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Senate Bill 75: Active Shooter Intruder Response Training Perceptions of Building Leaders and Teachers from Southwest Missouri High Schools

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by

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This Dissertation has been approved as partial fulfillment

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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree.

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Abstract

This study was focused on the perceptions of teachers and administrators from southwest Missouri high schools regarding the impact of Active Shooter Intruder Response Training (ASIRT). Perceptions of school safety, school climate, and preparedness for an active shooter were collected through focus group interviews. Participants for this study included four teachers and four principals randomly selected from a stratified cross-section of southwest Missouri high schools, based on enrollment. Also interviewed was Senator Dan Brown, primary sponsor of Missouri Senate Bill 75 (2013). Missouri Senate Bill 75 was signed into law by the Governor of Missouri in 2013 and mandates intruder training for Missouri school districts. The findings of this study were that teachers and administrators reported greater feelings of safety, climate, and preparedness for an intruder after participating in ASIRT. According to Senator Brown, the bill was originally authored to allow each school district the opportunity to determine how to best train staff for the event of an active shooter. Findings revealed that ASIRT was designed primarily to better provide safe learning environments for students and school staff, allowing higher levels of teaching and learning. Maslow's (1954) theory of motivation–hierarchy of needs was the theoretical framework of this study, which states all humans must have the basic need of safety met before further development can take place. This theory paralleled the literature reviewed for this study, which indicated students perform at higher levels when they have a greater sense of safety.

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Chapter One: Introduction

According to C. Hale Sipe (1929), in his book entitled, *Indian Wars of Pennsylvania*, public school houses have been the settings of mass attacks for more than 250 years. Sipe (1929) recounted the events of July 26, 1764, known as the Enoch Brown Massacre, in which three Delaware Indians entered a small Pennsylvania school house and brutally attacked and scalped the schoolmaster, Enoch Brown, and 11 children. More recently, on December 14, 2012, at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, gunman Adam Lanza gained entry by shooting through locked doors and then proceeded to kill 28 people, including 20 children (Vogel, Horwitz, & Fahrenthold, 2012).

Random acts of violence continue to emerge in public school buildings as school violence remains prevalent in small and large districts, both urban and rural (Campbell, 2014). According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MODESE) (2013b), in 2013 public schools reported 660 incidents in which students were disciplined for bringing a weapon to school. The state's largest districts, Kansas City, Springfield, Saint Louis, and Columbia, accounted for 172 of all weapons incidents in 2013, equating to 26% (MODESE, 2013a).

During the Clinton administration, the federal government enacted the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 in response to increasing levels of gun violence in schools, one of the first major pieces of legislation specifically designed to protect students and school staff (Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, 2012). According to the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence (2012), the Gun-Free Schools Act imposed a federal requirement on school districts to adopt a zero-tolerance policy and minimum one-year expulsion

from school for possessing a gun on school grounds. The Gun-Free Schools Act was replaced in 2001 as part of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) Act (United States Department of Education, 2004). The NCLB Act requires any state receiving federal funding to have laws requiring local educational agencies to adopt discipline policies prohibiting possession of guns on school grounds (The Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, 2012).

The Safe Schools Act (SSA) is another piece of legislation specifically written with the objective of increasing safety (Center for Safe Schools, 1998). According to the Center for Safe Schools (1998), the SSA was a federal mandate enacted in 1995 and revised in 1997, all in an effort to provide guidance for school administrators on the writing of discipline policy for events involving a weapon on school grounds (Center for Safe Schools, 1998). The SSA defined a weapon as "any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, rifle, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury" (Center for Safe Schools, 1998, p. 2). The SSA also required each district discipline policy to, at minimum, "…provide for the suspension of not less than one year or expulsion for a student who brings a weapon to school" (Center for Safe Schools, 1998, p. 1).

Although the GFSA and SSA subjected violators to harsh punishments, neither act placed focus on the preparation for a school shooting (Ponche, 2010). According to a discipline report from the MODESE (2013a), incidents involving a weapon have been on the decline, but the opportunity for a school shooting continues to exist, and school districts must prepare for such an unforeseeable event. Less than three years after the SSA was enacted, one of the nation's most notorious school shootings occurred at

Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado (Cable News Network, 2014). During this

tragedy, 12 students and one adult lost their lives after two classmates opened fire in the

school (Cable News Network, 2014). In spite of lawmakers' efforts to keep weapons out

of schools, random school shootings continued to occur across the United States,

prompting lawmakers to introduce additional legislation in an effort to keep schools safe

(Carroll, 2014).

According to the MODESE (2014b), schools are required to perform drills for

lockdown, fire, tornado, and earthquake each year. Despite these safety drills, preparation

for an emergency or an intruder did not exist in Missouri schools until the passage of

Missouri Senate Bill 75 (Flippin, 2014). Missouri State Auditor, Susan Montee (2008),

stated, "There are insufficient violence prevention programs, anti-bullying policies, safety

procedures and programs, and emergency management plans and drills…" (p. 2). This

statement could not be truer in the eyes of legislators after the massacre that transpired at

Sandy Hook Elementary School, as state lawmakers rushed to introduce legislation with

the main impetus being safety in schools (Shah, 2013).

Shortly after the Sandy Hook tragedy, Missouri legislators followed the lead of

neighboring states, Illinois and Arkansas, and voted to require school district personnel to

perform active shooter drills (Aronowitz, 2014). This change in school safety policy was

also enacted by other states in the Midwest, including Tennessee and Oklahoma, which

passed similar intruder drill legislation for school staff (Frosch, 2014). In Missouri, this

legislation is commonly referred to as Missouri Senate Bill 75 (2013) (see Appendix A),

which requires Missouri school districts to provide training to staff members on how to

manage a situation in which individuals have, or intend to use, a weapon on school

grounds. This study included examination of the impetus that led to the passage of

Missouri Senate Bill 75 (2013), along with the perceptions of key stakeholders from

southwest Missouri school districts regarding the effectiveness of the mandates of the bill

in relation to preparedness for an active shooter in Missouri public schools.

Background of the Study

Missouri Senate Bill 75 (2013) was written in the wake of the events that

transpired at Sandy Hook Elementary School in December of 2012 (Frosch, 2014).

According to Frosch (2014), five states in the Midwest including Illinois, Oklahoma,

Arkansas, Tennessee, and Missouri, each passed legislation soon after the Sandy Hook

shooting which mandated intruder training for school staff. Governor Jay Nixon signed

Missouri Senate Bill 75 into law in 2013, requiring all Missouri school districts provide

annual professional development to each staff member on proper procedures of ASIRT

before July 1, 2014 (Missouri Senate Bill 75, 2013).

This research involved analysis of the perceptions of teachers and principals from

a cross-section of southwest Missouri high schools. Including teachers and school leaders

from different-sized districts allowed for a better understanding of the effectiveness of

intruder training for all Missouri schools. By comparing perceptions of teachers and

principals from each demographic, it was possible to determine if large districts prepare

differently for an active shooter compared to smaller districts and the reasons for any

observed differences.

In response to Missouri Senate Bill 75, state and local law enforcement officers

have started businesses with the purpose of training school staff members on how to

protect themselves and their students in the event of an emergency (Department of

Homeland Security, 2014). According to one intruder training expert (T. Ceplina, personal communication, December 4, 2013), companies that provide this training strongly support the intent of Missouri Senate Bill 75 due to the inclusion of multiple scenarios teachers and staff may face in the event of an active shooter. In the interview (T. Ceplina, personal communication, December 4, 2013), this training expert praised the efforts of lawmakers for taking a proactive approach to school safety by passing Missouri Senate Bill 75. Other personal communication with training experts adds to the relevance of this training, as most experts agree the training focuses on ensuring safety for all, no matter what role a person has in a school (G. Martin, personal communication, December 10, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was Maslow's theory of motivation–hierarchy of needs. According to Abraham Maslow (1954), "All humans are motivated by unsatisfied needs, and certain lower factors need to be satisfied before higher needs can be satisfied" (p. 3). Maslow (1954) formulated a framework for his theory with safety and security being two basic needs that must be met in order for a human to move on to more complex levels of motivation.

In a 2010 study, Rollings agreed with Maslow when he stated, "Safety is a need that must be met in order to reach self-actualization. In times of emergency or disorganization, safety becomes essential" (p. 11). Ifedili and Ifedili (2012) also concurred with Maslow safety is an important basic human need. However, Ifedili and Ifedili (2012) found, "Many people may see safety as the first basic need, rather than

physiological needs" (p. 80), differing from the opinion of Maslow (1954) that a true hierarchy exists and needs are met in a progressive order.

This study fit in the scope of Maslow's theory, as perceptions of safety in Missouri public schools were the primary focus. According to Britto (2013), "Human beings need to feel safe and free from tension and anxiety…." (p. 1). Britto (2013) further added, "A child exposed to crime of any kind will be unable to properly concentrate on learning" (p. 1). Campbell (2014) explained how the work of Maslow has direct correlation to education. Campbell (2014) stated, "Teachers can help students learn to meet their own safety and friendship needs and to recognize their own self-worth by building a positive classroom environment. These basic needs must be met before education can take place in school" (p. 1).

Hanson (2014) supported the theory of safety being a basic need that must be met, stating, "Students, whether children or adults, have to feel safe, both physically and mentally, before they can let down their guard and learn" (p. 1). According to Wright (2014), safety, or security, is needed for academic success. Wright (2014) further explained how a well-established link exists between academic success and very basic needs, supporting Maslow's (1954) theory that the need for safety must be met for further development to take place.

Statement of the Problem

School leaders and teachers are given the responsibility of providing a safe environment conducive to the learning process (MODESE, 2014b). According to Parrett and Budge (2012), "To learn, children and adolescents need to feel safe and supported. Without these conditions, the mind reverts to a focus on survival" (p. 7). Numerous

studies by the United States Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2014a) have shown a safe climate has a positive impact on student achievement. In efforts to better provide a safe climate, school leaders are now tasked, through the mandates of Missouri Senate Bill 75 (2013), with providing meaningful professional development to staff members with intruder response drills. The focus of the professional development is preparation for a potential active shooter, helping ensure safety and providing a safe learning environment for students (National School Climate Center [NSCC], 2014).

This study involved examination of teacher and administrator perceptions of active shooter intruder response training for key stakeholders from high schools in southwest Missouri and allowed for greater understanding of the impact this training had on district dynamics. Insight was provided to legislators and school leaders regarding the importance of intruder training for all school personnel. According to intruder training expert T. Ceplina (personal communication, December 4, 2013), intruder training was designed to allow administrators to continually be aware of potential threats, in efforts to better protect staff members and students.

The intentions of Missouri Senate Bill 75's (2013) mandate of ASIRT were examined as documented by the author of the bill, as well as teacher and building leader perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter after participating in required professional development. This study will allow building leaders to determine the effectiveness of the training through examination of the perceptions of both teachers and building leaders in districts, which may have differing frequencies of incidents involving a weapon in the school.

Purpose of the Study

Missouri statute prohibits any individual to "knowingly carry a loaded or unloaded firearm or any other lethal weapon into a school, onto a bus, or onto the premises of any school sponsored function…" (Missouri Safe Schools Act [SSA], 2013). According to this state statute, a person can be charged with a misdemeanor if the weapon is unloaded or with a Class D felony if the weapon is loaded (Missouri Safe Schools Act, 2013). If a student brings a weapon to school, these actions violate the SSA, which requires each school district administrator adhere to the policy requiring, at minimum, to "provide for the suspension of not less than one year or expulsion for a student who brings a weapon to school" (Center for Safe Schools, 1998, p. 1). Although Missouri statute and the SSA prohibit guns and other weapons from being allowed on school grounds, nationally, random acts of mass violence continue to exist, and Missouri school districts must prepare for such events (Ponche, 2010).

Despite strict legislation designed to prohibit weapons on school campuses, random school shootings have continued to occur across the nation (Missouri National Education Association, 2014). School safety legislation introduced in the past has primarily been preventative in nature; however, Missouri Senate Bill 75 is one of the first pieces of legislation written as a reaction to a school shooting (Frosch, 2014). According to the MODESE (2013a), in 2013 alone there were 660 incidents in Missouri in which students were disciplined for bringing a weapon to school. Although data from the MODESE (2013a) indicate the number of incidents has steadily decreased over the past five years, from 854 incidents in 2009 to 660 in 2013, a single armed intruder with the intent to produce mass casualties has the potential to occur at any Missouri school.

In the wake of the events that transpired at Sandy Hook Elementary School, lawmakers sought to introduce legislation designed to save lives during an active shooter event (Aronowitz, 2014). In 2013, more than 450 bills related to school safety were filed across the nation after the Sandy Hook shooting (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014). Missouri Senate Bill 75, sponsored by Senator Dan Brown of Rolla, Missouri, was one such bill. This bill required all Missouri school staff members annually attend a minimum of four hours of ASIRT in efforts to better prepare for such an event (Senate Bill 75, 2013).

Two years after the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75, most school districts have now likely participated in at least two ASIRT training opportunities. This study involved collection and analysis of the perceptions of teachers and building leaders from a stratified cross-section of southwest Missouri school districts who have participated in this training. The research allowed an assessment of teacher and building leader perceptions from all sizes of school districts in southwest Missouri, in an effort to gain better understanding of levels of preparedness for active shooters, post-ASIRT training. In addition, the primary reasons that led to the writing and passage of this legislation were identified, along with sources from the field of education that were utilized by the bill's primary author, Senator Dan Brown.

This qualitative study, designed with a constructivist approach to a grounded theory, utilized a specific type of purposeful sampling known as maximal variation sampling. As described by Creswell (2014), this purposeful sampling technique qualifies participants due to differing characteristics. For this study, participants were chosen from four different sizes of high schools in southwest Missouri. A purposeful sampling of

southwest Missouri high schools aided in the collection of useful information (Creswell, 2014). In this case, teacher and building leader perceptions were collected to expand the knowledge of active shooter intruder response training, post implementation of Missouri Senate Bill 75.

Research questions. The following questions guided the research:

1.   In what ways has the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75 transformed the perceptions of district and building leaders with regard to school climate, sense of safety within the building, and district or building preparedness for an armed intruder?

2.   In what ways has the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75 transformed the perceptions of teachers with regard to school climate, sense of safety within the building, and building preparedness for an armed intruder?

3.   According to the primary author of Missouri Senate Bill 75, what where the motivating factors that contributed to the writing of the bill? To what extent, if any, were Missouri school leaders involved in the writing of Missouri Senate Bill 75?

Research questions allowed for further discovery into the impact Missouri Senate Bill 75 had on the educational community. By analyzing responses from interviews, new insight was provided into school climate and perceptions of safety within school districts. Lastly, insight was provided into the perception that large schools are more prepared for an active shooter than small schools, due to the frequency with which incidents involving a weapon occur.

Definitions of Key Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms were defined:

Active Shooter Intruder Response Training. Active Shooter Intruder Response Training (ASIRT) is professional development for school personnel, designed specifically to train all staff members how to respond appropriately in the event of an armed intruder. The training is a minimum of four hours annually, mandated by Missouri Senate Bill 75 (2013). This professional development training is part of a legislative effort to better protect students and staff in Missouri schools, written after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014).

Safe Schools Act. The Safe Schools Act (SSA) is federal legislation passed in 1995 "designed to provide resources to school districts to increase local capacity and to institute a sustainable emergency management program that can be maintained by district staff" (School Safety Partners, 2011, para. 4). The SSA provides individual state education agencies with a framework for safety in the areas of school district operation, policy development, discipline, admission, enrollment, and record keeping (Center for Safe Schools, 1998). The SSA expected discipline policies to approach weapons infractions with zero tolerance, resulting in expulsion for a minimum of one year (Center for Safe Schools, 1998).

