



Keep Idaho Students Safe (KISS) Initiative Overview

March 12, 2018

Current Efforts

The State Department of Education (SDE) is committed to supporting schools in creating safe and supportive learning environments for every student in Idaho. Social and emotional wellness is prerequisites for academic success. As such, activity to keep students safe through prevention, intervention and response strategies is an ongoing effort; below are descriptions of current SDE supports for schools in this area:

- ✓ ***Superintendent Ybarra's Stop Bullying Initiative***- this is intended to raise awareness of bullying and harassment through public service announcements and includes an anti-bullying toolkit.
- ✓ ***Idaho Prevention and Support Conference***- this is an annual, statewide conference hosted by the SDE and draws approximately 700 school counselors, administrators, school resource officers, program providers and various stakeholders. The focus centers on addressing youth risk behaviors (bullying, suicide, drug and alcohol use, etc.) and fostering optimal conditions for learning.
- ✓ ***Local / Regional Trainings***- SDE staff provides trainings / presentations on bullying, suicide prevention and related topics at schools, conferences, parent nights and other events on an ongoing basis.
- ✓ ***Tools and Resources***- the SDE website contains guidance, legal references, program summaries, policy examples, links to national resources and public service announcements focused on preventing and addressing bullying and harassment.
- ✓ ***Data***- the SDE administers the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which is anonymously administered to a random sample of 9-12 graders biennially and includes questions about bullying, harassment, suicide ideation and related topics. The SDE also collects incidents of bullying from school districts on an annual basis.
- ✓ ***Suicide Prevention***- in partnership with the Office of Suicide Prevention (housed in the Department of Health and Welfare), the SDE administers the Idaho Lives Project, which entails the implementation of a best practice suicide prevention program called Sources of Strength in Idaho schools. Sources of Strength focuses on cultivating positive school climates through student-led activities to foster hope, help, strength, resiliency and grit.
- ✓ ***Funding***- The SDE administers funding to school districts for prevention activities. Resources include Safe and Drug Free Schools (\$4 million state funds) and Title IVA (\$2 million in federal ESSA funds). IVA funding has three priorities, and only one of which is safe and healthy students. Schools determine how to prioritize these funds.
- ✓ ***Idaho Office of School Safety and Security***- This office is housed within the Division of Building Safety. The primary mission of the office is conducting onsite security vulnerability assessment of every publicly funded school campus in the state and assisting with prioritizing threat mitigation steps.



While these current efforts are valuable supports to address school safety; more can be done to assure every student in Idaho feels safe at school. This is where the KISS Initiative comes into play.

KISS Initiative Overview

No one strategy is sufficient to address school safety; therefore a multi-pronged approach is required to protect students from harm. The combination of equipping staff with knowledge, tools and resources, and increasing human security presence is a holistic approach to keeping students safe. The components of KISS are informed by stakeholders, parents, students and school staff and include the following:

- ✓ ***School Safety Course-*** the SDE is designing a 3 credit course (45hrs) focused on protecting students and addressing risk behaviors. The initial vision is for this course to be required for teacher and administrator recertification (required every five years) and will be offered 25 times a year throughout the state. The content of the course will be designed by subject matter experts representing various stakeholder groups. The following topics have been identified as areas of focus for the course:
 - Social / emotional learning
 - Positive school climate strategies
 - Bullying / harassment prevention
 - Social media impact on student interactions
 - Dating relationship violence prevention
 - Human trafficking prevention
 - Internet crimes against children awareness
 - Suicide prevention
 - Sexual assault prevention
 - Drug and alcohol use prevention
 - Behavioral threat assessment

Subject matter experts are being convened to design the standards for the course; these will be aligned with the Idaho Core Teaching Standards. Rather than a series of 'standalone' trainings clustered together to meet the time requirement for the course; the SDE will facilitate a process of identifying themes across the topics listed above to highlight root causes of risk behaviors and common approaches to inoculate students from dangerous activities that disrupt well-being and interrupt learning. As the process of designing the course plays out refinement will occur depending on topics / themes that emerge.

Cost Estimate: \$1,990,000.00

- ✓ ***Security Grant for Schools-*** the SDE is focused on securing funds for all Idaho schools to have a trained security presence. While School Resource Officers (SROs) commonly



fill this role, lack of resources (both human and financial) is a barrier to establishing this presence throughout the state. These individuals may be SROs, retired military / law enforcement or private security. All will receive the same training.

- Total number of student-occupied school buildings in Idaho: 732
- Grant funding proposed per building: \$25,000
- Estimated cost for training per individual: \$500

Cost Estimate: \$18,666,000.00

✓ ***Statewide Crisis Communications Counselor***- this position would be housed in the SDE and serve as the single point of contact for school counselors (primarily) for support in addressing student social / emotional issues. This position will serve as a dedicated 'lifeline' for threats to schools as a way to quickly leverage resources at the state level. Activities the Statewide Crisis Communications Counselor will provide include:

- Assisting schools in implementing a behavioral threat assessment system
- Identification and implementation of crisis response resources
- Maintaining a repository of local mental health providers
- Identifying grants and other resources to increase healthy school climates
- Leveraging state-level supports to assist schools in addressing student risk behaviors (Juvenile Corrections, Division of Building Safety, Health and Welfare)
- Conduct training based on the unique needs of local jurisdictions

Cost Estimate: \$116,584.45 (includes salary, fringe and \$20K in operational funds)

Keep Idaho Students Safe Total Cost Estimate: \$20,772,584.45