



2022 Student Staff Summits

Colorado Springs Region, La Junta Region, Hayden Region

The Colorado School Safety Resource Center holds Student/Staff Summits on a yearly basis. These Summits are held so our staff can hear what your students have to say about the state of school safety in Colorado. Every year we are joined by groups of middle and high school students from local schools/districts in different regions around the state. This year the regions represented included; the Colorado Springs region, the La Junta region and the Hayden region.

The workshops covered three different topics and the student comments are listed below by the topics.

Topic #1: Student Voice & Safety Focus Groups

In one of the breakout sessions; students, school staff and the Center's staff discussed if and how schools are involving students in school safety and emergency planning. The Center staff also posed the question in this session, whether schools were conducting emergency drills with too little or too much realism, in an effort to understand if these students felt or identified trauma from realistic drills. Also discussed in this session was the question, what safety issues are being missed or overlooked by school staff?

Students were given the opportunity to record their responses and discuss solutions to these important topics. Recorded below, with only slight grammatical and spelling corrections, are your students' views and solutions.

Student/Staff Summit, Colorado Springs, CO 11/29/22

Question: Why should schools involve students in their school safety and emergency planning?

Answers:

- Help be more organized*
- Help them understand*
- More ideas (more perspectives, solutions) *
- Our ideas matter
- Be prepared
- Lessen fear*
- Our safety is important
- Leaders



- Get parents involved
- Makes us feel safer, calmer
- Education, creating community by talking about possibilities
- Be calm
- Be more clear
- Discussions*
- Builds trust
- Well informed

Question: How has your school involved students in school safety or emergency planning?

Answers:

- We aren't
- Fix it:
 - Assemblies, talks with staff, revisit throughout year, more staff prep with what to do, surveys for input, monthly topics & talks about safety (student choice), help younger students: mentor, presentations from older kids, develop understanding of why
- Emergency preparedness club for students *
- More drills
- Guest speakers come in to talk to us
- More warning
- More education
- More fun
- Suggestion box
- Being more interactive
- More students involved
- An app that tells students about lockdowns
- A way to tell the school you're safe

Question: Do you feel that schools are conducting emergency drills with too much or too little realism?

Answers:

- Too little realism **
- Possibly other drills: tornado, wildlife, earthquake, fire drill, different scenarios, from different places, unannounced
- Do not take drills seriously (students, some teachers)
- Add some stuff to make the drill more realistic
- Training for subs
- Teachers select students to help during drills



- Mix up locations, times, types of drills

Question: What safety issues are adults in your school missing?

Answers:

- More security in case of intruder
- Have more sensors (to detect smoke, toxic gas, etc.)
- Cyberbullying*
- Safe2Tell box at school
- Building trust w/adults*
- Resources outside of school for help
- Different types of drills from different places in the building *
- Helping younger students not feel scared
- More cameras outside
- The teachers should be more calm
- Teachers should be less scared
- More sensors

Student/Staff Summit, La Junta, CO 12/1/22

Question: Why should schools involve students in their school safety and emergency planning?

Answers:

- Students should be more involved with the school and emergency planning because students should be more aware***
- The students are the biggest part of the school, so if they are not safe or involved then the school should do better *
- To know how to respond to certain situations (ex: Natural vs Unnatural disasters) *
- Involving students helps them remember procedures when an actual situation arises**
- Medical needs of students
- We as students should be prepared by knowing the plans****
- If we as students help plan we would feel safer. **
- Students can provide feedback on what is actually happening during events and how the student body reacts*
- Make sure students are taking this seriously and not always joking. Making sure they are well-behaved. ***
- It makes students feel more involved*
- Lockers – So students don't carry all their stuff with them which makes it harder to move around the classrooms safely, especially in emergencies*
- Students should be allowed to voice their opinions/thoughts on how drills would happen. *
- They should be involved in school safety to feel safe, and to know what to do in case of a real incident.
- Students should be involved because they will or won't know what's real and fake.



- Ask for student's input

Question: How has your school involved students in school safety or emergency planning?

Answers:

- Lockdown/lockout/fire drills. **
- Involved with emergency drills. *
- Participating in safety drill situations. **
- Students need seatbelt safety group. *
- Announced school shooting drills. *
- Student feedback (survey). *
- Teach students how to emotionally/physically respond when we go into fight/flight mode
 - Prevent trampling/stampedes*
- Making sure students get all help needed if possible. *
- Talking about how to deal with abuse of all kinds. **
- Safety summit like today (12/1/22).
- Start a Jr. High safety group to help safety rules and regulations for our student body. ***
- Making sure kids get involved. **
- WE have information posters all over the school. *
- Don't feel involved 😞
- Safety assembly
- WE need to take it more seriously and get involved more. *
- Have a new school shooting drill.
- Feedback after drills
- Info on how we do a drill.

