



Safe Schools Community Meeting Minutes

DATE: Nov. 6, 2024

TIME : 9:00 a.m. Zoom Video Conference Meeting

Welcome/Introductions

Confirmation of Agenda

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| Board of Education | Julia Fraser |
| City of Kelowna | Ron Cannan |
| COTA | Lori Dawson Bedard |
| COPAC | n/a |
| CUPE | George York |
| District Administration | Al Lalonde, Kevin Kaardal, Sherri Roche, Rick Taylor, Jared Birkeland, Ashley Ragoonaden |
| Traffic Safety Officer | Dan Glasscock |
| Kelowna Fire Department | n/a |
| RCMP | Federico Angulo, Ryan Rode |
| City of West Kelowna | Melissa Hunt-Anderson |
| District of Lake Country | n/a |
| Brain Trust | Amanda McFarland |
| BGCO/Upstream | Philippa Putlitz |
| Recording Secretary | Angela Kreklewetz |
| Regrets | <i>Kirsten Macleod, Brandwyn Rigby, Jeannette Watson, Natalie Morin, Michelle Price, Lee-Ann Tiede, Jon Rever, Mohini Singh, Candace Friesen, Paul Johnson</i> |

Welcome & Land Acknowledgment

Sherri welcomed everyone to first meeting of the school year and acknowledged that this meeting was being held on the traditional, unceded territory of the Okanagan Syilx People.

Update re: Ministry of Education Safe Schools Coordinator Meeting 2023-2024 Trends & Themes

- What is a Safe School Coordinator? In 2012 Ministry started the ERASE (expect respect and safe education) strategy- each school district across BC would have a safe school coordinator contact (liaison for ERASE work). Al

Lalonde and Sherri Roche are the representatives for SD23; hold meetings every year and monthly online trend meetings.

- **Safer Schools Together (SST)** is contracted by the Ministry of Education and Childcare. The team specializes in safety, wellness and violence prevention. They work closely with schools across the province, law enforcement and communities. SST Team provides trainings, case consultation and tools to address both digital and behavioural threats.
- Trends for 2023-2024 were shared at the Provincial Safe Schools Coordinator meetings. Trends include: 109% bullying and cyberbullying increase, 28% sexual assault decrease (better job at having community supports and services in place), 36% threat related behaviour increase that we're seeing in province- not unusual, contagion affect with trends in other areas of the world.
- **School Threat Assessment:** A structured process by a trained, multidimensional team to identify, assess, and respond to potential safety threats, aiming to create proactive intervention plans that support individuals towards healthier pathways
- **Worrisome Online Behavior (WOB) report data-** Utilizes open-source information for early identification of potential violence. Despite media creating heightened concern, the data shows a 12% decrease in physical violence, additionally a 60% increase in weapons (more youth posting photos with weapons), and a 70% rise in gang-associated behaviour (increased posts depicting drugs).
- **ERASE website-** has just been updated- new 'get help' section, more information and resources for students, parents, and educators related to online safety, mental health, bullying, violence, SOGI etc.
- Erase website has the erase/**Report It** tool- lets students securely and anonymously report concerns they may have; students may be afraid to share in person (snitch or fear of retaliation), safer to share anonymously. See <https://erasereportit.gov.bc.ca/> for more information. Reports first come to Kevin Kaardal, Al Lalonde, and Sherri Roche who then follow up with schools.
- Report It Trends 2023-2024: Data indicates a 90% increase in sextortion risks, a 53% rise in hate/racism/radicalization incidents, and a 300% increase in reports involving firearms. These reports facilitate timely RCMP engagement for immediate intervention. Notably, most tips occur during or immediately after school hours; with the implementation of the new cell phone policy, we anticipate a potential shift in reporting times
- Increase in help and support for sextortion- In March 2023 the Intimate Images Protection Act was passed; claims can be made if an intimate image has been posted online and has caused damage; legal counsellors assist; provide emotional support; free of charge service, youth 14 or older can apply and reach out for support on own, younger youth need parents' assistance.
- Other reporting options:
Take It Down: <http://takeitdown.ncmec.org>
Cyber Tip: <http://cybertip.ca/en/>

Questions? *How do we promote this to the students?* We have posters in schools with QR code; shared with district student advisory council; administrators know it's out there; YMCA, team members, BGCO, sharing with community members; links on our school website.