Missouri Safe Schools Act. The Missouri Safe Schools Act (MO SSA) is Missouri legislation passed in 1996. The MO SSA "attempts to standardize the response of school districts across the state to acts of violence committed by students" (Missouri National Education Association, 2014, para. 1). The MO SSA provides directives for Missouri school districts on discipline policies, reporting policies, and record-keeping

policies in relation to someone who is or has been in possession of a weapon on school grounds (Missouri Center for Safe Schools, 2005). The MO SSA also provides Missouri school districts with a clearer definition of a weapon (Missouri National Education Association, 2014). Lastly, the MO SSA differs from the SSA, in that the superintendent has authority to modify discipline if necessary, unlike the zero-tolerance approach outlined in the SSA.

Missouri Senate Bill 75. Missouri Senate Bill 75 is a bill sponsored by Senator Dan Brown of Rolla, Missouri, which was signed into law by Governor Jay Nixon in 2013. This bill mandates all school personnel must have a minimum of four hours of active shooter intruder response professional development annually, starting July 2014 (Senate Bill 75, 2013)

Professional development. Professional development includes ongoing learning opportunities for teachers and school personnel, allowing further knowledge and training in specific content areas (MODESE, 2014a).

Southwest Missouri. For the purpose of this study, southwest Missouri is defined as the region designated by the Missouri State University Southwest Regional Professional Development Center [SWRPDC] (2014). The southwest region is an area composed of the lower half and western half of the state, accounting for the southwest one-quarter of Missouri.

Limitations and Assumptions

The following limitations were identified:

The interview questions used for this study were a limitation, as they were created and written from the perspective of the researcher (Creswell, 2014). The population of

high schools for this study was a limitation, as the use of maximal variation sampling did not allow all teachers and administrators in the state of Missouri to share their perceptions regarding Missouri Senate Bill 75, limiting data to only those individuals interviewed (Creswell, 2014). Another limitation for this study was the purposeful sampling used to select participants. Participants for this study were randomly selected from lists provided by the superintendents of schools and did not represent the beliefs and opinions of all Missouri educators who have participated in intruder training.

The following assumption was accepted:

1. The responses of the participants were offered honestly and without bias.

Summary

Legislative action in the wake of school shootings is not a new phenomenon (Schildkraut & Hernandez, 2014). With the events that transpired at Sandy Hook Elementary School, many legislators introduced bills intended to drastically change school safety policies in their states (Frosch, 2014). According to Jett (2014), the intruder policies states have now mandated are specifically intended to train teachers to respond appropriately in the event of an intruder.

Following the Sandy Hook shooting, Missouri Senate Bill 75 was enacted, mandating all Missouri school personnel must receive intruder training on an annual basis (MO S. Res. 75, 2013). The need for this training is validated by data collected from the MODESE (2013a), which showed over 600 incidents involving a weapon occurred in Missouri public schools in 2013. Although the number of incidents has decreased significantly in the past five years, data continue to warrant a proactive approach to preparation (MODESE, 2013a). This study involved examination of the perceptions of

both teachers and building leaders from southwest Missouri high schools with regard to the impact of Missouri Senate Bill 75. Lastly, this research allowed for examination of the impetus and reasoning that prompted Senator Dan Brown to sponsor Missouri Senate Bill 75.

In Chapter Two, a review of literature is included, placing primary focus on school safety, an analysis of similar legislation to Missouri Senate Bill 75, assessment of other safety preparations schools use, evidence for the need of professional development, the impact school climate has on a school and academic success, and Maslow's theory of motivation–hierarchy of needs. All literature is presented focusing on the importance of safety, through the viewpoint of Maslow's theory.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Public schools continue to be a setting frequently chosen by individuals who desire to cause harm to innocent people (*The Denver Post*, 2013). According to *The Denver Post* (2013), there have been 15 school shootings across the nation in the past 10 years. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (2007) stated, "Crime in schools is one of the most troublesome social problems in our nation today" (p. 1). However, families continue to trust schools to keep their children safe, and educators across the United States accept the daily responsibility of providing students with a safe learning environment (School Safety Partners, 2011). According to School Safety Partners (2011), "The unfortunate reality is, however, that at some point many school districts in this country will be touched either directly or indirectly by an emergency or crisis of some kind" (p. 1). A report by the NCES (2013) concluded the ability to guarantee school safety not only affects the individuals attending but also the entire school and community, which stresses the importance of a school being a safe environment.

Schildkraut and Hernandez (2014) found, "Due to the amount of attention they garner, school shootings can incite moral panics, whereby members of society believe their values and interests are being threatened" (p. 359). These moral panics may cause society to focus on "strengthening the social control apparatus of the society, including tougher or renewed rules, increased public hostility and condemnation, more laws, longer sentences, more police, more arrests, and more prison cells" (Schildkraut & Hernandez, 2014, p. 359). While society may respond to school shootings by condemnation, legislators have, in the past, responded by introducing new legislation (Schildkraut & Hernandez, 2014). As random school shootings have occurred over the past two decades,

legislatures have continued to enact new forms of legislation specifically designed to enact harsher penalties for those who would perpetrate these crimes (Mongan & Walker, 2012). Nationally, 97 bills have been enacted into law since the December 2012 massacre in Newtown, Connecticut (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014). Of those 97 bills, 43 primarily focus on drills and emergency planning for the purpose of preparation, signifying a legislative shift to more proactive approaches, as opposed to reactionary (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014).

With safety as the framework for this study, the literature review revealed facts regarding steps lawmakers and educators have taken to better protect students and staff in public schools, as well as the importance of safety in school. Literature on school safety was reviewed regarding frequency of weapons in Missouri public schools, the Safe Schools Act (SSA) of 1995, and Missouri law, referred to as statute 571.030. Literature was also analyzed regarding other safety measures, in addition to intruder training, that schools have taken since the tragedy that occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012. These additional safety measures typically include the implementation of school resource officers, controlled access for entryways, security camera installation for monitoring, and arming staff members to offer better protection (NCES, 2014b).

Bills that were introduced and passed from Missouri's neighboring states of Arkansas, Tennessee, Illinois, and Oklahoma were also reviewed due to the similar characteristics they share with Missouri Senate Bill 75. The review of literature highlights the important role of professional development for staff members, along with different styles of professional development available to school districts. An analysis of literature is presented on school climate and the effect it has on academic success. Lastly,

literature was reviewed showing supporting and opposing views of Maslow's (1954)

theory of motivation–hierarchy of needs, as all literature was viewed through the scope of

this theoretical framework that all humans have a basic need of safety that must be met

for further development to take place. This particular component of the theory of

motivation is inherent in the issue of school safety (Campbell, 2014).

School Safety

School safety and order is essential for optimal learning conditions; however,

according to Cornell and Mayer (2010), recent random acts of school violence have

undermined this sense of safety. School districts are tasked with developing discipline

policies that will not only ensure safety for all students and provide optimal learning

environments, but will also modify behaviors of those who violate policy (Missouri

School Board Association, 2015). In a study conducted by Link (2010), he concluded

progressive communities, along with school leaders and law enforcement officials, need

to seek new and innovative ways to convey safety awareness and preparedness. Link

(2010) found communities would be more forgiving of low test scores than a school not

prepared to maintain safety. According to Link (2010), "School leaders have to recognize

that when safety issues occur at their school, their history of academic excellence

becomes irrelevant" (p. 24).

According to Mongan and Walker (2012), "School personnel are in a unique

position of keeping students safe, as well as advocating for their well-being" (p. 232).

Mongan and Walker (2012) further added legislation such as the Gun Free Schools Act of

1994 have made it difficult for school personnel to use better judgment when assigning

discipline because of the mandated zero-tolerance policy. According to Mongan and

Walker (2012):

> These tasks are arguably never in greater conflict than when a student is
>
> caught in possession of a weapon while on school grounds. The initial
>
> response of school workers caught in that predicament would be to
>
> remove the student in order to ensure safety for remaining students and
>
> staff. However, imagine that the student had been a 5-year-old and the
>
> weapon had been a red, plastic squirt gun; or if the student was unaware of
>
> being in possession of the weapon because of extenuating circumstances.
>
> School workers would be remiss to not ask whether such a policy is
>
> socially just if it can expel a student for an offense committed without
>
> knowledge, or exclude a young child from a year of education for
>
> violating a policy that she may be unable to comprehend. (p. 232)

According to a survey by the School Safety Advocacy Council (SSAC)

(Lavarello, 2015), of the 623 school safety professionals surveyed, from both

school administrators and law enforcement officials, only 51% felt they were

adequately prepared for a school shooter. This percentage was troubling, since

more than half the participants interviewed were law enforcement agents. Based

on the results of this survey, it can be reasonably assumed most administrators do

not believe their district personnel are prepared to take even minor defensive

actions in the event an active shooter enters their campus (Lavarello, 2015).

The frequency with which weapons continue to be reported in Missouri schools is

alarming (MODESE, 2013a). According to the MODESE (2013a), there were 660

reported incidents in 2013 in which a student was caught possessing a weapon on school grounds. With only 560 school districts in the state of Missouri, each district had an average of 1.17 incidents involving a weapon for that year (MODESE, 2013a). During the five-year span from 2009-2013, the total number of incidents involving a weapon in Missouri schools was 3,833 (MODESE, 2013a). Despite the high number of student weapon violations that occurred during this time, it should be noted the total number of incidents per year has steadily decreased from 854 incidents in 2009 to 728 in 2012, a 22% decline over the period (MODESE, 2013a).

Although the statistics show more than a 20% drop in the number of weapons incidents Missouri schools report each year, administrators, law officials, and legislators must continue to recognize that weapons "have no place in our nation's schools…" (Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, 2012, p. 1). The belief weapons do not belong in schools is not a new phenomenon, as a zero tolerance to weapons was first introduced through the enactment of the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 (Mongan & Walker, 2012). However, as administrators look to further protect their students, it is important to prepare and train staff members to react not only to guns but all weapons, including knives (Noonan & Vavra, 2007). A five-year study of school violence by the Federal Bureau of Investigation revealed, "The use of a knife or cutting instrument was over three times more likely than the use of a gun" (Noonan & Vavra, 2007, p. 2).

Violent displays of behavior may be random in schools but continue to be a constant problem (Kemp, 2014). According to the NCES (2013), in 2009-2010, more than 16% of public schools across the United States were forced to take action due to a student using or possessing a weapon, while 74% of public schools reported one or more

violent incidents of crime. According to the NCES (2014b), in 2012, more students in the

12-18 years of age range experienced victimization, which includes theft or violent crime,

at school than away from school, reporting 52 victimizations per 1,000 students

nationally while at school, compared to 38 victimizations per 1,000 away from school.

Although the NCES (2014b) claimed the number of students who admitted to carrying a

weapon to school for at least one day had decreased from 22% to 17% from 1993 to

2011, the number of incidents of weapons in public schools remains alarming. In

addition, schools continue to be the setting for such violent acts, causing school officials

and legislators to remain focused on ensuring safety (Mongan & Walker, 2012).

According to Kemp (2014), in Oklahoma's largest school district, Oklahoma City,

in 2012-2013, there were more than 2,400 violent discipline incidents amassed from the

district's 89 schools. The most troubling statistic was that 857 of the violent incidents

occurred in elementary schools, 42 of which involved a student assaulting a teacher

(Kemp, 2014). Kemp (2014) recounted a particular event that occurred during the 2012-

2013 school year, in which Eleanor Goetzinger, a veteran teacher of 16 years, was

punched by one of her third-grade students. Goetzinger was hit hard enough to loosen a

tooth, prompting her to restrain the child (Kemp, 2014). During the restraint, the child's

father shoved Goetzinger to the floor, causing a major head injury (Kemp, 2014).

Goetzinger appeared before the board of education, pleading for help, explaining how the

act of violence has now caused her to suffer headaches and memory loss (Kemp, 2014).

In Tennessee, the governor and general assembly are given a report each year by

the Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Education, as mandated in the

Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) Act of 2007 (Huffman, 2014). This

report tracks the number of violent and disruptive incidents in Tennessee public schools as a method to monitor the effectiveness of programs designed to reduce violence and increase safety for students and school personnel (Huffman, 2014). Huffman (2014) reported between the years 2009-2013, Tennessee public schools experienced an average of nearly 60 incidents each year in which a student was disciplined for the possession of a handgun. Possession of a rifle or shotgun was much lower at an average of four incidents per year, while the yearly average for the possession of explosive or incendiary devices was near 50 incidents per year (Huffman, 2014). Most alarming was the number of incidents for possession of a weapon other than a firearm, averaging nearly 1,140 incidents reported each year by Tennessee public schools over the last four years (Huffman, 2014). These data supported the report by the Federal Bureau of Investigation claiming the use of a knife or other form of a weapon is three times more likely than an incident involving a firearm (Noonan & Vavra, 2007).

Legislators are also aware of the importance safety plays in schools, providing impetus for federal and state laws aimed to prevent weapons from being allowed in schools (Schildkraut & Hernandez, 2014). One of the first pieces of federal legislation designed to keep weapons away from school grounds was the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, which required public schools to adopt a zero-tolerance policy in order to receive federal funding (Mongan & Walker, 2012). However, the SSA was one of the first pieces of legislation specifically designed to guide school administrators in the writing of discipline policy, taking more of a proactive approach to school violence (Center for Safe Schools, 1998). The SSA prohibits the possession of a weapon on any school campus, property, school-sponsored activity, or transportation provided by the school and is

applicable to every public school across the nation (Center for Safe Schools, 1998). In addition to prohibiting weapons in schools, the SSA states students who are in violation must be expelled from school for no less than one year (Center for Safe Schools, 1998).

According to Mongan and Walker (2012), zero-tolerance policies that mandate expulsion are simply an "attempt to take back control of schools and provide districts with the power to increase social control in order to prevent violence" (p. 233). The Center for Safe Schools believed by creating the SSA, they had provided a guide for states to follow which required each state to establish an Office of Safe Schools within the Department of Education (Missouri National Education Association, 2014). In Missouri, this guide helped aid in the creation and passage of the Missouri Safe Schools Act of 1996 (MO SSA) (Missouri National Education Association, 2014). For Missouri school districts, the MO SSA contains many of the same requirements of the original SSA; however, the MO SSA also provides specific instructions for Missouri school districts to follow, particularly in the areas of "district operation, policy development, student admission and enrollment, residency requirements, and reporting and record keeping" (Missouri Center for Safe Schools, 2005, p. 1).

The MO SSA currently requires each Missouri school district to develop a written discipline policy to administer to students, parents, and staff annually (Missouri Center for Safe Schools, 2005). In addition to the original SSA, the MO SSA (2005) requires the discipline policy to define acts of violence or violent behavior as "the exertion of physical force by a student with the intent to do serious bodily harm" (Missouri Center for Safe Schools, 2005, p. 1). These acts of violence often involve a weapon, which the Missouri Center for Safe Schools (2005) defined in the MO SSA as the following:

The term "weapon" must be defined in the policy and shall mean

"firearm" as defined under 18 U.S.C. 921 and must include a blackjack,

concealable firearm, an explosive weapon, a firearm, a firearm silencer, a

gas gun, a knife, knuckles, a machine gun, a projectile weapon, a rifle, a

shotgun, a spring gun, and a switchblade knife. (p. 1)

According to the MO SSA, students who violate this policy are to be expelled

from school and shall not be allowed within 1,000 feet of the school's property or

any school-sponsored activity (Missouri Center for Safe Schools, 2005). The MO

SSA also states district administrators can only inform district employees as

needed, exclusively informing those who are directly responsible for the

education of the student or who interact with the student regularly in the scope of

their assigned duties (Missouri Center for Safe Schools, 2005).

