment should be universal throughout the school (reevaluate how and when for disciplinary protocols)</li> </ul>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Site-based mental health provider/center must be permanent</li> <li>● Monday and Friday mindfulness exercises</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make all teachers, subs and staff aware of all students that have an IEP, 504 plan and behavior plan</li> <li>● Hire additional social workers, currently hired support staff should be able to do the work they are hired to do</li> <li>● Hire a substance abuse coordinator which would give students who may be struggling with addiction a safe space</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop training for staff and students that address viable mental health resources</li> </ul>

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More training of mental health resources for teachers/staff</li> <li>• Hire quality subs and train them properly (quality vs. quantity)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and administrators having a clearer understanding of IEPs and 504s</li> <li>• Actual mental health professionals (eg. DMHAS) coming in providing mandatory yearly training (eg. motivational interviewing, implicit bias, OUCH training)</li> <li>• Hiring more social workers with a screening on those social workers for implicit bias (prioritize LMFTs- licensed marriage and family therapists)</li> <li>• Having permanent social workers at each school since the switching out causes regression with the relationships and trust students build</li> <li>• Permanent librarians and other staff as well providing a consistent positive environment for students</li> <li>• Commitment from social workers to remain long term as well as commitments from administrators to keep them employed as well</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Training</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a mandatory training portal outside of traditional professional training</li> <li>• Outline student advocacy training portal with specific rewards</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training support that address the following topics: sensitivity, de-escalation, diversity and inclusion, safety protocols and restorative justice</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop clear procedures for drills and emergency situations that are uniform within the district and clearly communicate them to ALL staff</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More training of mental health resources for teachers/staff</li> <li>• Hire quality subs and train them properly (quality vs. quantity)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training courses that address the following: cultural diversity, racial/cultural bias, substitute training, mental health, and student triggers</li> </ul>
<b>Resources &amp; Support</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Black teacher recruitment plan for elementary, middle and high schools</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement peer mentorship program and student programs like Upward Bound and Gear Up</li> <li>• Utilize counselors and behavior specialists to offer additional support</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metal detectors to ensure no contraband</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide student IDs that must be scanned to enter</li> <li>• Secure all exterior doors with alarms and ensure locks are functioning</li> <li>• Make sure all staff has universal keys to classroom doors</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School IDs for all middle and high school students that must be used to enter the school</li> <li>• Clear backpacks for all students</li> <li>• Pilot program for Wallace &amp; Crosby with metal detectors at all entrances</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentives to benefit current teachers and recruit future teachers (pensions, pay, etc.)</li> <li>• SROs become resources and offer counseling</li> <li>• Increase security measures and increase patrols to monitor doors and unsecured locations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Progress Monitoring</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication - public feedback using various methods</li> <li>• Mental Health - wellness provider document individual services</li> <li>• Training - determine who and how many individuals have taken the training within the allotted time frame</li> <li>• Resources &amp; Support - scorecard based on NAACP and WPS collaboration</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication - weekly surveys of parents, staff and students</li> <li>• Mental Health - student surveys</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the task force meet again in 5 months to review what steps have been taken and the impact of the change ideas</li> <li>• Survey of staff, students and parents in 5 months to gauge efficacy of the implemented strategies</li> <li>• Monthly updates to the board of the status of strategies</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent square sent to parents regarding ID and public announcement of board when all students have been issued an ID</li> <li>• Uniform policy updated to reflect only clear backpacks are allowed</li> <li>• Possible have 211 visit the middle and high schools monthly</li> <li>• Quarterly progress report on progress/items found</li> <li>• ESS needs to change their required credentials, individuals should have at least 12 credits in college</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys to students asking if they feel trustful and confident in the relationships with social workers. These surveys are done but the results should be transparent, shared with students, parents and staff to ensure all (especially students) know where the surveys go and how the data is used.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>