Question: Do you feel that schools are conducting emergency drills with too much or too little realism?

Answers:

- Some drills can be made more serious and others can be made not so serious. *
- All the drills we do at our school are just the same basic fire drills; they should be more realistic. ***
- Our school just has unexpected drills that aren't very organized. **
- The drills can be made more realistic so we are prepared! ***
- Incorporate law enforcement and EMS practices into trainings
- Inform students of plans before a realistic drill **
- Practice ALL emergency drills! ***
- Better communication with teachers and students about the drills ****
- I feel that they should have it less often, so that kids take it seriously and not joke around. *
- Most of adults need to make sure they have control of the students so that they stay safe; as one gets bored by the process. *
- We need more drills so that we can be more prepared. ***



- Too little realism because, we need to always be prepared. If it is too realistic student's will be traumatized. *
- We think we practice with too little realism, we only do fire drills/tornado drills. We lose focus of what could really happen in those situations. Too little realism so many people won't take it seriously. *
- We think there is way too little realism during our drills, not showing how severe the situations can actually be. *

Question: What safety issues are adults in your school missing?

Answers:

- Mental Health (avoiding labels, suggestion box) **
- Practice fake school shooting *****
- Bullying**
- Weather emergency ***
- Snow/Blizzard, tornado, dust storms, high winds, & school/community threats*
Hallways – do students know what to do in difficult circumstances? **
- Needed Warnings!!!*
- Healthy Relationships**
- School Buses need seatbelts.
- Parking lot rules
- Identifying a person with bad intent, i.e., bully/predator etc.**
- How to drive correctly to school
- Circumstances of driving or operating machinery under the influence and have to deal with citation
- Consuming layout*
- Congested hallways*
- Letting the students know where the exits are. ***
- Severity of drills depending on a K12 school (what to do with little ones during realistic drills) ****
- Bathroom safety issues
 - Smoking/vaping
 - Vandalism
 - Junior high bathrooms
- Doing something to help potentially dangerous students, whether to themselves or others*
- All doors need to lock – anyone could walk into the school at anytime
- The mental health of students is often ignored (i.e., depression, anxiety, dangerous behavior).



Student/Staff Summit, Hayden, CO 12/8/22

Question: Why should schools involve students in their school safety and emergency planning?

Answers:

- Highly affects students
- Other types of drills needed (weather/inside threats)
- Communication about how students feel during drills
- Teachers and students learn safety drills
- More interactive *
- More variety
- So, we have inclusive ideas
- So, we get student point of view

Question: How has your school involved students in school safety or emergency planning?

Answers:

- They will tell us when we have upcoming drill & we watch a video **
- We could have a practice/informed of time and later there will be a surprise drill, however, the day will be known but not the time.
- Have better spots and clearly designated places
- Better organization/maps for plans
- Getting strategies for exits
- Being farther from building
- Hold school safety summits
- More specific directions
- Where to go
- Clarification for special times (free period, lunch, PE)
- Explain why we do what we do
- More details and explanations
- Life skills training (CPR, CERT, Self Defense)
- Go more in depth*
- Questions to first responders
- Take drills seriously, but don't overreact
- They tell us where to go during a drill/emergency
- More realistic explanations
- Have a more in-depth health class

Question: Do you feel that schools are conducting emergency drills with too much or too little realism?

Answers:



- More clarification before drills so realistic drills aren't as traumatizing *
- Allowing students to see consequences of needing to take things seriously*
- Staff planning when we drill so it doesn't run at a bad time
- Plans for leaving class*
- Too little*
- More in depth
- Teacher participate more
- Better communication to build trust
- Speedier to create more realism
- Install a louder alarm
- More information about directions
- Anxiety of not knowing during drills
- Not taking drill seriously (students)
- Not enough types of drills
- Discuss what to do/practice lock down

Question: What safety issues are adults in your school missing?

Answers:

- Social currency (not necessarily bullying) *
- First aid
- Drug use by students **
- Subs/other people in building getting trained
- Bathroom monitoring
- Smoking in the bathroom
- NO dark humor
- Fentanyl
- Students need to know when they are out of line
- Inappropriate language (in front of younger students)
- Derogatory language
- Eating

TOPIC #2 – STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Student/Staff Summits Colorado Springs, CO 11/29/22 and La Junta, CO 12/1/22

Question: What does engagement look like at your school?

- We have a larger school, and we have a lot of activities, but it's usually the same students participating in all of the activities.
- We live in a small town, so there are many people from the community that attend the events.
- Football and basketball get lots of fans, but other sports like gymnastics, golf, or tennis...not so much.