For school districts that have adopted Missouri School Board Association

(2015) policies, according to district policy JGF, violation of the MO SSA will be

documented in the student's discipline record. For the possession of a firearm, the

first offense has several options, including parent contact, suspension or

expulsion, a call to Missouri Violence Hotline, as well as notification to law

enforcement and juvenile officials (Missouri School Board Association, 2015).

The second offense for possessing a firearm is more strenuous and includes the

notification of law enforcement and juvenile officials, long-term suspension, and

the possibility of expulsion by the board of education (Missouri School Board

Association, 2015).

The MO SSA also provides stiff penalties for non-students who possess a weapon on school grounds without first gaining district permission (Missouri 571.030 RSMo.2000, 2013). Missouri statutes prohibit any individual to "knowingly carry a loaded or unloaded firearm or any other lethal weapon into a school, onto a bus, or onto the premises of any school sponsored function…" (Missouri 571.030 RSMo.2000, 2013, p. 1). According to this state statute, a person can be charged with a misdemeanor if the weapon is unloaded or a Class D felony if the weapon is loaded (Missouri 571.030 RSMo.2000, 2013).

In an analysis of Missouri's gun laws, the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence (2012) discussed the requirements for a person to possess a firearm on school grounds. Those who possess a concealed carry endorsement may only carry a weapon on school grounds if consent has been given by the district superintendent or board of education (Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, 2012). However, the report added that possession of a weapon in a vehicle is allowed as long as the weapon does not leave the vehicle while on school premises (Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, 2012).

Alternative Safety Measures

School safety has been at the forefront of the minds of educators for many years, and despite efforts, violence in schools continues to increase (Wright, 2014). In fact, a report by the NCES (2014b) found more than 85% of U.S. public schools recorded incidents of crime in 2010. More troubling is that only 50% of building leaders and law enforcement officials feel safe or prepared for a school shooter (School Safety Advocacy Council, 2015). Sense of safety plays a vital role in academic success, and according to

Wright (2014), safety has "supplanted the primary goal of education as students and faculty can be distracted if they feel unsafe" (p. 13). Friedland (as cited in Link, 2010) stated schools must continue to create environments that are safe for students to learn and free from violence and harassing distractions. School administrators are tasked with these creative ideas to ensure safety, and these objectives may range from hiring school resource officers, controlling access to buildings, installation of security cameras, to even arming staff members (Rollings, 2010). According to the NCES (2014b):

> Certain practices, such as locking or monitoring doors or gates, are intended to limit or control access to school campuses, while others, such as the use of metal detectors and security cameras, are intended to monitor or restrict students' and visitors' behavior on campus. Another measure of safety and security, collected in the School Survey on Crime and Safety, is the presence of full-time and part-time security staff in public schools during the school year. (para. 1)

School resource officers (SROs) are a safety option for many districts that can afford the addition of staff (Link, 2010).

In a study by the NCES (2014b), in 2010, 43% of schools in the United Stated reported the presence of security staff at their schools, a number that has increased since the school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. School resource officers help ensure a safe environment, allowing students to focus on academics more than safety (Link, 2010). Link (2010), in his study, stated 63% of the superintendents surveyed reported the presence of an SRO in their schools had a positive impact on student climate and student achievement.

Nienhuis (as cited in Link, 2010) found programs placing resource officers in schools have been around since the 1950s, originating in Flint, Michigan, developed with intent of improving relationships among schools, city, youth, and law enforcement. According to Link (2010), "Duties for these officers were usually serving as teacher's helpers and counselors" (p. 12). Link (2010) also reported other states followed and implemented similar programs after observing positive results from Flint, Michigan, and Miami, Florida:

- 1963: Tucson, Arizona – Officers were initially assigned to junior high schools with the primary goal of improving relationships between law enforcement and juveniles. The program was successful, prompting expansion into local high schools.

- 1966: Saginaw, Michigan – Two officers were assigned coverage of all schools in the city, including two high schools, five junior high schools, and 27 elementary schools. This program was not as successful, due to officers being spread too thin.

- 1967: Cincinnati, Ohio – Officers limited their activities to emergency situations, focusing more on positive relationships and classroom contact. This led to more positive attitudes towards law enforcement in the city.

- 1968: Los Angeles – This program combined local police officers and the sheriff's department. Law enforcement officers were initially assigned to junior high schools as informal counselors and resources for parents, teachers, and students. The program was successful and later expanded into high schools.

- 1968: Tulare, California – One officer was assigned two junior high schools, assisting the schools with crime prevention, campus patrol, teaching content on law, and counseling. The program was deemed successful, as juvenile crime and arrest rates decreased by 52% in two years.

- 1969: Miami, Florida – The program began with the Miami Police Department, prompted by the chief of police who had come from Tucson, Arizona, where the program had been in place for many years. The success of the program quickly caused it to expand throughout the remainder of Dade County. Evaluations demonstrated an increase in relationships between law enforcement and the youth.

- 1972: Orlando, Florida – Two full-time officers were placed in two junior high schools. Evaluation of the program reflected a decrease in crime and an increase in attitudes toward law enforcement, prompting expansion into all Orange County secondary schools.

- 1974: Fresno, California – The Fresno Police Department created a Juvenile Bureau, assigning seven school resource officers the duties of Juvenile Detective. The primary duties of these officers were to investigate crimes committed on school property or by a student.

- 1975: Hillsborough County, Florida – Officers compiled from the local sheriff's department and the local police department were placed into the junior high schools. Evaluations of the project deemed it successful, prompting expansion into all junior high and high schools in the county (as cited in Link, 2010).

According to Link (2010), the 1980s through the 1990s displayed growth of SRO programs nationally. In the 1990s, McDaniel (as cited in Link, 2010) found the SRO program gained great momentum due to random acts of school violence throughout the country. Having the presence of someone who can protect others is beneficial, allowing those around to feel a greater sense of safety (Wright, 2014). Responsibilities of SROs vary from one school district to the next (Kentucky Center for School Safety, 2009). According to the Kentucky Center for School Safety (2009), the standard frameworks of duties are to help prevent crime by educating youth, enhance awareness of crime prevention and drugs, foster positive relationships with the public, and participate in school-related activities outside of regular school hours. These responsibilities have remained almost constant since the implementation of the first SRO program in the 1950s (Nienhuis, 2008).

As a result of his study, Rollings (2010) stated the roles and responsibilities of administrators are to unequivocally provide safety for students and staff. Administrators are responsible for communicating proper safety protocol, scheduling training for staff, along with addressing any potential areas that may cause concern during a crisis (Rollings, 2010). Teachers' responsibilities include communicating to administrators any areas needing attention after performing training, along with reporting any threats made by students (Rollings, 2010).

In a report by the Associated Press (2015), it was stated, "No school can be free of the risk of violence, short of transforming them into gated, prison-like facilities" (para. 3). In fact, violence is becoming more likely to occur at school than away from it (NCES, 2014b). According to a study by the NCES (2014a), in 2012 more students from ages 12

through 18 experienced a form of violent crime at school than away from it, solidifying the need for safety policies. Although legislation like the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 was passed specifically to prevent violent criminal acts in schools, Mongan and Walker (2012) found no conclusive empirical support the zero-tolerance policy was effective. Knowing violence has a greater chance of occurring at schools, coupled with a lack of effectiveness of legislation to detract violence, administrators are seeking alternatives for safety (Eligon, 2013). Options administrators are choosing to better provide safety include controlling access to buildings, installing security cameras, and arming staff members (NCES, 2014a).

According to the NCES (2013), in a national study conducted during the 2011-2012 school year, 88% of public schools reported they control access to their school buildings by locking or monitoring doors during the school day. Controlling access allows all exterior doors to remain locked from the outside, forcing visitors to enter through one main entrance, or access point, that is monitored by school personnel (Federal Protection, Inc., 2015). The access points are typically covered by a security camera and monitored by a building secretary who can question intent of the visit before pressing the button to unlock the door (Federal Protection, Inc., 2015). Some schools have also installed special material on entryway windows, preventing a person from being able to shatter glass to gain access (Custom Shade Window Tinting, 2015). This film is installed on pre-existing windows and acts as a bond for the glass and window or door frame, thwarting potential intruders from being able to bust or shoot their way into a building (Custom Shade Window Tinting, 2015).

Another step public schools have taken to help better ensure safety is through the installation of security cameras (Rollings, 2010). According to the NCES (2013a), results from a national survey of the 2011-2012 school year showed 64% of public schools used security cameras to monitor buildings. School officials use a wide variety of security cameras, ranging from those that record in low-light conditions to those that have zooming capabilities (American Detection, 2015). Although security cameras may detract some people from entering a school, those surveyed on the use of cameras suggest the leading reason for installing them is to monitor student and visitor behavior on campus (NCES, 2014b).

For many school districts the financial burden is the most common limitation when determining what precautions can be added to ensure safety (Severson, 2013). The economic impact of creating a full-time or even part-time position for some school districts may be too great, while larger districts may not be able to hire the number of personnel necessary to effectively protect all students (Severson, 2013). Another limitation many districts are faced with is the response time for law enforcement officers (Eligon, 2013). For many rural districts in Missouri, the time needed for an officer to respond could easily exceed 15 minutes (Eligon, 2013). With the limitations of money and time in mind, lawmakers in many states, including Missouri, have introduced legislation allowing teachers and administrators to carry concealed weapons, designating them as school protection officers (Kiekow, 2014). According to Kiekow (2014), "This makes Missouri the 10th state to allow armed school employees since the deadly shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012" (para. 7). The NCES (2014b) found during

the 2009-2010 school year, 43% of U.S. schools reported the presence of a security staff member, a number that has undoubtedly increased since the tragedy at Sandy Hook.

Missouri school boards previously had the power to allow employees with concealed weapon permits to carry a weapon on school grounds as long as written permission from a school official had been obtained (Ballentine, 2014). According to Ballentine (2014), the new law, known as Senate Bill 656, also includes a training provision for those designated as school protection officers. Ballentine (2014) further explained, "The state Department of Public Safety is required to establish training guidelines for schools wanting to designate a teacher or administrator as a school protection officer authorized to carry a concealed gun…" (para. 5).

Although the training required to be a school protection officer may come in different forms, some Missouri school districts elected to participate in several hours of course work, along with extensive background checks, drug tests, and mental evaluations in effort to become eligible (Eligon, 2013). Training for school protection officers is often provided by companies who employ retired law enforcement officers or off-duty SWAT team members (Eligon, 2013). Officers conducting this training use a compilation of firearm and situational drills that may be faced in a school shooting scenario (Eligon, 2013).

According to Ballentine (2014), there is a large debate regarding school officials carrying weapons in a building that is intended to be gun-free. Parents of school-age children and both Democrat and Republican lawmakers have voiced their opinions, both for and against the practice of arming school personnel (Eligon, 2013). After Missouri Senate Bill 656 passed, it was soon vetoed by Governor Jay Nixon; however, the veto

was then overridden by the Republican-led legislature (Ballentine, 2014). Republicans

claimed the bill was necessary, as it allowed school personnel to better protect their

students, while Democrats felt the bill made schools less safe by allowing guns on school

grounds (Ballentine, 2014). Parents expressed similar reactions to the bill, as some felt

the added security measure helped ensure safety, while others were not as supportive,

claiming adding more guns was not the right approach (Eligon, 2013).

The purpose of allowing personnel to carry a concealed weapon on a school

campus is to better protect students and staff while not visibly displaying the weapon

(Wright, 2014). According to Wright (2014), having certain staff members carry

concealed weapons at school can provide a bridge from level two to level three in

Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs (see Appendix B), due to the basic need of

safety being met. In his study, Wright (2014) found a relationship existed between fear of

a tragedy occurring on a school campus and support for carrying a concealed weapon,

concluding people would have an increased sense of safety if concealed weapons were

allowed.

Legislation from Neighboring States

Many of Missouri's neighboring states have also taken seriously the events that

transpired at Sandy Hook Elementary School (School Safety Legislation since Newtown,

2014). Of the eight states that border Missouri, four states introduced and passed

legislation with similar characteristics to Missouri Senate Bill 75, which mandated

training for all staff members (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014). The four

other states with similar legislation as Missouri Senate Bill 75, requiring participation in

active shooter drills for school personnel, are Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Illinois (Frosch, 2014).

In the state of Oklahoma, Senate Bill 256 was passed and made effective July 1, 2013 (Oklahoma School Security Institute [OSSI], 2013). On this same date, the Oklahoma legislature created the OSSI (2013), a division of the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security. According to the OSSI (2013), they "act as the central repository for the public and private elementary and secondary schools in the state" (para. 2). The OSSI (2013) is used both as a resource for Oklahoma schools and as a place to find resources to enhance safety and security in schools, as well as a place for individuals to report tips that may help prevent school violence.

According to the Cooperative Council Oklahoma School Administration (CCOSA), Oklahoma Senate Bill 256 mandates all Oklahoma public schools conduct two intruder drills per year, each of which must be performed within the first 15 days of each semester (CCOSA, 2013). The CCOSA (2013) cited the purpose for these drills is to "prevent injuries or death by executing a plan as an alternative to the lockdown method" (para. 1). The CCOSA (2013) further detailed district requirements by adding each district must have an emergency plan on file and must provide a copy to each emergency response organization within the district. Lastly, drills must be documented in writing and kept on file at the school site, and documentation must be filed with the district office and with the Institute for School Security, a division of the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security (CCOSA, 2013).

T. Ceplina (personal communication, December 10, 2013) stated the intent for all drills is to evaluate procedures in order to perfect them for the event of a real emergency.

Hertneky (2013) further explained the importance of intruder drills in an interview with elementary principal Tracy Fredman. According to Hertneky (2013), Fredman stated, "We constantly re-evaluate what we are doing, especially in light of everything that has happened recently" (para. 6). Ogle (2014) also added to the relevance of drills in an interview with Oklahoma City Superintendent of the Millwood Arts Academy, Cecillia Robinson. In the interview Robinson stated, "We live in a world where we can't always manage what happens day to day, and when you're charged with something as important as people's children, you want to make sure you keep them safe every day" (as cited in Ogle, 2014, para. 2). Other safety precautions Oklahoma schools are considering include the installation of safe rooms and shelters with thick walls and steel doors (Shah, 2013). The additions will be for existing schools, since many new schools are being designed with them already (Shah, 2013).

The state of Arkansas passed intruder drill legislation following the school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School when lawmakers enacted Senate Bill 140 in 2013. State Senator Missy Irvin is the bill's primary sponsor and explained her reason for sponsoring the bill was the safety of her own children (Shah, 2013). When asked how they would respond to a situation similar to Sandy Hook, Irvin's children claimed they "would not know what to do" (as cited in Shah, 2013, Footing the Bill section, para. 4). Irvin expressed the same amount of attention that is placed on fire and tornado drills should also be placed on intruder drills, stating, "It's natural that school safety preparation now include practice for a more recent type of potential crisis too" (as cited in Shah, 2013, Footing the Bill section, para. 5).

