

**Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant
Year 4 Mid-Year Performance Report**

Project Status

October 1, 2002 - April 30, 2003

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Introduction

The Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) is currently in the extension year, or Year 4, of the Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant. This report outlines the activities continued in the extension year, and a status report on each activity for the first part of Year 4. Due to the shortened reporting period used in the last performance report, the Year 4 mid-year report will include October 1, 2002 to April 30, 2003.

Strategy 4 – Facility Security

There was no grant activity during this report period. However, a television show about school security is being created. This show will be aired on local television in August 2003, and subsequently distributed to all schools in the school system.

The Closed Circuit Television and Intellikey installations will provide safer schools after the SS/HS grant has ended. In addition, security systems for future schools will be funded by WCPSS.

Strategy 5 – Telephone Hotline

During this report period, there were 16 calls made to the WAVE Line anonymous hotline. Hotline calls included reports of bullying, child abuse, substance abuse, sexual harassment, stalking, a suicide threat, theft, and verbal threats of violence.

The WAVE Line hotline will be available after the end of the SS/HS grant; the hotline is funded by the state of North Carolina. Grant funds were used to increase students' awareness of the hotline and its purpose.

Strategy 7 – Mentors

Thirty-four Communities in Schools (CIS) mentor trainings were conducted during the 2002-2003 school year. At these trainings, approximately 365 mentors were trained. There were five elementary, five middle and four high schools participating (including one alternative school). Data was missing from five schools; there were 359 students participating in the remaining nine schools.

During this report period, CIS has actively recruited at local businesses, a local university, and community organizations. In addition, CIS recognized national volunteer recognition week by recognizing six Lifesaver Award recipients and the Volunteer of the Month.

The CIS mentoring program will continue after the end of the SS/HS grant. CIS staff are meeting bi-monthly with representatives from WCPSS to discuss the future of the program. Improvements may include revising the volunteer training curriculum to focus on academics as well as life skills for students of all ages.

Strategy 8 – Teen Court

During the October 2002-April 2003 report period there were 119 volunteers from nine middle schools and eight high schools in WCPSS, as well as schools outside our school system. There were 193 offenders referred to the Teen Court program, of whom 139 participated in hearings. Of the students referred during this report period, 34 were found to be ineligible for Teen Court. During this report period, 108 students successfully completed their sentence (community service, restitution, seminars, etc.), and 18 were unsuccessful.

New outcome data has recently become available for past Teen Court offenders. The 350 students studied were referred between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2002, and successfully completed the program before July 1, 2002. Of those 350 students, 47 re-offended, which results in a 13% recidivism rate of successful Teen Court participants.¹

The Teen Court program has secured future funding from the Wake County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. It will continue exactly as it is currently staffed and running.

Strategy 12 – Preschool Second Step

During this report period, 91 teachers implemented Second Step in 31 preschools, where approximately 1,000 children were served. In addition, 816 parents were exposed to the preschool Second Step program.

The final training for preschool Second Step was completed in June 2002. Most preschools that were trained in Second Step in June 2002 began implementation in the 2002-2003 school year. Teacher-Parent consultants visited all private preschools and daycares to support and monitor the progress of Second Step.

¹ Kaiser-Polge, T. L. (2003). The effectiveness of the Capital Area Teen Court: A look at recidivism and program attributes. Unpublished master's thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill.

Strategy 13 – Violence and Substance Abuse Curricula

Second Step

Fifteen staff from seven elementary schools and one middle school participated in a final Second Step Training of Trainers workshop on November 5-7, 2002. In addition, 191 staff members from nine schools were trained in their schools by staff previously trained in Second Step.

Twenty-four elementary schools were implementing Second Step during this period. There were approximately 344 school staff who taught the curriculum to approximately 8,620 students, and about 6,690 families were exposed to the Second Step program.

In March, Second Step kits were provided to six regional counselors' libraries, as well as two additional elementary schools. Support continues to be given to schools during staff training and program implementation.

Incentives were offered to Second Step coordinators to improve return rates of post-test surveys at the end of the 2002-2003 school year. Each counselor will be given a gift certificate to an educational supply store if surveys are returned. Survey results will be available in the final report.

SS/HS funding for Second Step was provided to train counselors and teachers in the Second Step curriculum, as well as to provide Second Step kits to schools and regional libraries. As a result, the Second Step curriculum is now available to schools, and can be sustained without further funding.

