Nebraska's Cross-Systems Approach to School Safety: Education Work Group

Overall Goal: To collectively support, enhance and sustain safe, healthy and successful learning environments for all Nebraska's children and youth through a comprehensive, integrated cross-systems approach to school safety, grounded in collaboration, context and best practice.

Guiding Principles:

➢ Creating safe, inclusive and welcoming learning environments is essential to educating and preparing children and youth to achieve their highest potential.

➢ An integrated, collaborative cross-systems approach school safety is essential at both local and State levels.

➢ Efforts to improve school safety, school climate and student learning are not separate endeavors nor should be undertaken in siloed isolation.

➢ The capacity across all systems to effectively address school safety must be collectively supported through proactive leadership, stakeholder engagement and sustainable change.

➢ Schools building and sustaining positive relationships and a climate of trust with students and families is key.

➢ School safety efforts must balance the physical safety and psychological safety of all students, including those with special needs.

➢ School safety efforts should be based on evidence-based practices, policies and standards whenever possible, with consideration given to the unique context of the school, district, community and student population(s) served.

Recommendations: The following recommendations, grouped by priority area, are organized under the primary components of school safety that each address - **Prevention, Preparedness, Response** and **Recovery**.

State-Level Cross-Systems Leadership and Support

PREVENTION	PREPAREDNESS	RESPONSE	RECOVERY
▪ Establish and support a State-level **Cross-Systems Task Force on School Safety**, with representatives from Education, Behavioral Health, Law Enforcement, Child Welfare and Juvenile/Criminal Justice systems.			
▪ Establish and support a State-level **Cross-Systems Technical Assistance Center on School Safety**.			
▪ Ensure technical assistance, evidence-based training and resource materials are culturally, linguistically and developmentally appropriate for the student population(s) served.			

Statewide Reporting System and Cross-Systems Communication

PREVENTION	PREPAREDNESS	RESPONSE
▪ Establish and support a **Statewide Reporting System** for anonymous tips on potential threats.*		
▪ Ensure and support statewide availability of **Multiple Reporting Avenues** for students, schools staff, families and the general public.*		
▪ Develop and align written guidance on timely, prudent and appropriate **Cross-Systems Information Sharing, Emergency Communications** and **Incident Command Protocols** across all systems involved.*		
▪ Develop and deliver ongoing **Cross-Systems Information Sharing Training** to all systems (e.g., FERPA, HIPAA).*		
	▪ Establish and align **Accountability Mechanisms** to ensure when information is shared, there is a timely, appropriate and coordinated response across all systems.	

Standard Response Protocols (SRP)

PREPAREDNESS	RESPONSE	RECOVERY
▪ Adopt and align evidence-based **Standard Response Protocols (SRP), Common Signage and Vocabulary on School Safety** across all schools and involved systems statewide.		
▪ Adopt *I Love You Guys* **Protocols** statewide, addressing a spectrum of incidents (e.g., school events open to the public, after-school events, off-grounds events, bomb threats, Hazmat incidents, etc.) and student populations (young children, students with disabilities or limited mobility, ELL students, etc.).		
▪ Integrate these protocols into overall emergency preparedness in schools and across systems statewide.		
▪ Statutorily mandate **School Lock-Out** and **Lock-Down Drills** at least once a semester.		
▪ Encourage cross-systems participation in these drills.		
▪ Encourage schools' adoption of **Emergency Response, Re-Unification and Recovery Talking Points for Parents**.*		
▪ Encourage schools to share these resources with care givers, child care providers and all involved systems.*		

Positive School Climate, Relationships and Partnerships

PREVENTION	PREPAREDNESS	RESPONSE	RECOVERY
▪ Encourage schools' adoption of **Evidence-Based Practices** in fostering positive relationships and a climate of trust with students and families; addressing student behavior (e.g., Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Social-Emotional Learning); and school safety measures promoting a positive school climate and community of caring, rather than hardening schools buildings.			
▪ Increase statewide availability and schools' access to **Professional Consultation** with Behavioral Health Practitioners.*			▪ Increase statewide availability and schools' access to **Professional Consultation**.*
▪ Reduce **Stigma attached to Mental Health** and address related bullying through ongoing evidence-based **Training for School Staff** and expanded health/wellness **Curricula for Students** statewide.*			
▪ Expand and deliver ongoing evidence-based **Training for Law Enforcement and SROs** statewide on adolescent brain development and students with special needs (e.g., trauma history, physically or developmentally disabled, etc.).			

Statewide Access to Services and Supports

PREVENTION	PREPAREDNESS	RECOVERY
▪ Increase statewide availability of **School-Based Wellness Centers, Services and Supports**. ▪ Advocate for school-based services being eligible under Medicaid and private insurance.		▪ Increase statewide availability of **School Wellness Centers, Services and Supports.** ▪ Advocate for school-based services being eligible under Medicaid and private insurance
▪ Increase schools' awareness and collaborations with **Community-Based Behavioral Health Services and Supports** for students and families.* ▪ Increase statewide availability of **School Social Workers** to facilitate these collaborations.		▪ Increase schools' awareness and collaborations with **Community-Based Behavioral Health Services and Supports** for students and families.* ▪ Increase statewide availability of **School Social Workers** for these collaborations.
▪ Increase schools' awareness and use of **NeSOC Youth Mobile Crisis Response Teams** statewide.		▪ Ensure all affected by a community or school-related incident are debriefed and have access to services and supports throughout recovery.*

Cross-Systems Threat Assessment Teams

PREVENTION	PREPAREDNESS	RESPONSE
▪ Establish and support local/regional **Cross-Systems Threat Assessment Teams** statewide, which include school administrators, mental health practitioners, school resource officers (SROs) and law enforcement.*		
▪ Develop and deliver ongoing evidence-based **Team Training** statewide, on topics such as early warning signs, risk factors, effects of trauma, self-harm, threat assessment, etc.*		
▪ Increase statewide availability and schools' access to mental health practitioners trained in suicide screening, risk assessment <u>and</u> threat assessment.*		

Cross-Systems Crisis Response Teams

PREPAREDNESS	RESPONSE
▪ Expand and support local/regional **Cross-Systems Crisis Response Teams** statewide, which include school staff, SROs, mental health practitioners, 911 operators, law enforcement, first responders and emergency medical facilities.	
▪ Develop and deliver ongoing evidence-based **Team Training** statewide on response to a variety of incidents.	
▪ Expand and support **Emergency Response Capacities in Rural Areas** to address minimal law enforcement coverage, volunteer first responders and longer response times.	

Cross-Systems Crisis Recovery Teams

PREPAREDNESS	RESPONSE	RECOVERY
▪ Establish, support and train local/regional **Cross-Systems Crisis Recovery Teams** statewide, based on LOSS Model*		
▪ Encourage schools' adoption of evidence-based **Re-Unification and Recovery Protocols** statewide.*		