Subtitled the Safe School Initiative Act, Arkansas Senate Bill 140 was enacted by the Arkansas General Assembly, citing the continuation of crime and violence in public schools in Arkansas and across the nation as a reason for the bill (The Safe School Initiative Act, 2013). The Safe School Initiative Act (2013) further identified the 1998 school shooting at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, where four students and one teacher were killed along with nine students and one teacher wounded, as impetus of this bill. According to the Safe School Initiative Act (2013), Arkansas discipline data in 2007 indicated 9.1% of Arkansas's public high school students had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property, compared to the national average of 7.8%.

Arkansas school districts are required to involve local law enforcement by providing ample training to officers and staff members on what may occur in an actual school shooting (The Safe School Initiative Act, 2013). Drew Central School District Superintendent Billy Williams said, "We need to make sure all staff members know their role in the event of a school shooting" (as cited in Cason, 2014, para. 4). In Arkansas, school districts are required to involve students in all drills (Bronstein, 2014). According to Bronstein (2014), in her investigation of intruder drills conducted by school districts, participants often have mixed emotions after performing the training, feeling uncomfortable seeing a gun in a school but understanding the importance of safety.

Tennessee legislators also felt the necessity to pass legislation mandating active shooter intruder training by enacting Senate Bill 267 in 2013. Tennessee Senate Bill 267 requires all Tennessee school districts to perform one full fire drill each month, one intruder drill within the first 30 days of operation, and three additional safety drills of district choice during the school year (SJR 267, 108th Gen. Assem., 2013). According to

Carroll (2014), intruder drills are a "sign of the times," adding "schools across the nation have become targets for deranged individuals" (p. 1). Carroll (2014) found in Tennessee the Special Response Team is compiled of local law enforcement officers tasked with conducting intruder training drills for staff. Involving local law enforcement in this training is beneficial for staff, as they learn how law enforcement officials operate in these situations (Carroll, 2014). According to Carroll (2014), this training is also a benefit to the Special Response Team due to the exposure and knowledge of the layout of a building, proving important in the event of a real emergency.

In a report conducted prior to the enactment of Tennessee Senate Bill 267, Campbell (2013) found some Tennessee school districts had already taken a proactive approach to school safety by conducting intruder training for staff members. The technique taught to staff members was to avoid intruders at all cost and to flee if the opportunity arises, contradicting the outdated lock down drills of the past (Campbell, 2013). Campbell (2013) concluded by stating positive perceptions from teachers and administrators, adding that all participants felt more safe at school once they knew how to react in the event of an actual intruder.

In addition to Missouri, Tennessee, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, the state of Illinois passed major legislation designed to strengthen school safety policy (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014). Illinois Senate Bill 1625 was enacted in 2013, and mandated each Illinois school building must participate in emergency drills and law enforcement must be included in each drill (School Safety Drill Act, 2013). According to State Senator Jacqueline Collins, the School Safety Drill Act's primary sponsor, "Unfortunately, today we must prepare not only for acts of nature but acts of violence"

(as cited in Dunn, 2013, para. 2). The drills of fire, earthquake, evacuation, and intruder are all included in Illinois Senate Bill 1625 (School Safety Drill Act, 2013).

According to Governor Pat Quinn of Illinois, efforts to pass IL SB 1625 were not met with much resistance, citing the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School as having provided lawmakers with enough reasoning to validate the need for emergency drills (State of Illinois, 2013). Quinn added to the importance of enacting the School Safety Drill Act by stating:

> In the event of an emergency situation where a gun is involved, precious lives can be saved by knowing what to do, where to go and how to respond. Our schools can never be too prepared. By working with local law enforcement, these safety drills will ensure that every Illinois school is as prepared as possible if, perish the thought, the worst should occur. (as cited in State of Illinois, 2013, para. 4-5)

Using local law enforcement in these training opportunities is beneficial, as the officer and the staff members involved are all becoming more prepared for an emergency situation (Campbell, 2013).

The need for emergency drills and the importance of school safety is generally accepted; however, the methods used by law enforcement officers seem to vary according to which organization is providing the training (Goudie, 2013). According to Goudie (2013), in a report conducted on the topic of Illinois intruder drills, the biggest problem faced was consistency from one school to the next. The Security Director of Illinois School Safety Ron Ellis stated, "The School Safety Drill Act says you will have certain

types and numbers of drills, it does not say how to do them" (as cited in Goudie, 2013, para. 7).

Five Midwest states have enacted legislation mandating specific drills involving the training of staff members on how to effectively manage the event of an intruder on their school campuses (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014). Each piece of legislation from these five states was passed in 2013, immediately following the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014). The impetus of each bill was increased student safety and the provision of a safe learning environment for students and staff (Shah, 2013).

Professional Development

Opportunities to train staff, as per the mandate of Missouri Senate Bill 75, are described as professional development (Mizell, 2010). The goal of professional development should be to raise achievement for all students, increase the quality of teachers and administrators, and increase content knowledge (Northwest Missouri State University, 2013). According to a report from Mizell (2010), "Professional development is the only strategy school systems have to strengthen educators' performance levels. Professional development is also the only way educators can learn so that they are able to better their performance…" (p. 3). Mizell (2010) described professional development as "collaborative learning among members of a work team" (p. 5). According to the MODESE (2013b), to bridge the gap from professional development to instructional practice there must be collaborative teams, which have proven to be highly effective in student outcomes.

Frey and Fisher (2010) reported the purpose of professional development is to drive high-quality teaching. For professional development to have a positive outcome on performance, whether by students or staff, there must be a purpose for it, such as data supporting a need for improvement (Frey & Fisher, 2010). Mizell (2010) explained effective professional development in the following manner:

It enables educators to develop the knowledge and skills they need to address students' learning challenges. To be effective, professional development requires thoughtful planning followed by careful implementation with feedback to ensure it responds to educators' learning needs. Educators who participate in professional development then must put their new knowledge and skills to work. Professional development is not effective unless it causes teachers to improve their instruction or causes administrators to become better school leaders. (p. 10)

Funding for professional development can at times require creativity from school districts (Mizell, 2010). Most districts combine local, state, and federal funds to appropriately budget for staff professional development (Mizell, 2010). Some states require districts to allocate certain percentages of revenue to the professional development budget (Mizell, 2010).

In Missouri, each district is required to designate "1 percent of its revenue from the foundation formula, exclusive of categorical add-ons, to the Professional Development Committee for professional development" (MODESE, 2013c, p. 60). According to the MODESE (2013c), the mandate for 1% allocation is referred to as The Outstanding School Act of 1993. The MODESE (2013c) further explained the only time

this mandate has been waived was during the fiscal years of 2011 through 2013, when House Bill 1543 allowed school districts to keep this money in general revenue due to the underfunding of the foundation formula.

To measure the effectiveness of high-quality professional development, Kennedy (2010) conducted a study on literacy skills in a high-poverty school. After teachers received intensive training, Kennedy (2010) found through individualizing professional development to specific needs and making it purposeful to those being trained, the professional development had a greater impact on student outcomes. Similar results were found in a study by Brendefur, Strother, Thiede, Lane, and Surges-Prokop (2013), in which student abilities were measured in mathematic content. One group of teachers were provided six months of extensive professional development to improve instruction, compared to the second group of teachers who were not (Brendefur et al., 2013). Results of the study found children from group one performed at a much higher level than students in group two (Brendefur et al., 2013).

Professional development has tremendous advantages for public educators, as research has demonstrated the results of high quality, effective training for staff members (Kennedy, 2010). According to Mizell (2010), professional development is a necessity for public educators as "college and university programs cannot provide the extensive range of learning experiences necessary for graduates to become effective public school educators" (p. 5). Mizell (2010) further explained teachers must participate in purposeful professional development, because "they learn through experience" (p. 6).

For many school districts, professional development took on a new meaning after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012 (School Safety Legislation since

Newtown, 2014). Legislation was introduced and passed in many states mandating

schools train staff members on how to effectively prepare for a school shooting (School

Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014). According to Karnes (2014), school districts

may contract the services of training companies designed specifically for this intruder

training. Karnes (2014) further explained that in Missouri one such company is Strategos

International, which is a licensed company designed to train school staff, law

enforcement officers, and emergency personnel to effectively respond to violent

intruders.

　　Flippin (2014) reported Strategos International teaches the philosophy to run first,

hide second, and fight last. Strategos International also provides training to school staff

on how to better secure classrooms and how to use class objects as weapons (Flippin,

2014). Flippin (2014) added the philosophy to fight as a last resort is somewhat different

than the teaching methods of other companies that provide similar training to schools.

One such licensed company that has a differing philosophy of the training is Shield

Solutions (DelPilar & Murphy, 2014). The training of Shield Solutions primarily focuses

on the idea of fighting first and attempting to stop an intruder immediately (DelPilar &

Murphy, 2014). In a report by DelPilar and Murphy (2014), they found Shield Solutions

also promotes the belief teachers and principals should be armed at school. Shield

Solutions provides extensive tactical training for school employees who are designated as

school protection officers, which must be conducted each year to remain certified

(DelPilar & Murphy, 2014).

　　Professional development can cover a wide variety of topics; however, the

objective remains the same, and that objective is to increase content knowledge (Mizell,

2010). In a study by Geissler (2015), very few teachers felt prepared to respond to violent acts that occur at school. Geissler (2015) further explained teachers reported higher levels of self-efficacy after participating in violence training, validating the need for legislation that mandates all school staff members must participate in intruder training.

School Climate

School climate is more than the quality and character of school life for an individual, but also includes the patterns of students, parents, school staff, and their experiences of school life as reflected in their norms, goals, values, and relationships (NSCC, 2014). Link (2010) described school climate as linking all campus activities together, creating one large school environment. According to the NSCC (2014), the framework for a positive school climate must include "safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and the external environment" (para. 5). In regards to the role safety has on school climate, the central component of this study, Schneider and Duran (2010) added safety includes rules and norms, physical safety, and emotional safety.

Link (2010) stated one of the major components found in correlates of effective schools is a safe and orderly climate. According to Lezotte, an effective school "has an orderly, purposeful, businesslike environment free from violence and threats of physical or mental harm" (as cited in Link, 2010, p. 10). The United States Department of Education (USDE) (2014) understands the importance climate plays in a school environment, as it believes all schools must remain focused on creating a positive climate, one where staff members are focused on preventing violence. In addition, Lezotte stated schools with good climates have "student behaviors that are desirable and

there is an environment of interaction between the students and teachers with clear articulated expectations" (as cited in Link, 2010, p. 10).

In a report by the Indiana Juvenile Justice Blog [IJJB] (2014), three guiding principles for positive school climate were cited as prevention, expectations and consequences, and equity and improvement. As for prevention, the IJJB (2014) stated interventions are vital for students at-risk or with behavior problems, because other students can be easily distracted from learning. According to the NCES (2014b), 41% of teachers in the United States reported student behaviors interfered with class instruction. The second guiding principle is expectations and consequences, meaning school districts must have clear, appropriate, and consistent discipline policies for students to follow (IJJB, 2014). With policies that are clear to understand, appropriate for the intended outcome, and consistently administered, the IJJB (2014) found student behaviors will improve, causing higher student engagement, which leads to increased achievement. The third principle for increased school climate is equity and improvement, meaning a staff that continuously strives to improve policy and practice to ensure fairness will improve the climate of the school (IJJB, 2014).

In a report by Kemp (2014), credit for improved school climate was given due to principals and teachers effectively administering discipline. Schneider and Duran (2010) found, "Staff support for high expectations and concern for student welfare are mentioned frequently as factors effecting school climate" (para. 4). In contrast, schools that do not evaluate policies regularly or clearly demonstrate to staff how to effectively follow policy will likely see dissention among staff members (NCES, 2014b). The NCES (2014b), from a national survey of teachers, found only 68% of teachers believe school

rules are enforced by other teachers of the district, and only 84% believe the principal

effectively enforces the rules, concluding improvement efforts for policy and practice

need to be continuously sought out to provide best safety practices. The USDE (2014)

placed importance on training, adding all school staff should be trained on policies and

practices of the school so all students are treated fairly due to discipline being

administered equitably.

School climate is essential for a school to be successful, as it is a reflection of the

norms and values of all stakeholders involved (NSCC, 2014). The USDE (2014) believed

for the climate of a school to change, stakeholders should be involved in the policy

change, as they are an essential part. One of the most important outcomes of a successful

school climate is academic achievement (Sparks, 2011). In her report, Sparks (2011)

stated a student's level of achievement is a better indicator of school climate than the

neighborhood in which the school is located, validating the importance of a positive

learning environment.

The relationships teachers form with students are crucial, regardless of the school

dynamic (Sparks, 2011). Wells (2015), in her study of the impact relationships have on

student outcomes, found academic achievement, along with positive student behaviors,

increased significantly as relationships strengthened between the teacher and the student.

Sparks (2011) claimed, "Even in high-poverty, high-crime neighborhoods, the quality of

relationships among adults and students at a school can turn one school into a safe haven

while another languishes as a center for violence" (para. 2). Sparks (2011) added low-

performing schools should evaluate their level of academic success to see if a correlation

exists to school safety. According to the NSCC (2014), "Peer-reviewed educational

research has consistently demonstrated that a positive school climate is associated with academic achievement, effective risk prevention efforts, and positive youth development" (para. 2).

In a quantitative study conducted by Johnson, Burke, and Gielen (2011), data demonstrated the importance students place on school climate in relation to their individual academic success. Johnson et al. (2011) found student outcomes have a strong correlation to school climate, as participants expressed the importance of a sense of safety and a safe learning environment at school, allowing for full engagement in learning. Similar results were found in a quantitative study by Schneider and Duran (2010) when they surveyed 2,500 middle school students regarding school climate and character development. Schneider and Duran (2010) were able to conclude strong relationships existed between school climate and student outcomes, as both were increased after implementing character education strategies over a time period of two years. Link (2010) determined increasing the sense of safety, a major component of school climate, has a direct impact on academic achievement. Link (2010) made this determination after first interviewing school superintendents and then analyzing standardized test data of these districts, concluding schools that attempt to provide safer environments score better on assessments.

Maslow's Theory of Motivation-Hierarchy of Needs

According to Maslow (1954), "All humans are motivated by unsatisfied needs, and certain lower factors need to be satisfied before higher needs can be satisfied" (p. 3). Maslow (1954) formulated the framework for this theory by claiming each individual has a hierarchy of needs. Maslow (1954) claimed physiological needs come first, then safety

and security, which are two basic needs that must be met in order for a human to move on to more complex levels of motivation.

Rollings (2010) agreed with Maslow, maintaining, "Safety is a need that must be met in order to reach self-actualization. In times of emergency or disorganization, safety becomes essential" (p. 11). Ifedili and Ifedili (2012) agreed with Maslow safety is an important basic human need. Knowing the importance safety plays in a person's life, a safe educational setting is critical for development (NSCC, 2014). According to Britto (2013), "Human beings need to feel safe and free from tension and anxiety… A child exposed to crime of any kind will be unable to properly concentrate on learning" (p. 1).

Campbell (2014) found that Maslow's theory of motivation–hierarchy of needs has a direct correlation to education. Campbell (2014) stated, "Teachers can help students learn to meet their own safety and friendship needs and to recognize their own self-worth by building a positive classroom environment. These basic needs must be met before education can take place in school" (p. 1). Likewise, Hanson (2014) stated, "Students, whether children or adults, have to feel safe, both physically and mentally, before they can let down their guard and learn" (p. 1). Moreover, Wright (2014) found safety, or security, is needed for academic success. There exists a well-established link between academic success and very basic needs, supporting Maslow's theory the need for safety must be met for further development to take place (Wright, 2014).

