

Ingham Impact Episode 21 – Safety Committee

Steve Rusnock: Safety Committee was formed to bring all the departments together, in one room, once a month to talk about safety related items, and that can range from a slipping issue to our most severe lock-down procedure issue. That committee was formed to make sure that all departments have input, and say into the policies and procedures that that committee develops. Jeff Taylor: With IT (Information Technology Services) specifically, it was important to have an IT representative as part of the Safety Committee because so much of what we work on in the Safety Committee intersects with what we do in IT; things like access control on doors, or the InformaCast paging system that we use for emergency alerts; these are all systems that we look at in IT. Michelle Nicholson: Two of the programs we have in Early Childhood are home visiting programs, so that's very different than being in the ISD buildings or even being in a school district, but we have a lot of procedures that we've put together to really have staff think before they go to the visit. Some things they might need to do to prepare themselves to be safe during a visit. One of the things that we have provided to staff is actually a window cling that they put on the window of their car so that when they park at someone's home, if there were to be any problems, and police, or other people were to arrive, they would know that somebody that is Early On staff or Great Parents, Great Start staff is in this home. Denise Lycos: There's a lot of things that come up under school safety that are more than just building safety; it can be the need to have EpiPens in each school; all of those things kind of fall under that, the school safety. Our biggest initiative right now is updating our lock-down drills and procedures, in light of the fact that we had a lock-down earlier this year; what did we learn, and what did we do well, and what do we need to improve on? And also, what's everybody else doing. Steve Rusnock: We interact with the Ingham County Emergency Operation Center; so that would be Rob Dale and Mary Hull. They are our experts, so, while we are trained in school policies and procedures, we're not necessarily experts in active shooter situations or lock-down situations. So we rely on that department out of Ingham County for our policies and procedures, help us developing those, help us implementing them, developing our drills, communicating our drills, so they are really our expertise when it comes to all of those. Also, from the ISD position, we try to use the Ingham County Emergency Operation Center to help push a common safety policy and procedure throughout all of our local districts in Ingham County. Mary Hull: As the County Emergency Manager, all schools in Michigan in each county have to report their lock-down drills to us. We go out and we assess their lock-downs and give them feedback, what great things they did, what areas they need to improve on. If there were every an incident, obviously we would go to that school or district and help them with the incident. Jeff Taylor: After the lock-down at the Wilson Talent Center, we invited Sergeant Mary Hull to speak with us, with the Safety Committee to kind of talk about what they saw from their side of things, the responding officers, and kind of walk through how that event went and where we could make improvements, and what went well. Mary Hull: Seems like, whenever lock-down is brought up everybody gets really confused about what to do, but it's really just keeping everybody safe. Denise Lycos: School safety is everybody's responsibility; it doesn't have to be a supervisor or a manager that sees something going on in the building that they might have a question about or somebody who looks lost. We have big buildings, lots of people, they may sign in but they may not know where they're going and just making sure that we are welcoming people and acknowledging and trying to determine where they belong and how we can help them get there, and if they don't seem to be in the right place, making sure we get them to the right place because that will ultimately help us keep everybody more safe. Michelle Nicholson: For each of our on-campus buildings, we're putting together procedures again, for lock-down, fire, tornado, and we need to think about, how can we adapt those procedures for our off-site programs, and I know ours aren't the only ones, but again, going into homes where we don't always have control or say over what's going to happen, but thinking about what are the things we can control? And having the other committee members'

perspectives because of their experiences helps us come up with the best plan for what we can do.
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