Have you done a presentation with district student council? Yes, last year's presentation on Safer Schools, especially focused on the anonymous reporting tool.

Partner Group Update

- **RCMP- Federico Angulo-** new members on the Westside and Kelowna so there has been a lot of new experiences and learning; getting out to schools a lot and being proactive at events; in Kelowna team up with Crown Counsel at ICE and going to law classes (grade 11 & 12), talking about law issues, sextortion etc.;

addressing issues in the community; continuing to work with the HRVY team and looking forward to the program moving forward and seeing more positive progress.

SROs met with BCGO and Restorative Justice program, trying to get the community more involved and creating packaged education piece re: low-level petty crime, early intervention.

RCMP- Ryan Rode- busy area on the Westside; main school working with is Mt. Boucherie (1900 students), establishing relationships with principal and VPs and everyone at the school; main concern is cyberbullying. Trying to educate youth starting in grade 5 to help prevent incidents.

Question? *Is there just one RCMP SRO for Kelowna and one for the Westside?*

There are two RCMP for Kelowna- Federico Angulo and Kirsten Macleod. One for West Kelowna- Ryan Rode, and one for Lake Country- Brandwyn Rigby. This is not enough staff, as there were once 4 SROs just for Kelowna. However, RCMP staffing levels are low across Canada; there is a serious need for RCMP- shortage around the country.

- **Board of Education- Julia Fraser-** Nothing to share at this time- just had their AGM and election, next meeting is next Wednesday; there more to report after that.
- **COTA- Lori Dawson Bedard-** nothing to report from COTA.
- **CUPE- George York-** nothing to report from CUPE.
- **COPAC-** n/a
- **City of Kelowna- Ron Cannan-** congratulations to Julia Fraser new Board Chair; appreciated resources and data shared- interested in obtaining data specifically for SD23; brought up concerning issues regarding youth recently and transit safety concerns.

Discussion- overall trend is that criminal behaviour is diminishing but seems contradicting due to a few recent events that hit social media very close together, slowly incidents have been decreasing from RCMP perspective. Also, these events may or may not be related and are happening *outside* of school. SROs help work with staff/collaborate to move forward in a positive way.

- **City of West Kelowna- Melissa Hunt-Anderson-** shared the following links about two relevant engagements in West Kelowna:
[Help us understand housing and support needs in our community | Engage West Kelowna](#) – looks at unhoused and those at risk of losing housing.
[Help us finalize West Kelowna's Accessibility & Inclusion Plan! | Engage West Kelowna](#) – looking for feedback on the accessibility plan to recognize gaps in the community.
November 20th is National Child's Day- Lianne Carley from Vancouver Coast Health created a resource to support mental health/wellness for youth and will be sharing the resource; focuses on the protective factors- play, safety, participation, social connection, and belonging; event will be held 9:00 am-12:30 pm at Metro Hub and it is free to attend. More information: [National Child Day Community Event Registration](#)
- **District of Lake Country-** n/a
- **Kelowna Fire Department-** n/a
- **West Kelowna Fire Department-** n/a
- **Lake Country Fire Department-** n/a
- **Traffic Safety – Dan Glasscock-** school year has started off very well; has dealt with safety concerns at Chief Tomat, Rose Valley, Davidson Rd, worked with local government, talked with parents to alleviate concerns, working on getting parent volunteers to help with school crossings, working with Safe Routes for schools with COK; finished a lot of work at North Glenmore and Webber Rd, Casorso and moving onto Bellevue Creek (fixing sidewalks and crossing upgrades); had several meetings with Lake Country council for their Shared Roads programs.
Concern- eBikes/scooters- parents reaching out, need for better storage facilities; informing/educating parents that if not 16 years old, they are illegal.
Question if there was still Safe Routes to School- yes, on website.