There are some who oppose the views of Maslow, claiming a true hierarchy does not exist or that each person is different and may move from one level of the hierarchy differently than others (Nain, 2013). Ifedili and Ifedili (2012) found, "Many people may see safety as the first basic need, rather than physiological needs," (p. 80) offering

somewhat of a differing opinion from Maslow. Ifedili and Ifedili (2012) further conveyed one does not have to meet needs on a hierarchy scale. In fact, they expressed belief a person can actually skip from one need to the next and back again, contradicting the theory of Maslow (Ifedili & Ifedili, 2012). Although both Ifedili and Ifedili (2012) and Nain (2013) disagreed with the hierarchy framework of Maslow, neither argued with the importance of safety and the role it plays in one's life, adding credibility to the claim students must feel safe before learning may take place (Campbell, 2014).

While some proponents argue the structure of Maslow's theory, at least one other psychologist went as far as creating his own theory for human behavior (Caulton, 2012). According to Caulton (2012), psychologist Clayton Paul Alderfer created the ERG Theory to better understand human motivation in the work place, attempting to "increase morale and productivity" (p. 4). According to McRay (2015), ERG is an acronym for existence, relatedness, and growth.

McRay (2015) determined that Alderfer reclassified Maslow's theory of motivation, which is a five-tiered hierarchy, into a three-tiered hierarchy. In Alderfer's three-tiered ERG model, existence is part of a human's basic needs, placing a safe environment as a beginning need, comparable to Maslow's theory (McRay, 2015). According to McRay (2015) the second tier of the ERG model is Relatedness, or the human need to have social interactions with others, combining the tiers of Belongingness and Esteem from Maslow's theory. The third tier of the ERG model is Growth, or a human's desire for personal growth, overlapping Maslow's tier of Esteem and combining it with his Self-Actualization tier (McCray, 2015). Caulton (2012) found Alderfer's theory was primarily constructed to provide better understanding of job-related issues in

the business world, as it is used to predict common issues that occur on-the-job, along with personal development choices in relation to job satisfaction.

Summary

Although Missouri public schools have shown a decrease in the number of incidents involving a weapon over the last five years, the frequency with which these incidents continue to occur suggests each school must continue to prepare for such an event (MODESE, 2013a). According to Link (2010), "Increased crime and academic accountability within schools have increased the need for more concerted effort among schools, communities, and local law enforcement to provide safe and orderly school climates" (p. 37). Link (2010) further explained schools across the nation have been proactive in efforts to reduce school violence by mandating changes to crisis plans and safety regulations. Schools must remain vigilant in ensuring safe learning environments, forming relationships with students, and recognizing "that students need to feel connected to the schools and communities to create the desired environment to achieve academic success" (Link, 2010, p. 37). In a report by Poland (2014), he concluded relationships provide a connection to the school for students and that this display of caring can prevent violence.

To further ensure safety in public schools, many Midwest states have introduced and passed legislation mandating intruder training for school personnel (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014). In her study, Geissler (2015) proved the necessity for staff training to prevent violence, providing evidence teachers feel safer after participating in the professional development. According to Mizell (2010), professional

development is the most impactful method of training teachers and staff, as it can be focused to specific needs.

According to Missouri state statutes, non-students are prohibited from knowingly possessing a loaded or unloaded firearm on school property (Missouri Safe Schools Act, 2013), while the MO SSA prohibits students from possessing a weapon on school property (Missouri Center for Safe Schools, 2005). Violation of either state law or MO SSA comes with stiff consequences, including jail time, fines, or expulsion from school for one year (Missouri 571.030 RSMo.2000, 2013). Following the tragic school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary, many states introduced legislation focusing on safety drills (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014). Five Midwestern states introduced legislation specifically aimed at training teachers for intruders or active shooters (Frosch, 2014). Although each piece of legislation has differing characteristics, all agree on the importance of intruder drills to increase safety of students and staff. Safety is a basic need identified by Maslow (1954), who stated a person must have a sense of safety in order to move to the next level of development. This theory is the theoretical framework from which this study was viewed.

In Chapter Three, a detailed description of the methodology for this qualitative study is provided. Further explanation is also provided as to how schools qualified to participate in the study. Lastly, a detailed description is given of how individual participants were chosen for focus group interviews, along with how the data from these interviews were gathered and recorded.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Following the December 14, 2012, massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, more than 450 bills related to school safety were filed across the nation (Shah, 2013). Five states in the Midwest responded to the events of Sandy Hook by passing legislation mandating intruder training for school staff (Frosch, 2014). One such bill was Missouri Senate Bill 75, sponsored by Senator Dan Brown of Rolla, Missouri. According to the bill, all school staff members are required to annually attend ASIRT training to better prepare for such an event (Senate Bill 75, 2013). Chapter Three describes the methodology used for this study, the data that were collected, and the methods used to analyze the data.

Problem and Purpose Overview

According to Maslow (1954), all humans are motivated by satisfying basic needs first. Maslow (1954) further explained safety as a basic need for a human being, arguing it must be met for the rest of one's needs to be met (Maslow. The NSCC (2014) asserted a safe learning environment is critical in a school because of the impact safety has on achievement. School leaders are tasked with the responsibility of providing resources which promote safety, along with professional development designed to help faculty and staff prepare for an active shooter (NSCC, 2014).

In Missouri, public schools continue to take a proactive approach to safety. Data from the MODESE (2013a) indicate most schools are likely to encounter a student with a gun, knife, or other cutting device at some point, validating the need for intruder training. Some of the larger Missouri school districts began practicing intruder drills as early as

2008-2009, well before the Sandy Hook shooting in 2012 that likely initiated the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75 (Ponche, 2010).

Research questions. The following questions guided the research:

1. In what ways has the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75 transformed the perceptions of district and building leaders with regard to school climate, sense of safety within the building, and district or building preparedness for an armed intruder?

2. In what ways has the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75 transformed the perceptions of teachers with regard to school climate, sense of safety within the building, and building preparedness for an armed intruder?

3. According to the primary author of Missouri Senate Bill 75, what where the motivating factors that contributed to the writing of the bill? To what extent, if any, were Missouri school leaders involved in the writing of the bill?

Research questions allowed further discovery into the impact Missouri Senate Bill 75 has had on the educational community. Through the analysis of responses from interviews, new insight is provided into school climate and perceptions of safety within school districts. Lastly, comparisons of perceptions were made regarding the belief larger school districts are more prepared for an active shooter than smaller districts due to the frequency with which incidents involving a weapon occur in their districts.

Research Design

This qualitative research study involved a constructivist design in a grounded theory to address the research questions. The grounded theory method allowed data gathered through the interviews to generate a theory (Creswell, 2014). A qualitative method of research best aided in this study, as participants were chosen through

"purposeful sampling, based on places and people that can best help us understand our central phenomenon" (Creswell, 2014, p. 205).

According to Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2014), qualitative research best documents the perceptions of stakeholders involved, investigating the "quality of relationships, activities, situations or materials" (p. 426). A purposeful sampling of teachers and school leaders was used, as individuals and sites were intentionally selected to aid in understanding (Creswell, 2014). For this study, the level of preparedness for an active shooter, along with perceptions of climate and safety in southwest Missouri high schools, were assessed. This method enabled the collection of useful information, providing motivation for a legislative movement for school safety policy change. Interviews conducted consisted of standardized, open-ended interview questions (see Appendix C) "where exact wording and sequence are determined in advance, thus allowing interviewees to be asked the same questions in the same order to prevent bias" (Fraenkel et al., 2014, p. 452).

For this study, research was conducted through the utilization of focus group interviews of a stratified cross-section of teachers and building leaders from southwest Missouri high schools. This cross-section afforded input of the perceptions of school safety after having participated in active shooter intruder response training. Interviews also provided insight into the impetus of Missouri Senate Bill 75, as well as the perceived impact it had on Missouri school districts.

Population and Sample

This study employed maximal variation sampling to identify school districts eligible for participation. Creswell (2014) explained, "This procedure requires that you

identify the characteristic and then find sites or individuals that display different dimensions of that characteristic" (p. 208). According to Creswell (2014), this method of sampling will "present multiple perspectives of individuals and represent the complexity of our world" (p. 207). For this study, the subgroup characteristics were based on student enrollment data obtained from the MODESE (2014c). To accomplish this, a stratified cross-section of southwest Missouri schools was taken, compiling four groups. These groups were formed based on student enrollment of 0 to 250 students; 251 to 750 students; 751 to 1,500 students; and 1,501 or more students. The sample of southwest Missouri schools was based upon areas encompassed in the Missouri State University Southwest Region Professional Development Center [SWRPDC] (2014).

Instrumentation

Research for this qualitative study was conducted using standardized, open-ended interviews of focus groups, which allowed for the comparison of responses from each sample (Fraenkel et al., 2014). According to Turner (2010), standardized, open-ended interviews are extremely structured because participants are asked identical questions. This style of interview was advantageous to this research due to the questions being open-ended, thus allowing participants to contribute as much information as they deemed necessary to answer the questions (Turner, 2010). The open-ended questions were designed to allow those being interviewed to "fully express their viewpoints and experiences" (Turner, 2010, p. 756). According to Fraenkel et al. (2014), standardized, open-ended interviews can also have a disadvantage, in that this style allows "little flexibility in relating the interview to particular individuals and circumstances" (p. 452).

Interviews for this study were recorded and transcribed for analysis (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2011). According to Fraenkel et al. (2014), "Using some method for recording an interviewee's words exactly is required" (p. 457). Turner (2010) stressed the importance of using a recording device in qualitative research due to the vast amount of data the researcher is tasked with analyzing.

The interview questions for this research were created by the researcher, formed with the intent of providing answers to the research questions. Answers to the questions provided insight into teacher and building leader perceptions of ASIRT as they related to safety, climate, and how prepared staff members in southwest Missouri schools are for an active shooter after having participated in the training mandated in Missouri Senate Bill 75. Interviews clarified the catalysts that prompted Senator Dan Brown to sponsor Missouri Senate Bill 75.

Data Collection

After receiving Institutional Review Board approval (see Appendix D), the recruitment of participants began. Participants for this study were randomly chosen from lists constructed by superintendents of each school district involved, based on the criteria those interviewed must have a minimum five years of experience and must have participated in ASIRT. A phone call was made to each superintendent explaining this study and the intent of the research, followed by an electronic Recruitment Letter (see Appendix E) for superintendents to review and forward to participants randomly chosen by the researcher from a number generator. Next, participants randomly chosen from lists provided by superintendents were mailed an electronic copy of the Letter of Consent (see

Appendix F). Lastly, a phone call was made to Senator Dan Brown's office, requesting his time for an interview to discuss the history of Senate Bill 75.

Data for this study were collected through interviews of a maximal variation sample of a stratified cross-section of southwest Missouri high school teachers and building leaders. Participants were chosen from each district using a purposive homogenous sample, where those being interviewed share the same traits or characteristics; in this instance, occupation and background (Lund Research, 2012). A perceptional comparison of personnel from the cross-section of school size provided greater understanding toward the impact Missouri Senate Bill 75 has had in large schools versus small schools. Building leaders and teachers with a minimum five years of experience were chosen, because these groups offer better insight into levels of preparedness before and after Missouri Senate Bill 75 was enacted.

Focus group interviews lasted approximately one hour (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell (2014), focus groups typically include four to six individuals. The first focus group consist of four teachers from a cross-section of southwest Missouri high schools, and the second focus group was compiled of four high school principals from a cross-section of southwest Missouri high schools. All participants had a minimum of five years of experience in their respective districts.

In addition, an interview of Senator Dan Brown, the primary sponsor of Missouri Senate Bill 75, was conducted to understand his motivation for sponsoring the legislation. This interview provided insight into the sources used by legislators when writing this bill, as well as changes from the original language that may have occurred before the bill was

signed into law by Governor Nixon. This interview was scheduled by contacting Senator

Brown's office and requesting a convenient date and time for the interview to take place.

Data from the focus group interviews display the perceptions of each sample of

stakeholders. The perceptions were then analyzed and recorded, creating a clearer image

of the impact Missouri Senate Bill 75 has had on Missouri schools. In conjunction, an

open-ended interview with primary sponsor Senator Dan Brown provided descriptive

data regarding the impetus of Missouri Senate Bill 75.

Data Analysis

According to Hall (2014), methods of research, such as those employed in this

qualitative study, provide descriptive details that oftentimes lead to more rigorous

research. Hall (2014) also pointed out this descriptive qualitative method "often involves

extensive observation and note-taking, as well as in-depth narrative" (p. 1). Fraenkel et

al. (2014) added the expectation is the interviews will provide a large amount of data to

analyze, providing a clear picture for this topic. For this study, the interviews provided

teacher and school leader perceptions on the impact of Missouri Senate Bill 75.

Qualitative research is described as interpretive by Creswell (2014), where the

researcher analyzes the data to determine if the findings fit a particular theme or category.

Creswell (2014) further added qualitative research is not limited to one approach and may

differ from one observer to the next. The data for this study were collected, recorded, and

analyzed to provide a better understanding of the impact Missouri Senate Bill 75 has had

on public schools in Missouri and allowed discovery into the impetus behind the bill.

Data obtained through focus group interviews were collected and analyzed

according to the methods detailed by Creswell (2014). The first step was the collection of

data. For this study, data were collected from notes and transcriptions. The second step

was analysis of the data, which was completed by transcribing the field notes. Thirdly,

transcripts were studied and examined to gain a more in-depth understanding of the

content. Lastly, the data were coded according to various labels created. Labels for

teacher perceptions were based on districts with a student enrollment of the following: (a)

0 to 250; (b) 251 to 750; (c) 751 to 1,500; and (d) 1,501 and above. Labels for high

school principal perceptions were based on districts with a student enrollment of the

following: (a) 0 to 250; (b) 251 to 750; (c) 751 to 1,500; and (d) 1,501 and above. These

labels were ultimately narrowed into coded data, creating five major themes (Creswell,

2014). The major themes for this study include sense of safety, heightened self-

awareness, climate of school, strengths and weaknesses of ASIRT, and professional

development training.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations for this study were based on suggestions in Creswell

(2014). To begin, the participants were informed of the purpose of the study and the role

of the researcher (Creswell, 2014). As recommended by Creswell (2014), the researcher

also explained confidentiality to all participants and the sharing of collected information,

which focused on keeping the identities of individuals interviewed confidential at all

time. Each focus group interview participant was represented by a number instead of a

name, further protecting the identity of participants (Creswell, 2014). However, Senator

Brown signed a permission letter so his name could be used in this study. The role of the

researcher in this interview was solely as a recorder, so as not to appear to take sides or

offer personal opinions (Creswell, 2014).

Summary

The methodology of this study allowed analysis of the effectiveness of the mandates set forth in Missouri Senate Bill 75. This chapter included an explanation of the process as to how the research was conducted and how each focus group was constructed. By gathering the data through open-ended interviews of focus groups, the researcher was able to collect detailed, thorough, and varied responses to all research questions for this study. After the data were compiled, an understanding of teacher and building leader perceptions of active shooter intruder response training was clearer. The data also provide insight into the impetus behind Missouri Senate Bill 75 and the changes made to school safety policy. Lastly, the perceptions of preparedness by staff members in large districts were compared to perceptions from small districts.