- The clubs we have are suited for our small-town environment and pretty much everyone participates.
- There are a couple of teachers that go to a lot of events.

Question: How can the adults in your school improve the engagement?

- Creating more clubs for different personalities.
- We don't have enough clubs or activities.
- There aren't very many people that go to the games.
- We need to have more clubs or activities for non-athletes.
- Form a "Super fans" club, where students are assigned to go to other events That way, all students at all events have people cheering for them.
- Teachers should be required to attend some events.
- More student input
- Have us involved in more events like this!

Question: What prevents students from feeling like they belong in school?

- Fights/Bullying
- They form opinions about you when they don't even know you.
- No tolerance for people outside of cliques.
- Certain friend groups/sports/clubs
- Not knowing many people

Question: How can adults help students feel like they belong in school?

- Be friendlier and talk to us more about our lives and what is going on with us.
- More diversity
- Teacher should come to more games/activities and show their support.
- Actually, listen to us.
- Don't assume we are bad kids

Question: The biggest misunderstanding that adults have about students is....?

- That we don't feel or care about people around us or our grades/life.
- They think we don't want a student/teacher relationship when it helps us do better.
- They think we are all the same.
- There's no understanding of our lives or other things going on on both sides.
- That we don't have other big issues going on in our lives.
- That everything is ok at home.
- That school is the most important thing in our lives at that time.

Question: How could adults in your building fix the misunderstandings or at least make them better?

- Teachers could ask us, "How are you?" "How's your day going?"
- If they see a student is struggling, rather than yelling at them, ask if they need help or need to talk to someone.



- Teachers should talk to us more respectfully and not always assume the worst about us.
- We are so small, that teachers pretty much get it. Most of them grew up in our small town.

At the end of one session, a school staff member stated: "I didn't realize that our students were so hungry for connection!"

Student/Staff Summit, Hayden, CO 12/8/22

CSSRC staff provided a brief PowerPoint presentation that featured our Yes2 students from around the state and what School Engagement looks like for them. The students were then asked the following questions, their responses are below.

What does engagement look like at your school?

- Good teachers
- Making things interesting in the classroom through different activities
- " Win" time (What students need). This is a specific time set up for students to work directly with teachers to address any academic challenges they are facing.
- Passion project: Students were asked to create a community project of their choice
- Allowing students to pick their own classes
- Holiday door decorating
- Sports
- Spirit week
- School dance
- Ski day

What are some barriers to engagement and how do we fix it?

- Focus on students' individual strengths
- Make student expectations more clear
- Be open to having more groups in school
- Allow kids to actually lead
- Teachers that want to be there (this has been worse since COVID)
- Teachers need to be more involved with students
- Small school
- Stop stigmas in school
- Lack of choice
- Meet kids where they are
- Not enough clubs
- It's all about sports- they want the focus to be on all activities
- More diverse teachers

Advice for adults on how to increase engagement

- Hire more diverse teachers
- Everyone needs to learn from each other (students and teachers) Teachers need to be willing to learn from other teachers
- Partner students up more in learning
- Create more diverse learning environments
- Recognize students different learning styles



- Change is ok (teacher's need to be willing to change)
- Slow down and actually listen to what students are saying
- Have clear boundaries with students
- Collaborate with students and each other
- Allow students to show who they really are

TOPIC #3 – HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Three of our YES² team members put together and presented a workshop on Healthy Relationships. They recorded their portions so that they could co-present even when they were geographically distanced from one another. Topics included attributes of healthy partnerships such as reasonable pace, open and safe communication, equality in decision making, respect, and consent. The students also discussed warning signs of abusive behaviors that manifest physically, emotionally, sexually, electronically and financially. Prior to the events, the students researched statewide and local resources relevant to each location (Colorado Springs, La Junta, and Hayden, respectively).

The students who attended the sessions shared that they have witnessed the behaviors identified by our team within family dynamics, in friendships and in romantic relationships. They discussed upstander strategies, the need for conversation promoting positive interactions, and education about online risks that isn't fear-based.

Some of the supports they discussed having in their schools included:

- **For the larger community–**
 - Family Career & Community Leaders of America (FCCLA)
 - Safe places to be themselves, including the offering of multiple clubs within schools to reach a multitude of interests
 - Gender Sexuality Alliances
 - Safe2Tell

- **For individual students–**
 - Parents
 - Friends, older siblings and relatives
 - School counselors, teachers (they cautioned that some act as “false” allies by displaying pride flags, but the students believe the teacher would out them to their families if they were to confide in them)
 - Therapists

There was a clear intersection of risk and protective factors affecting healthy relationships, bullying, cyber safety, school violence, and school climate. The students wished we had more time to address these important topics.