Get Real About Violence

A final Get Real About Violence (GRAV) Core Team Training, originally planned for November 2002, was cancelled due to previous budget concerns. Ten elementary schools, four middle schools, four high schools, and one alternative school reported implementing GRAV during this report period. There were approximately 72 school staff members teaching the curriculum, and approximately 4,360 students participating. In addition, about 2,500 families were exposed to the GRAV curriculum.

In March, one GRAV kit was provided to a regional counselors' library. Kits were also provided to five additional elementary schools and two additional middle schools.

Incentives were offered to GRAV coordinators to improve return rates of post-test surveys at the end of the 2002-2003 school year. Each counselor will be given a gift certificate

to an educational supply store if surveys are returned. Survey results will be available in the final report.

SS/HS funding for GRAV was provided to train counselors and teachers in the GRAV curriculum, as well as to provide GRAV kits to schools and regional libraries. As a result, the GRAV curriculum is now available to schools, and can be sustained without further funding.

Strategy 14 – Non-School Hours Youth Programming

In Year 4, SS/HS is no longer providing funding for Life Skills training. Instead, the 4-H Cooperative Extension has provided two Parent-to-Parent trainings. Parent-to-Parent trainings are provided to community and faith-based organizations, who then provide an interactive video-based series of parenting classes targeted at preventing the incidence of drug initiation and use by adolescents. The first training was December 9-10 with 14 people attending. The second training was May 5-6, with 21 people attending.

Strategy 16 – Youth Infrastructure

SS/HS, in conjunction with WTVD, created a local news program called “Invisible Weapons” which was aired on March 8, 2003. “Invisible Weapons” discussed the issue of bullying with words. The show reached approximately 49,000 households across the Raleigh/Durham/Fayetteville area. The tape of “Invisible Weapons” was close captioned for the hearing impaired and distributed to all Wake County middle and high schools, and is available in a central location for general viewing.

All previous programs produced by SS/HS were edited to provide closed captioning for the hearing impaired. Tapes will be copied and placed in a middle school and a high school serving a large number of hearing impaired students. Copies will also be housed in the central office Special Education Services department and made available to students with hearing impairment served at other school sites. All middle and high school special education chairs will be notified that the tapes are available.

Erika Harold, the current Miss America, spoke in Raleigh on February 5, 2003. Ms. Harold presented a program entitled “Empowering Youth Against Violence and Bullying” on two occasions. In the afternoon, Ms. Harold spoke to students and facilitated a question and answer session at Southeast Raleigh High School. Approximately 250 students attended. In the evening Ms. Harold spoke to parents, teachers, and other community members at the BTI

Memorial Auditorium in downtown Raleigh. Approximately 300 people were at the evening presentation.

Strategy 17 – NovaNET

During the fall 2002 semester, there were 17 high schools using NovaNET in Wake County. Of those schools, 15 returned data for the fall semester. In the 15 schools with available data, there were 777 students participating in NovaNET. Data for the whole 2002-2003 school year as well as outcome data will be available in the final report.

A comprehensive evaluation of NovaNET in the 2001-2002 school year was published by the WCPSS Department of Evaluation and Research. A major finding of the evaluation was that student outcomes related directly to the method of NovaNET implementation in each school. Some schools had much better outcomes, measured by rate of pass and GPA, than other schools. The evaluation, entitled “NovaNET Student Outcomes 2001-2002,” can be accessed at:

http://www.wcpss.net/evaluation-research/reports/report_topics/othereval.htm

Results of the NovaNET evaluation were presented at the American Educational Research Association national convention in April 2003.

NovaNET is already funded largely by the school system, and will be completely supported locally at the end of the SS/HS grant.

Threat Management by Assessment and Counseling

Beginning in Year 3, SS/HS funds were provided for specific aspects of the new WCPSS threat assessment and intervention process. During this report period, two activities were funded by SS/HS.

A community partner is providing intervention services for students suspended for severe threats made in school. The partner created a manual outlining the curriculum developed for this purpose. In addition, Wake County Human Services was paid to assess students making specific threats with immediate access to the weapons necessary. However, this service has not yet been needed.

SS/HS provided a means to train WCPSS staff in the new threat assessment process, and in curriculum development. These are one-time costs that created systems change, and will be sustained at no cost after the end of the SS/HS grant.