Mountain Valley School District

Mountain Valley School has been working hard to design appropriate plans for providing a safer learning environment for their children. Mountain Valley applied for Safe Communities ~ Safe Schools training and technical assistance as a pro-active stance against potential violence in their school. The school serves all students, grades K-12. Although there are only 174 students in the school, the SCSS Planning Team has been very active in driving the initiative. The Planning Team began their Strategic Plan with the writing of a vision statement, “100% RESPECT”, (Respect Every Student, Person, Environment, Community Today) and mission statement, “Your Kid, Your School, Your Community, Your Involvement, OUR Success”. Based on the responses to surveys completed by students, teachers, parents and community, (cont. on pg. 2)

Montrose County School District

Columbine Middle School, part of Montrose County School District, was selected as one of the 16 sites in Colorado to participate in the Safe Communities - Safe Schools Initiative. The goal of this initiative at Columbine is to improve the learning and social environment of the school and community by encouraging student, teacher, community and parent participation. Columbine’s purpose in participating in this is to ensure that the school remains a safe and secure place for students to learn.

One of the first projects in the safe school planning process was to have some students, with parent permission, participate in a confidential student survey. The goal of this research project was to examine how school and community climate issues impact students and school safety. The overall outcome of the survey, with regard to school climate, showed students felt safe at Columbine and enjoyed attending school. (cont. on pg. 2)

Putting into Practice Colorado’s Information Sharing Laws

The year 2000 was a milestone for Colorado in legislative acts to help reduce school violence. Two bills, House Bill 1119 and Senate Bill 133, both addressed the issues of school safety and information sharing. These two laws have been in effect for over a year, and yet many schools, school districts, and law enforcement agencies have not attempted to implement the requirements outlined in the laws; others are struggling with how to effectively implement them.

Because of the collaboration required by the laws, it is recommended that an Interagency Agreement be developed and an Interagency Social Support Team be convened to address the requirements of the laws. Some key agencies to include would be: law enforcement, schools, juvenile justice agencies, social services, juvenile assessment centers, and mental health. The Colorado Attorney General’s Office, along with CSPV and governing representatives from agencies listed above, developed a model for those attempting to create an Interagency Agreement. It can be viewed at www.colorado.edu/cspv/safeschools. It is highly recommended that this model be used in the development of an Interagency Agreement.

Some concerns have arisen among certain agencies about the ability to participate in information sharing tasks due to client confidentiality agreements. In many cases, the new laws have actually made provision for those agencies to be able to share information, but even where that is not the case, agencies still have the ability to participate in discussions regarding possible treatment or intervention for students without disclosing specifics about a particular client. Many of these issues have been further clarified in the Model Interagency Agreement, but if further clarification is needed, CSPV is available to answer questions, as are employees of the Colorado Attorney General’s Office.

COMING SOON!

Safe Communities ~ Safe Schools
Spring Conference 2002
April, 2002
Omni Interlocken Resort

The Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence will host a conference regarding school and community violence. Topics to be discussed include: effective violence prevention programs, early warning signs, interagency agreements and information sharing, bullying, and special sessions for students!
Columbine Middle School has identified two main goals to target during the 2001/2002 school year: (1) increase parent participation and, (2) continue to reduce the incidences of bullying. Through the initiative the potential exists to implement a bully proofing program which could be implemented as early as next fall, 2002.

At Columbine, it is believed that one of the best ways to ensure academic success is to create a safe and positive learning environment. The Safe Communities ~ Safe Schools Initiative is another way to help reach the goals of Columbine Middle School and the Montrose County School District. For questions, please feel free to call Mr. Stephenson or Mrs. Lokey at (970) 249-2581.

the Planning Team identified five goals for achieving the intent of the vision statement. Bullying prevention and crisis planning were two of the selected goals.

On October 30, members of the Planning Team attended the most recent regional training in Salida on developing an Interagency Social Support Team and Crisis Response Plans. From that training, the Planning Team decided to form subcommittees to focus on the following areas: bullying, collecting parent permission slips for the spring surveys, development of the Interagency Social Support Team, and the Crisis Response Plan.

For more information, contact the co-coordinators, Patricia Hillis or Paula Lujan at (719) 655-2578.