

COUNTY WIDE SAFE SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

October 8, 2014

*See Page #2 Correction 2/26/15*

GROSSMAN'S RESTAURANT, 211 SOUTH DETROIT STREET, LAGRANGE, INDIANA

This meeting is being held pursuant to and in accordance with I.C. 5-2-10.1-10.

Cathy Phillip called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Those in attendance were: Cathy Phillip, Lakeland School Corporation; Karl Vaughn, and Col. Douglas, Howe Military Academy; Chris Wilkins, Chris Gerbers and Leanne DeFelice Lakeland School Corporation; Damon Witherspoon, and Gaylon Wisel, Prairie Heights School Corporation; Jim Hostetler and Randy Miller, Westview School Corporation; Wendy Petty, DCS; Terry Martin, LaGrange County Sheriff Department; Lee Ann Anders, Probation Department; Rich Snyder, LaGrange Town Police Department, Ryan Kauffman, Wolcottville Police Department; John Parish and Greg Kenner, Prosecuting Attorney's Office; Bill Connelly from LaGrange Publishing.

All present introduced themselves.

Terry Martin made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 28, 2014 meeting, seconded by Chris Wilkins and passed unanimously. Terry Martin made a motion to approve the executive session meeting minutes, seconded by Chris Wilkins and passed unanimously.

Cathy invited public comments. There were none.

Comments from members present:

1. Carl Vaughn shared that Howe Military Academy is off to a good start, with no major issues being seen. They have now partnered with Bowen Center for on sight counseling and that is working well.
2. Jim Hostetler shared he and Randy Miller had attended the recent two (2) day Safe Schools Academy in Indianapolis and it was worthwhile. Westview is working on installing a mass communication system for their families.
3. Ryan Kauffman indicated he is getting into Wolcott Mills to have lunch with the students and spend time to establish a relationship with the students. Rich also reported that corn school went well.
4. Rich Snyder shared the biggest concerns continue to be meth and e-cigarettes. He is also seeing a rise in the number of attempted suicides for all ages. Rich also raised the question of getting police, fire and EMS into the schools to walk the facilities and become familiar with them.

5. John Parrish inquired how often we do active shooter drills in the schools. Cathy Phillip explained most of us only have done the exercise once and it was within the last year, Lakeland's was this year. We keep the staffs informed using monthly safety programming.
6. Lee Ann advised the Probation Department is seeing the same pattern as Rich indicated with a continuing rise in meth and e-cigarette usage. She indicated she will be preparing a list of persons on probation and sharing that with designated persons from each school.

Lee Ann also shared more information on the JDAI (Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative) Group formed recently through the state and with a grant, that is intended to get more things in place for under aged students as an alternative to incarceration. Several programs and ideas are currently on the table and Lee Ann intends to be announcing a meeting date in the near future.

Also, Lee Ann reminded all present that there is a Crisis Intervention Team assembled and ready to respond should any school have an issue that needs addressed by the team.

7. Greg Kenner noted that his office is still very active and that they are working on behalf of all organizations that support youth.
8. Chris Wilkins shared the main focus at Lakeland Middle School is to improve the culture. Otherwise, things are going well.
9. Wendy indicated the same points of emphasis from DCS continue to be meth and spice.
10. Chris Gerbers shared his biggest issue at the High School is attendance. Lee Ann offered some ideas of support from the Probation Department. Chris being new to the group shared his background.
11. Terry Martin asked the schools and probation if they used Carlos (Lakeland's SRO) for home visits? All indicated they do. Terry indicated the county is working on a grant and with the Commissioners on a system called E-tie line for immediate notification of issues within schools. He concurs with all previous statements relative to meth being the number one issue they face daily. Terry also noted the increase in inmates with mental health issues and how this is really putting a burden on the department.
12. Damon shared that Prairie Heights was off to a great start.
13. Gaylon shared many of the safety updates that have been put in place at Prairie Heights including key fobs for entry to the building, sharing of maps with local law enforcement, review of the safety procedures, radios for playgrounds and emergency buttons in the buses. (Correction made 2/25/15 by motion)
14. Cathy summoned up the meeting indicating it sounds as if we need to ban together to create more proactive and deterrent steps for the youth relative to meth and e-cigarettes. Also that Lakeland would gladly participate in efforts through JDAI council to support those efforts. She asked if anyone had filed for the annual CJI Grant? No one had.

Cathy also committed to Rich Snyder that we would organize walk through of all the facilities.

Terry Martin made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Rich Snyder and passed unanimously at 12:25 p.m.

The Committee did not meet in executive session.

Respectfully submitted:

  
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Cathy J. Phillip, Chairperson