In Chapter Four, a descriptive account is given of all the interviews conducted. Narratives are provided for focus group interviews, both of teacher and building leaders from the cross-section of southwest Missouri high schools. In addition, the impetus behind Missouri Senate Bill 75 is provided through analysis of the data gathered in the interview with Senator Dan Brown.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Data

This study was designed to discover the impetus of Missouri Senate Bill 75, as described by the bill's primary author Senator Dan Brown. Another purpose was to explore the perceptions of school climate and sense of safety from teachers and building leaders in southwest Missouri high schools after participating in ASIRT. Literature surrounding this subject revealed safety, a basic human need according to Maslow's (1954) theory of motivation–hierarchy of needs, has a penetrating effect on students, as research provided evidence academic success increases as sense of safety increases. Furthermore, literature verified the need for professional development, a major component of Missouri Senate Bill 75, as school staff must prepare for these random acts of violence like the school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012.

Data for this study were collected through two separate focus group interviews and an individual interview with state senator Dan Brown. The first focus group was compiled of teachers in southwest Missouri high schools, with the second focus group including high school principals from southwest Missouri. Participants were randomly chosen from a stratified cross-section of southwest Missouri high schools, providing perceptions of the impact of ASIRT in varying sizes of schools. Participants for both focus groups met the criterion of five years of experience, allowing more insightful opinions of the effects of ASIRT in their school buildings.

According to Creswell (2014), focus group interviews are advantageous in a qualitative study such as this one, as participants are given an opportunity to provide input and also respond after hearing opinions from others who are participating. Creswell (2014) further explained the themes discovered from focus group interviews will provide

insight into the central phenomenon; for this study that central phenomenon is the impact of ASIRT. The major themes discovered through the interviews were sense of safety, heightened self-awareness, school climate, strengths of ASIRT, and weaknesses of ASIRT, which are further explained in this chapter.

For this study, the purpose was to analyze perceptions of teachers and building leaders of high schools in southwest Missouri in regards to the effect of ASIRT and identify motivating factors and the stakeholders leading to the writing of Missouri Senate Bill 75. Three research questions guided the study:

1. In what ways has the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75 transformed the perceptions of district and building leaders with regard to school climate, sense of safety within the building, and district or building preparedness for an armed intruder?

2. In what ways has the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75 transformed the perceptions of teachers with regard to school climate, sense of safety within the building, and building preparedness for an armed intruder?

3. According to the primary author of Missouri Senate Bill 75, what where the motivating factors that contributed to the writing of the bill? To what extent, if any, were Missouri school leaders involved in the writing of Missouri Senate Bill 75?

Justification for these research questions was based on the literature reviewed; first displaying the importance of school climate, second professional development for school staff, and third the impact sense of safety can have on a student's academic success. Safety is a central theme for this study and also one of a human's most fundamental needs according to Maslow's (1954) theory of motivation–hierarchy of needs. Maslow's (1954) theory was the theoretical framework for this study, which

places safety as a common need that must be met before a human can develop to meet further needs.

Demographic Analysis

Participants for this study were chosen from a stratified cross-section of teachers and building leaders from southwest Missouri high schools. Using a cross-section of differently sized schools provided varied opinions, thus allowing a more rounded view of the impacts of ASIRT. Cross-sections were determined through building enrollment data, forming the following categories: 0-250 students; 251-750 students; 751-1,500 students; and 1,501 or more students.

Teachers who participated in this study ranged in years of experience from seven to 23 years, while building leaders had a range from six to 14 years of experience in their respective fields. Teaching and building leaders for this study had experience exclusively in southwest Missouri schools. Of the teachers interviewed, two were female and two were male, while the building leader focus group was compiled of three males and one female. Four of the teachers interviewed had completed a four-year college degree, while three had completed master's degrees. Of the building leaders, four had completed four-year degrees, all four had their master's degrees, all four had completed specialist degrees, and one had completed a doctorate degree. Lastly, Senator Dan Brown of Rolla, Missouri, was interviewed, as he was the primary author of Missouri Senate Bill 75.

Responses to Interview Questions

The purpose of this chapter is to provide analysis of data collected. Included in this chapter is a description of the interview with primary author of Missouri Senate Bill 75, Senator Dan Brown. This interview provided insight into the motivation behind

Missouri Senate Bill 75, as well as the sources he used during the writing of the bill. Lastly, this chapter includes analysis of teacher and building leader perceptions, based on responses gathered through the focus group interviews.

As interview transcripts were analyzed, it was determined to code responses based on their relation to the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Next, as recommended in Creswell (2014), codes were narrowed into five themes that emerged from the data. These themes included safety, professional development training and preparedness, climate, heightened sense of awareness, and strengths and weaknesses of ASIRT. Each theme was designated with an acronym and responses from interviews were divided into these themes, which are described below:

- Safety (S)

- Professional Development Training and Preparedness (PDTP)

- Climate (C)

- Heightened Sense of Awareness (HSA)

- Strengths and Weaknesses of ASIRT (SWA).

Analysis of Interview with Senator Dan Brown

Interview question #1 (S). In your opinion, what role should teachers have in the event an active shooter enters their building?

Senator Brown's responses reflected two main ideas regarding the role teachers should have in the event of an active shooter. First, he felt it was very important to follow the district's crisis plan. Senator Brown stated:

Hopefully there is a plan within the school already in place, a scenario that they have played out where they can do the best they can to protect their kids. Hide them in a closet, or do whatever it is that seems to be best.

Second, Senator Brown stressed the importance of local control, or allowing local school boards and administrators to collaborate and determine what roles each employee has in maintaining safety. Senator Brown added, "We wanted local school boards and local administrators to develop what they felt were the best plan." To further his thoughts on the role a teacher plays in the event of an active shooter, Senator Brown stated, "Talk it through and develop a plan that the classroom teacher and administrator of the building is most comfortable with."

Interview question #2 (S). In your opinion, what role should an administrator have in the event of an active shooter in their building?

Senator Brown remained adamant in his belief in local control for each school, explaining the importance of each school district being in charge of determining roles for employees, since each school has different characteristics. However, Senator Brown did elaborate further on his vision of the principal's duties, explaining the vital role a principal plays in maintaining safety. According to Senator Brown, "They are the captain of the ship. They direct this policy in the way they think is best to protect students." The senator added, "Protecting those little kids that come to school every day, you know, that's a big job, I don't care who you are."

Interview question #3 (C). What was the greatest catalyst that led you to sponsor Senate Bill 75?

For Senator Brown, safety was the greatest catalyst for pursuing the passage of this bill; safety for not only his grandchildren who attend public schools, but ultimately safety for all Missouri children. The senator stated:

> I think safety is the number one issue, and a safe environment, you know, educating kids in a safe environment is what we all hope and pray for. You know, I know that covers a lot of territory when you think about it, but that is a goal of everyone.

Senator Brown concluded his motivation of safety was important for the student and the teacher, explaining the vitality of a safe environment to be successful. According to the senator, "If you can keep that kid in a safe environment and the teacher safe and they can actually teach those kids, they are probably going to be very successful, both as a teacher and as a student."

Interview question #4 (HSA). What was your objective, or vision, in regards to the impact of Senate Bill 75?

According to Senator Brown, his objective, or vision, for the impact of Missouri Senate Bill 75 was to make sure every school employee had an opportunity to receive meaningful training focused on keeping students safe. The senator pointed out there were many people who thought he was crazy for trying to mandate training in school shooting scenarios, but after teachers actually went through the training, many began to change their opinions since they felt more equipped to provide safety for themselves and their students. Senator Brown alluded to one specific incident in which one of his patrons was adamantly against the training:

One of the local school districts back home, this gal was adamant, she was against

it, she hated it. Then we had that little second school shooting that occurred, I

think there was only two or three kids killed, but one is too many, and they had

had their Active Shooter Intruder Response Training the day before, and she

actually went to the paper and told them she was thankful that I had passed this

legislation. She was against it, had fought it hard but it was very valuable.

Senator Brown concluded most educators who had less than favorable initial opinions of

the training changed their minds after participation, due to the increase in knowledge and

comfort.

      Interview question #5 (PDTP). What sources did you use, or data, to drive

your decision to sponsor Senate Bill 75?

      The data came from various sources during the initial writing of this bill;

however, Senator Brown stated the National Rifle Association (NRA) had the majority of

information needed, as well as companies that specialize in training employees for mass

emergencies. According to the senator:

A lot of NRA data is out there, you know, and I guess I, some people say, well

that is being really biased and well, I am going to use their data, I'll do whatever I

can that proves a point. Their data is pretty darn good. A lot of the guys that train,

or teach these courses, we took a lot of their input and uh, it turned out to be

helpful.

Senator Brown faced the most criticism for using the Eddie Eagle training video

as part of the language in Missouri Senate Bill 75, mainly due to the fact the program was

provided by the NRA. Senator Brown claimed the majority of critics were from urban

areas in the state of Missouri. Teacher unions, along with larger media sources, were strongly against the bill, citing the training would take away from educational time. Senator Brown stated:

> You know, I was on probably every television station in St. Louis, Columbia, and then some national liberal talk show hosts had me on. You know, I can honestly say I believe in this, and if they're misrepresenting it as teaching kids to shoot, then I'm fine with going on and dispelling that. And all I'd ever ask was, that investigative reporter out of St. Louis, he's tough, he always tries to get you in one of those "gotcha" moments, you know, and he was beating the hell out of me over the Eddie Eagle part of it, and I said, "You know, have you ever watched the video on Eddie Eagle? You can Google it, and it's on YouTube." He said "no," and I asked him to view it before he aired anything, and so they decided to only run a short blip about the whole deal. They were going to do a whole segment on what a nut I was. I said, they not only teach the gun safe program, they teach the fire safe program, they teach the water safe program. This is all some of the things that NRA moneyed to us, I mean, they paid for this stuff. Some of my smaller school districts already had the Eddie Eagle program; you got the little badge and all that crazy stuff you know. Small school districts, they probably have kids that are better hunters than you and I are today by the time they are in third grade.

Senator Brown concluded he was comfortable using the NRA data since he himself had watched the training and did not feel that it was persuasive in any manner.

Interview question #6 (SWA). Did you consult with school superintendents, superintendent organizations, or other stakeholders prior to sponsoring Senate Bill 75?

(Follow up: If yes, who and why?)

Senator Brown was very open with the fact a judge from Columbia, Missouri, was the first person to pursue him about the importance of ASIRT. According to the senator, this judge had conducted vast amounts of research on school shootings, along with organizations that train staff members in reaction and prevention of school shootings. As for specific superintendents or organizations, Senator Brown stated, "I talked to anyone who wanted to talk about it. We put some stuff out in the district and then pretty much statewide." When asked what type of response or feedback he received, Senator Brown explained, "Quite a few weighed in on it, and you know, their whole concern was, you know, don't tell me how to do this, and let me and my school board work this out. Which I thought was a great thing to do."

Interview question #7 (SWA). Now that Senate Bill 75 has been signed by the Governor, is there anything that you would like to change in the bill?

Without hesitation, Senator Brown was clear his biggest regret for Missouri Senate Bill 75 was that he conceded with certain language changes to senators from urban districts to allow the bill to pass. The reason these senators gave for not agreeing to the bill were frightening to Senator Brown, who stated:

> I had a senator from St. Louis inner city public schools tell me that they didn't have a gun problem in their schools. I'm like, well, you must be watching different news than I am, because there is a shooting about four times a year in this school and around the school every night.

When asked what concession was made to allow the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75 and if he regretted the decision, Senator Brown stated, "I wish I would have kept it a

shall instead of a *may*." The language in Missouri Senate Bill 75 states school districts

may train all staff members in ASIRT, as opposed to the original language that would

have clearly mandated the training if the bill would have stated staff members shall be

trained.

Interview question #8 (SWA). Are there any additions or subtractions from the

original bill's identity? (Follow up: If yes, why do you believe changes were made to the

original bill?)

The senator once again stated his regrets for changing original language, but he

continued to be optimistic of the outcomes Missouri Senate Bill 75, stating, "It's been in

effect long enough now we're not getting a bunch of problems." Senator Brown further

explained some of the language the bill had attached to it before being signed into law by

Governor Jay Nixon had him concerned but has not been an issue, stating:

> I was concerned about a lot of this language that the bill took on and some of the
>
> concealed carry stuff, trying to do away with some of the biometrics, and I
>
> thought maybe down the road that's going to be a problem, but actually it's turned
>
> out to be pretty straightforward and hasn't been a big problem.

Senator Brown stated he continues to feel a great since of pride in this bill, adding,

"Missouri's children are safer because of it."

Analysis of Interviews with Teachers

Interview question #1 (S). Prior to the mandates of Senate Bill 75, did you feel

safe in your school? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Responses to this question varied according to comfort level of maintaining

safety. In fact, three of the four participants reported feeling relatively safe prior to being

trained with ASIRT strategies, while one participant was clear she did not feel safe before the training. Teacher A explained she felt very uncomfortable with the thought of defending herself or her students from an intruder if needed. She stated, "I would have to say no, I absolutely did not feel safe before the training. I felt unprepared for a shooter and my abilities to fight back or keep my students safe."

Participants who felt safe prior to the training all agreed the training gave them more of a sense an intruder in their school could very easily happen, something they did not consider before the training. Teacher B responded, "I think I felt safe, but I now realize how naïve I have been to the possibility of there being a shooter in my rural school." With similar sentiments, Teacher D also felt safe prior to the training, mainly due to having good rapport with students in his school and through positive relationships he has formed. He stated, "Yeah, I felt safe. Although my school is big we still have a rural feel. I think having a good relationship with all my students makes me feel safer, too."

Interview question #2 (HSA). Prior to the implementation of Senate Bill 75, did you feel prepared to protect your students or yourself from an active shooter? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Participants responded to this question based on their prior experiences and comfort level of defending themselves. Both female participants agreed they did not feel prepared to protect themselves or their students, as previous drills taught personnel to hide students in the event of an intruder. Teacher A explained, "Now I would have to say absolutely not. In no way was I prepared to protect anyone, because all I knew before was

that I was supposed to hide my kids and keep them quiet." Teacher C expressed similar thoughts:

> I agree whole-heartedly with her, I was not prepared to take on a shooter
>
> by any means, but I sure didn't realized how unprepared I was. It scares
>
> me to think of having a school shooting, something I don't think you can
>
> prepare yourself for really.

In contrast to Teacher A and C, both of whom are female, Teachers B and D are both male and felt confident in their abilities to protect themselves and their students from a shooter if needed. Teacher B stated, "I felt safe before the training, because I know how to defend myself, but I also felt like if I followed the Crisis Plan in my room, then I would be able to keep kids safe."

Interview question #3 (PDTP). Prior to Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, did your district practice proper procedures for an intruder in your building? (Follow up: If yes, how often?)

All participants responded to the question stating their current school districts practiced intruder drills each year prior to the mandates of Missouri Senate Bill 75. However, other participants varied on the frequency with which training occurred. Teacher A stated, "We do practice drills quite a bit, our school has a list of trainings for various emergencies that we practice once a month." The other participants claimed they practiced lockdown procedures at least once a year, some twice a year.

Teachers B, C, and D also addressed the effectiveness of the drills they conducted prior to Missouri Senate Bill 75, and all agreed the previous versions of training were highly ineffective and did not promote safety. Teacher B responded, "My school did

them, but it was more of just doing the same old routine, and when they were over we

just went on with no real impact. "Teacher C stated, "My district used lockdown drills

before ASIRT, and unfortunately that just meant turning off lights, locking doors, and

hiding. I was just happy this old plan was eradicated and done away with after we started

ASIRT." Teacher D added, "We too had drills, I believe twice a year, but just like others

they didn't have a real impact on safety in my opinion."