- **BGCO Upstream- Philippa Putlitz-** matched 30 new kids from Springvalley Middle to Upstream yesterday; currently working with 91 families and youth across the school district to enhance resilience and prevent youth homelessness; last quarter had 132 youth and families served; enhancing group-based learning and participation is up from 20% to 60%; partnering with BGC LearnOn Program to create anti-violence-type program. Upstream maintains about 50% of the kids identified as needing support; Upstream might be expanding to all 8 middle schools.
- **Brain Trust- Amanda McFarlane-** Brain Trust focuses on prevention, education and support of traumatic and acquired brain injury, which is the leading cause of death and disability worldwide, many are sports injuries and caused by substance use related injuries; behaviour management is an issue in the youth population with brain injuries.
Received funding to create a virtual reality experiential learning program, learn in a sober state what it feels like to be intoxicated etc.; Brain Trust is able to do these presentations if interested. They also have free, easy-to-access, MA level counsellors available for youth and adults, remote access or in person.
Still have the helmet program- if you cannot afford a helmet, they will provide you with a helmet fitting and free helmet.
Received City funding- working with youth at risk of intimate partner violence.
- **Elementary Administrators- Jared Birkeland-** thanks everyone for being here and for sharing resources; congrats to Julia; good school startup, no safety updates, cell phone policy welcome with staff.
- **Secondary Administrators- Ashley Ragoonaden-** new to committee, sends congrats to Julia, cell phone in high schools is going in a positive direction- greater focus on learning, some college area concerns and homelessness and drug use on school property- needing to ask individuals to move in the morning.
Superintendent- Kevin Kaardal- extended congratulations to the team and all those supporting safety and critical response, especially considering recent sudden losses of staff and students; highlighted the effectiveness of community partnerships (e.g., BGCO) in achieving impactful outcomes and emphasized the committee's role in leveraging government grants to ensure continued support for vital programs like Upstream and HRVY, preventing loss due to funding gaps; underscored the importance of supporting youth in the aftermath of critical incidents, with the committee uniting community efforts to focus on positive collaborative outcomes. The success of these collaborations is evident, as 96% of SD23 students graduate (exceeding the provincial average), with 70% pursuing higher education; Board updates: new board chair- Julia Fraser, vice chair- Lisa Guderyan.
- **District Administration Al Lalonde-** yearly suspension report goes to the board- trends have decreased over the years; we do have SD23 data around mental health in school ex. the YDI (grade 11s), MDI, EDI, and satisfaction surveys. We spend more than any district in the province on mental health.
Alternative to suspension program at the YMCA; new partnership with Child Youth Advocacy Center (Sept. 1st) to provide wraparound supports, SD23 staff embedded in program.

Correspondence

New Business

HRVY (Honouring Resiliency in Vulnerable Youth) update-, partnership with Childhood Connections Society (CCS) effective Sept. 1, 2024: narrowed scope to 8-13 years of age; currently completing renovations; working with an interior designer who helped to create Foundry to make space more youth-friendly. More staff have been added- clinician attached to HRVY services (family counselling) and Volunteer Program Coordinator; goal is to have healthy adult mentors to work with youth with targeted prosocial wraparound supports. Sustainability of funding is a huge concern- support and funding for prevention is harder to ascertain than for response. HRVY is now receiving referrals.

Summary and Wrap Up- reach out to Sherri if you would like anything added to the next agenda. If anyone is missing or has changed from the agenda list, please notify Sherri.

Next Meeting Date: February 12, 2025, 9:00 am