Interview question #4 (C). After receiving the Active Shooter Intruder Response

Training, did you become more aware of detailed procedures for an active shooter listed

in your District Crisis Plan? (Follow up: Why?)

Of the participants who responded to this question, there was a consensus all felt

more comfortable with understanding the District Crisis Plan and the individual roles

each employee must play during such an event. Teacher C stated, "I thought the training

was great because it was intense, realistic, and thorough. After it was over I was

confident on what I could do to keep my kids safer." Teacher B agreed, "Absolutely, I

felt like I then knew exactly what my role would be and what our plan was."

For the other participants, communication was a beneficial piece, as ASIRT

allowed employees to hear and see what others do during an actual intruder. Teacher A

stated, "Everyone started talking about what we were supposed to do. The

communication was the best part because I knew what other people would be doing if a

shooting occurred."

Interview question #5 (PDTP). After participating in Active Shooter Intruder

Response Training, do you feel more prepared to protect yourself and students in the

event an active shooter entered your building? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Three of the four participants responded to this question, all of whom agreed they felt far more competent to protect themselves and their students if an intruder entered their buildings. Teacher B claimed, "This training took my confidence to a whole new level. I now feel confident that I could keep my kids safe if an intruder came into my building, all because of this training giving me valuable ideas." Teacher C added, "The words that I now think of when I think of ASIRT are awareness and empowerment, and that is all due to the training in my opinion."

Teacher A felt the scenarios used for training were very helpful in understanding each person's role during the event of an intruder. In addition, Teacher A stated during professional development, other school shootings were used as learning opportunities and noted how employees should have reacted to protect themselves and their students better, potentially saving many lives. Teacher A concluded, "This information was awesome, because I knew what I could do if I was ever in that situation."

Interview question #6 (C). In your opinion, has the Active Shooter Intruder Response Training produced a greater overall climate of safety at your school? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Participants all responded ASIRT produced a more positive climate at their respective schools. Each participant admitted this training allowed him or her to feel safer at school, along with believing students feel safer as well. Teacher B stated, "I would say that everyone in general is more comfortable with the thought of an intruder because they know kind of what to do and how to protect themselves."

The overwhelming consensus was ASIRT brought an opportunity for all employees to unify in their procedures of providing safety. According to Teacher A, "I

would have to say I feel safer because we have a specific plan of action now." Also, most agreed the professional development improved the climate of their schools, because everyone knew their crisis plan and how it is to be used. Teacher C concluded, "I definitely say yes, that I feel safer because the crisis plan is now updated and followed by all employees at my school."

Interview question #7 (SWA). After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, what changes, either additions or subtractions, need to be made to this professional development?

Each participant shared thoughts, all of which were additions that could make ASIRT even more impactful to them. The two common themes from each participant were that the training remains current and utilizing the assistance of law enforcement. According to Teacher A:

> I think the training needs to remain current, using the most recent school
>
> shootings as a guide to prepare teachers for a shooting at their school.
>
> Also, I think administrators need to have law enforcement officers give
>
> recommendations to increase safety at our school.

Teacher B expressed his thoughts on additions by adding:

> I would like even more professional development on how to react to a
>
> shooter in school. I would like to know what happened in other school
>
> shootings and apply that to our school. I think that would make this
>
> training even stronger.

Teacher C agreed with the other participants this training was impactful due to the trainers using recent school shootings as training opportunities and emphasizing law

enforcement is a valuable addition to each school district. The one idea that Teacher C did add was, "I think the drill needs to be conducted at random times, trying to catch people off guard to see how they respond in different places."

Interview question #8 (S). In addition to Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, are there any additional actions your district has taken to help ensure safety for students and staff?

The most common security feature of all school districts represented in this interview was controlling access to buildings. Each participant claimed his or her school has locked entryways and visitors must be allowed in by secretaries. However, each participant explained other safety precautions that differ from one school to the next. According to Teacher A:

Just like the others, our entrances are locked and visitors have to be buzzed in. One neat thing our school did was that they gave each room a rope to loop around the door knob and a wall hook was added as a locking device for every room. This makes it nearly impossible to get in to any room in our building without literally busting the door in.

The other participants acknowledged how this added feature would be great for all classrooms. Teacher D added, "You know, our entryways are also secured and only opened by secretaries, but I would have to say our biggest safety feature is that we have four full-time police officers on duty to keep things in control."

Analysis of Interviews with Building Leaders

Interview question #1 (S). In your opinion, what is the impetus behind Senate Bill 75?

The opinion of all participants was that Missouri Senate Bill 75 was created due to the number of school shootings that have recently transpired. Although Senate Bill 75 was submitted one day prior to the school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary, most participants felt strongly this bill was a result of fear and shock that occurred immediately following this tragedy. Administrator D stated:

> I think Missouri Senate Bill 75 was an effort to educate and train school employees to minimize loss of life if a school shooting occurred. But I think mainly it was a reaction to Sandy Hook and other school shootings in the past.

Although each participant mentioned Missouri Senate Bill 75 was a result of the increase of school shootings, Administrator A expanded further and explained he believed the bill also intended to educate employees on how to maintain safety in a school. In fact, according to Administrator A:

> I think the rise of shooting incidents at school districts across the country in recent years has raised the alarm and that schools have to be better prepared to protect the lives of students and staff. I also think the intent of the bill is to educate administrators, teachers, and staff members to take an active role in securing their buildings. I really like that the bill allows each district to determine for them as to how this will be done though, you know, the local control component.

Administrator B added, "I agree, but I also think it was written because of the rise in violent actions and shootings that have taken place on school property in the past five years, and it seems like more and more each year."

Interview question #2 (C). Prior to the mandates of Senate Bill 75, did you feel safe in your school? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

All of the participants responded to this question, and all agreed they felt safe prior to the implementation of Missouri Senate Bill 75. However, all agreed after participating in the professional development training, they soon realized not all employees were aware of what to do, and this training afforded them that knowledge. Although the participants reported a feeling of safety, each had different reasons. According to Administrator C, "Yeah, I felt as safe as possible I guess because my school had already hardened all of our entrances and implemented A.L.I.C.E. for intruder procedures." When asked what A.L.I.C.E. stands for, Administrator C answered, "It stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Escape. Just a neat acronym to help teachers remember what to do."

Administrator B admitted his feeling of safety was a result of the entrances being monitored, stating, "I felt good because the entrances into the school were limited and well monitored and also that all staff members were conscious of safety steps for the building." Administrator A agreed but added, "Yeah, but I have to admit that my school was not equipped to handle an active shooter, even after steps were made to better secure outside entrances."

Interview question #3 (HSA). Prior to the implementation of Senate Bill 75, did you feel prepared to protect your students or yourself from an active shooter? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Three of the four participants felt somewhat limited or uncomfortable with the thought of protecting themselves or their students from an active shooter, while one

participant felt strongly he could protect himself or others due to his background.

Administrator C explained his comfort was due to the fact "we had already implemented

A.L.I.C.E., and I am a former wrestling coach so I felt confident in being able to protect

kids." In contrast, Administrator B added:

> I was different, I guess, because I felt somewhat limited as to strategies
>
> and tools to utilize to protect students and myself from an active shooter.
>
> We never proceeded to the point of training any staff members how to use
>
> tools around them to defend themselves should a shooter gain entry into a
>
> classroom. That part of the training was very new to me but very
>
> informative, too.

Administrator A explained, "You can't ever be 100% prepared for any kind of active

shooting situation because there are so many variables to consider." Administrator D had

similar feelings, adding, "Most of my teachers had already been through training for an

active shooter, but I had not, so I felt very uneasy about protecting my students, but after

going through the training later I definitely felt more confident."

Interview question #4 (PDTP). Prior to Active Shooter Intruder Response

Training, did you practice proper procedures for an intruder in your building? (Follow up:

If yes, how often?)

All participants reported they practiced some variation of an intruder drill prior to

ASIRT. However, all administrators interviewed agreed the drills were simple lockdown

procedures and did not train staff members how to defend themselves from intruders.

According to Administrator A, "We conducted lockdown drills with staff and students

once or twice a year. This drill would take only a few minutes and typically consisted of

hiding kids and staying quiet." Administrator C agreed, adding, "Yeah, we also did lockdown drills at least once a semester, but it was just a quick lockdown and then go on with the day."

All participants reported the frequency with which they practiced these drills was usually once, maybe twice a year. Administrator B concluded:

Yes, we were the same. We would also conduct intruder drills once or twice a year and just like them, these drills consisted of hiding and being quiet, not really preparing anyone for a shooter in the school or how to better protect students or ourselves if someone started shooting.

Participants all noted the inconsistencies of the lock-down method of intruder drills, stating the drills were left for interpretation by each staff member, with no cohesiveness present.

Interview question #5 (SWA). After Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, were you more aware of detailed procedures for an active shooter listed in your District Crisis Plan? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Although all participants agreed they were more prepared for an active shooter, there were split opinions on the relationship they observed between the District Crisis Plan and the training they received. In fact, according to Administrator A, "I did not feel more aware of the procedures, because our crisis plan needed some serious updates and a lot more detail as to what steps we should take if a shooter came in to our school." Administrator D added, "The training I went through was great, but it did not address the relationship with my district's crisis plan at all. I guess we were supposed to form that on our own at a later time."

In contrast, Administrators B and C both felt the training had direct correlation to their district crisis plans. Administrator B stated:

I truly believe that after ASIRT that our procedures for an active shooter on campus became better articulated and more purposeful. It enabled us to communicate with each other on what our expectations are and talk about procedures so that we can optimize safety during the operation of drills.

With similar remarks, Administrator C added, "After going through ASIRT, our staff had an opportunity to revisit procedures in our crisis plan and ask any questions we had. This was awesome in helping understand what to do."

Interview question #6 (PDTP). After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, do you feel more prepared to react properly in the event of an active shooter? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

All participants were adamant they felt more prepared to react if an intruder entered their buildings now that they had participated in ASIRT. Most attributed this confidence to the scenarios of the training, which allowed each to formulate individual action plans. Administrator D stated:

Yes, I definitely feel more confident. You know, during the scenario, I learned who would and would not fight back. I quickly decided I want to be a fighter. Even though it was just a scenario, my heart was pounding. I immediately found anything possible to fight with. I feel a lot more confident in myself to fight now that I know what I can use.

A common response from each participant was to acknowledge the importance of using all available items to defend themselves and students.

According to Administrator A, "The training we received as a staff on better safeguards to put in place to protect our students from harm has definitely aided me and the teachers I work with to be better prepared for an active shooter." Administrator B agreed by stating, "Yeah, absolutely. I now have a plan in my head of how to put as many layers between my students and the bad people as possible." With similar sentiments, Administrator C added, "For sure, the mock scenario of a school shooting made everything feel so real. I definitely feel like it helped me come up with a plan of action."

Interview question #7 (S). In your opinion, does Active Shooter Intruder Response Training increase your ability to provide a safe learning environment for your students and staff? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Participants agreed ASIRT increased their abilities to ensure a safe learning environment. Administrator D stated, "Yes, ASIRT helped create a safer environment. I was able to look back at how safe my kids are and know now that steps have been taken to make them even safer. Safety is what it is all about." Administrator A added, "We have definitely increased our knowledge and are way more prepared for a shooter. These steps help make our school as safe and secure as possible."

Other attributing factors participants expanded upon, which they all felt are why ASIRT has such an impact, included the increase in communication with law enforcement. Administrator C noted the importance of this communication by stating:

As a principal, I noticed an increase in communication with law

enforcement, which I believe also helped make things safer in my

building. I like knowing that each officer has knowledge of my building

layout first, but second, I like them to demonstrate to my teachers how we

can increase safety each way possible.

Participants agreed the increase in communication brought a sense of

cohesiveness that had previously been missing in the lock-down method of drills.

Interview question #8 (C). In your opinion, does Active Shooter Intruder

Response Training increase the climate of your school? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Participants all agreed they believe ASIRT has caused an improvement in their

schools' climate because of the focus on safety. Each participant credited the training

with increasing communication among all stakeholders and providing an understanding

of what roles each person should play in the event of an intruder. Administrator A stated:

In my opinion, it brought an awareness that we needed to make changes.

The training increased everyone's understanding that this is real and it

brought everyone together to realize that this is a team effort and that

everyone has a part to play.

Administrator C was in agreement, adding, "Absolutely. I believe communication

is far better now. Just having everyone understand the same plan of action and be

on the same page helps everyone feel safer."

Administrator B expanded more on the reason ASIRT has improved his

school's climate by stating, "I believe ASIRT equips faculty and staff members

with confidence on how to react to these types of situations." The other

administrators agreed with Administrator C, communication was a pivotal

component of the training. Two of the participants stated having administrators,

teachers, staff members, law enforcement, and emergency personnel all on the same page was what made this training beneficial to them.

Interview question #9 (S). After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, what changes, either additions or subtractions, need to be made to this professional development?

Responses from participants varied somewhat on ideas that would strengthen the training for school staff. Of those who responded, additions to the training included location, frequency, and participants included in the drills. Participants did not mention any subtractions needed for this professional development.

As for location of the drill, Administrator A stated, "As far as additions, I would like to see more plans on how to keep kids safe outside the regular classroom, like when they are walking from one building to the next, because all schools have differing layouts." When elaborating on the frequency with which the drills should take place, Administrator B explained, "I believe we need to have drills more often. I think that drills that are done repeatedly and with a purpose create a routine and help increase responses in the event of a real emergency."

Utilizing local law enforcement as partners for this training was previously mentioned by two of the participants. Both Administrators C and D expanded on why they felt this was important, with Administrator D stating, "Our police department wasn't part of our training, and I think they should have been. I would also like to have more ideas of how to fight back if I need to." Administrator C

agreed, adding, "I really want law enforcement to get involved with training the teachers."

Interview question #10 (S). Since the school shooting at Sandy Hook, what actions has your district taken to increase security and safety for students and staff?

The common response from all participants was that their buildings controlled access from visitors. All administrators explained secretaries were responsible for monitoring cameras covering entryways and must allow access to the building by pressing a button to unlock the doors. Administrator B stated, "Our secretaries have to buzz people in that want to come into the school, because the doors have magnetic locks on them to keep people out." Administrator C added, "We actually remodeled entrances for this very reason, so that anyone wanting to come in would first be on camera and then have to be buzzed in."

Administrator A asked the other participants how the entryways were controlled between class times, since some students are coming and going, concerned that secretaries could become overwhelmed with monitoring the doors. Administrator D answered by stating:

> We have the same set-up as they described, really, our cameras are on
> entryways and buzz in systems are controlled mainly by secretaries. One
> neat feature that we added to the buzz-in system is that I can use my
> computer to schedule when the door is locked or un-locked, which allows
> the students to go in and out between classes without the secretary.

Administrator C noted the software controlling the locks is not an option currently being utilized in his district, but he expressed plans of researching it.

Interview question #11 (S). What funding source was used for the actions taken to increase safety and security?

Administrator responses varied on this question. Three of the participants stated the funding source was Capital Projects, or Fund 4. Administrator B explained, "Our board of education had earmarked capital project money to pay for our upgrades." Administrator C agreed, adding, "Our board set aside $400,000 in Fund 4 to address safety issues." Identical sentiments came from Administrator B, who stated, "Same here, my district used building funds." Administrator D responded differently, claiming the school resource officer who trains their staff members has his salary paid through a grant.

Demographic Comparisons

After the data had been analyzed, comparisons were then made between different demographics represented in this study based on participant answers during the focus group interviews. Comparison tables were used as described by Creswell (2014): "Creating a visual image of the information in the form of a comparison table…that compares groups on one of the themes" (p. 253). Each of the five themes that emerged from the data was then compared based on five demographic categories. Participant responses were disseminated and compared based on the categories of gender, administrator and teacher, school personnel and State Senator, enrollment size of district, and pre-training and post-training.

In the first comparison table, perceptions of safety, a major theme of this study, were compared from participants based on gender. There were a total of three females and five males who participated in the focus group interviews used to gather data. Table 1 demonstrates male participants in this study felt much safer at their respective schools

than the female participants. Responses to questions regarding safety revealed females

were uncomfortable with the idea of confronting someone or fighting, while male

participants were more comfortable with confrontation or defending others.

Table 1

Perceptions of Safety

Female Statements	Male Statements
Most of my teachers had already been through training for an active shooter, but I had not, so I felt very uneasy about protecting my students.	I felt prepared to protect my kids. I have always felt confident in my abilities and when I am under duress or pressure situations.
I felt unprepared for a shooter and my abilities to fight back or keep my students safe.	I felt safe. Although my school is big, we still have a rural feel. I think having a good relationship with all my students makes me feel safer too.
I felt relatively safe in school until I went through ASIRT. I quickly realized how wrong I was.	We had already implemented A.L.I.C.E., and I am a former wrestling coach, so I felt confident in being able to protect kids.

The second demographic used to compare perceptions was that of teachers and

administrators. Table 2 displays comparison statements regarding school climate from

teachers and administrators who participated in this study. Data from both focus group

interviews suggested school climate improved as a result of ASIRT. Teachers credited

this improvement to the intensification of communication that came from the training.

Administrators attributed the upsurge of school climate to staff members becoming more

comfortable and confident with their surroundings.

Table 2

Perceptions of Climate

Administrator Statements	Teacher Statements
The training increased everyone's understanding that this is real, and it brought everyone together to realize that this is a team effort and that everyone has a part to play.	Everyone started talking about what we were supposed to do. This communication was the best part, because I knew what other people would be doing if a shooting occurred.
I believe communication is far better now. Just having everyone understand the same plan of action and be on the same page helps everyone feel safer.	I would say that everyone in general is more comfortable with the thought of an intruder, because they know kind of what to do and how to protect themselves.
I believe ASIRT equips faculty and staff members with confidence on how to react to these types of situations.	I definitely think the climate is better, because the crisis plan is now updated and followed by all.

The third demographic analyzed was the perceptions of Senator Dan Brown,

primary author of Missouri Senate Bill 75, and the school personnel who participated in

this study. A perceptional comparison is outlined in Table 3 and was focused on the

ASIRT professional development mandated in Missouri Senate Bill 75. Senator Brown's

perceptions of the training were consistent that a safe environment is the most important

piece, and that ASIRT training would produce a safe environment. Senator Brown also

was adamant in local control, more specifically that each school should have a plan in

place to follow in such an event. Teachers and administrators indicated the training was

impactful for them because of how it was constructed. Both groups felt having mock

shootings helped prepare them more for the real thing. Common statements from teachers

and administrators were their confidence increased in how to better protect themselves

and their children.

Table 3

Perceptions of ASIRT Professional Development Training

Senator Dan Brown's Statements	School Personnel's Statements
I hope that there is a plan within the school already in place, a scenario that they have played out, where they can do the best they can to protect their kids.	The mock scenario of a school shooting made everything feel so real. Helped me come up with a plan of action.
Really talk it through and develop a plan that the classroom teacher and administrator of the building is most comfortable with.	This training took my confidence to a whole new level.
Protecting those little kids that come to school every day is the ultimate goal.	We have increased our knowledge and are way more prepared for a shooter.
First of all, I think safety is the number one issue, and a safe environment, you know, educating kids in a safe environment is what we all hope and pray for.	I was able to look back at how safe my kids are and know now that steps have been taken to make them even safer. Safety is what it is all about.

The fourth demographic compared was that of the school personnel used in this study pre-ASIRT and post-ASIRT. Table 4 displays perceptions from school personnel who participated in this study based on their heightened sense of awareness. The data collected from this comparison overwhelmingly suggest teachers and administrators were not prepared for an active shooter prior to this training. Most participants admitted their schools were not prepared for an active shooter intruder. After participating in ASIRT training, participants all noted an increase in awareness and understood their individual roles better. Data also revealed ASIRT allowed all staff members to understand and follow the same plan of action.

Table 4

School Personnel Perceptions of "Heightened Sense of Awareness"

Pre-ASIRT Training Statements	Post-ASIRT Training Statements
I felt unprepared for a shooter and my abilities to fight back or keep my students safe.	I truly believe that after ASIRT that our procedures for an active shooter on campus became better articulated and more purposeful.
I felt somewhat limited as to strategies and tools to utilize to protect students and myself from an active shooter.	Just having everyone understand the same plan of action and be on the same page helps everyone feel safer.
I was not prepared to take on a shooter by any means, but I sure didn't realized how unprepared I was.	In my opinion it brought an awareness that we needed to make changes.
I have to admit that my school was not equipped to handle an active shooter, even after steps were made to better secure outside entrances.	I felt like I then knew exactly what my role would be and what our plan is.

The fifth demographic used to make data comparisons was based on student enrollment. This study included a stratified cross-section of southwest Missouri high schools, categorizing schools based on enrollments of 0-250 students; 251-750 students; 751-1,500 students; and 1,501 or more students. Table 5 represents a perceptional comparison regarding the strengths and weaknesses of ASIRT from participants of this study from school sizes of 750 students and fewer to 751 students and more. The agreement from all participants was ASIRT increased communication and awareness and ultimately increased safety. The one difference the data revealed was some of the larger schools solely used school resource officers to conduct this training instead of hiring specific companies or utilizing local law enforcement to conduct the professional development. These participants demonstrated a desire to at least add the law

enforcement component to their trainings after hearing the responses from other

participants in this study.

Table 5

Perceptions of Strengths and Weaknesses of ASIRT

Enrollment of 750 Students or Fewer	Enrollment of 751 Students or More
In our training they pointed out what happened in previous school shootings and how teachers could have prevented many deaths, which was awesome.	I feel a lot more confident in myself to fight now that I know what I can use to protect myself and my students.
The training we received as a staff on better safeguards to put in place to protect our students from harm has definitely aided me.	The words that I now think of are awareness and empowerment.
Everyone in general is more comfortable with the thought of an intruder, because they know kind of what to do and how to protect themselves.	During the scenario I learned who would and would not fight back. I want to be a fighter.
Communication was the best part, because I knew what other people would be doing if a shooting occurred.	Our police department wasn't part of our training, and I think they should have been.

Summary

A total of nine participants were interviewed for this study. Contributors for the

study included four teachers from southwest Missouri high schools, four building

administrators from southwest Missouri high schools, and one state senator from

Missouri. The major themes that emerged from the focus group interviews were safety,

climate, a heightened sense of awareness, professional development training, and

strengths and weaknesses of ASIRT. Overall data revealed ASIRT is a valuable

professional development tool that increases communication, and ultimately safety, in schools. Participants all credited ASIRT with giving them more confidence to defend themselves and their students in the event of an active shooter.

Chapter Five further details the conclusions identified from this study, along with recommendations for future research. Research questions that guided this study are answered using the data collected from the focus group interviews. Lastly, findings in relationship to the literature are given.

Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusions

This qualitative study, designed with a grounded theory approach, was intended to discover the impact Missouri Senate Bill 75's mandate of ASIRT has had on Missouri school districts, along with identifying the catalysts that inspired the authoring of the bill. The data for this study were gathered by conducting focus group interviews of teachers and high school administrators in southwest Missouri High Schools. With Missouri Senate Bill 75 being signed into law in 2013, this legislation is relatively new; however, much research has been conducted on the importance of safety, especially in a school setting.

This study was conducted through a random sampling of a stratified cross-section of teachers and administrators in southwest Missouri high schools. Participants for this study all had a minimum of five years of experience in their fields. Parallels were not discovered as to how perceptions change in elementary or middle school teachers and administrators, or in stakeholders with fewer than five years of experience.

The intent of this study was to determine if teachers and administrators feel Missouri Senate Bill 75's mandate of ASIRT increased safety and improved the climates of their schools. This study was also designed to determine the impetus for Senator Dan Brown to author this bill. By understanding the importance of ASIRT to maintain safe environments, administrators may expand professional development opportunities, or increase the frequency with which they are implemented, both of which will increase the sense of safety, with safety being a basic need that must be met before a human can move to the next level on Maslow's (1954) theory of motivation–hierarchy of needs. Findings

in relationship to the literature, conclusions, implications for future practice, and recommendations for future research are discussed in this chapter.

Findings

  This section links interview responses with the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Interview questions were categorized based on their connection to emerging themes that developed through data analysis. The themes that emerged included safety, climate, heightened sense of awareness, strengths and weaknesses of ASIRT, and professional development. The research questions correspond with the literature on why safety is important and to the mandated professional development ASIRT.

  The following questions are presented by category using the same acronyms introduced in Chapter Four. Discussion for each question includes the themes that emerged from the interviews and how these correspond to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Findings for this study are consistent with other research regarding the importance of safety for schools and how professional development training can improve the overall climates of the schools.

Interview with Senator Dan Brown

  Interview question #1 (S). In your opinion, what role should teachers have in the event an active shooter enters their building?

  Senator Brown's response centered on the main idea of local control. The senator explained each district has unique characteristics that differentiate it from others, which is why it is important for local school boards and administrators to determine the most effective approach to ensuring safety. These findings are consistent with prior studies

conducted by Mongan and Walker (2012) showing each school has personnel who are responsible for keeping students safe.

Interview question #2 (S). In your opinion, what role should an administrator have in the event of an active shooter in their building?

The main idea from Senator Brown's response to this question was that the administrator is in charge of maintaining safety at all times. Senator Brown was clear he believes the administrator is the "captain" and is responsible for providing a safe learning environment. These findings mirror the study of Rollings (2010) showing administrators must provide safety for students and staff.

Interview question #3 (C). What was the greatest catalyst that led you to sponsor Senate Bill 75?

While many factors played into the reasons Senator Brown authored Missouri Senate Bill 75, the overwhelming reason was safety. The senator was adamant safe environments are the most crucial component of successful schools. These findings are consistent with early reports by Wright (2014) showing safety should be in the forefront of the minds of all educators, especially due to violence in schools becoming even more of a problem.

Interview question #4 (HSA). What was your objective, or vision, in regards to the impact of Senate Bill 75?

The central idea Senator Brown stated for the objective of Missouri Senate Bill 75 was that all staff members receive high quality professional development that can be applied to their classrooms, ultimately increasing safety of schools. These findings were

consistent with the report by Noonan and Vavra (2007) that suggested all school personnel need to be prepared and trained to react to weapons on school grounds.

Interview question #5 (PDTP). What sources did you use, or data, to drive your decision to sponsor Senate Bill 75?

Senator Brown's response centered on the idea he used all avenues to gather as much information and opinions from stakeholders as possible prior to the writing of Senate Bill 75. The senator credited his primary source of information being a judge from Colombia, Missouri, who had conducted research on school violence. Senator Brown noted other states have similar legislation, as confirmed by previous reports from School Safety Legislation since Newtown (2014).

Interview question #6 (SWA). Did you consult with school superintendents, superintendent organizations, or other stakeholders prior to sponsoring Senate Bill 75? (Follow up: If yes, who and why?)

First, Senator Brown was very open with his pursuit of feedback from stakeholders, all of whom he claimed were greatly in favor of the bill. Senator Brown stated most feedback centered on the belief the government should not mandate how the training was to be conducted, allowing each district an opportunity to train their staff members as they saw necessary. Rollings (2010) found similar results in his study, finding teachers are to communicate with administrators if concerns exist, while administrators are responsible for communicating proper safety protocol and areas of concern during a crisis.

Interview question #7 (SWA). Now that Senate Bill 75 has been signed by the Governor, is there anything that you would like to change in the bill?

The language in Missouri Senate Bill 75 states school districts *may* train all staff members in ASIRT, as opposed to the original language that stated *shall*. Senator Brown regretted this concession the most, as it was done primarily to ensure the bill passed. The complete language of the bill is found in Senate Bill 75.

Interview question #8 (SWA). Are there any additions or subtractions from the original bill's identity? (Follow up: If yes, why do you believe changes were made to the original bill?)

The language succession was once again the main theme from this question. Senator Brown concluded he is very pleased with the bill and the results that have occurred through this training. These findings are highly consistent with early reports suggesting intruder training has been beneficial for school employees (Carroll, 2014; CCOSA, 2013; Goudie, 2013; OSSI, 2013; Shah, 2013)

Interviews with Teachers

Interview question #1 (S). Prior to the mandates of Senate Bill 75, did you feel safe in your school? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Most of the participants claimed they felt safe in their schools prior to the training, but all agreed they were naïve in this feeling after receiving the training. A majority of the teachers claimed they soon realized how underprepared they were. These findings are consistent with the previous report from the School Safety Advocacy Council (SSAC) (Lavarello, 2015) which found in a national survey only 51% of teachers, principals, and law enforcement officers felt safe at their schools. The report by the SSAC (Lavarello, 2015) further explained the percentage of teachers and administrators who feel safe is much lower.

Interview question #2 (HSA). Prior to the implementation of Senate Bill 75, did you feel prepared to protect your students or yourself from an active shooter? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

The participants were split on this question. Both male participants claimed they were prepared to protect themselves and their students, while the female participants did not feel prepared. These findings are difficult to compare to previous research as to the preparedness of teachers, simply due to the limited number of participants for this study. In early studies, Geissler (2015) found very few teachers feel prepared to respond to violent acts that occur at their schools.

Interview question #3 (PDTP). Prior to Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, did your district practice proper procedures for an intruder in your building? (Follow up: If yes, how often?)

Responses to this question were unanimous in that all participants stated their current school districts practice safety drills. However, participants did vary on the method and frequency. Most agreed the previous method of using lockdown procedures was ineffective and did not prepare staff for an active shooter. The frequency with which the drills were administered varied from once a month to once a semester depending on the school. These findings are congruent with literature reviewed from the MODESE (2014b) that states Missouri school districts must perform fire, earthquake, storm, and safety drills at least once a year.

Interview question #4 (C). After receiving the Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, did you become more aware of detailed procedures for an active shooter listed in your District Crisis Plan? (Follow up: Why?)

Overall the teacher participants felt ASIRT improved communication among themselves, administration, and law enforcement. Those interviewed credited these improvements in communication to the development of a new Crisis Plan, one all employees understand how to follow. These findings mirror the early study by Geissler (2015), who found when teachers participate in meaningful professional development such as ASIRT, their level of self-efficacy also increases because they become more comfortable with how to react.

Interview question #5 (PDTP). After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, do you feel more prepared to protect yourself and students in the event an active shooter entered your building? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

The words "confident," "empowering," and "awareness" were used by the teachers to describe themselves after participating in ASIRT. All of the participants mentioned how powerful this training was due to the mock scenarios that were implemented. Mizell (2010) found teachers "learn through experience" (p. 6), which is why this training is successful.

Interview question #6 (C). In your opinion, has the Active Shooter Intruder Response Training produced a greater overall climate of safety at your school? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Participants all agreed ASIRT improved the climates of their schools, placing focus on safety for all. Link (2010) described a school's climate as combining all activities of a school, creating an overall environment. Schneider and Duran (2010) also added a school's climate is physical and emotional safety for students and staff members.

Interview question #7 (SWA). After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, what changes, either additions or subtractions, need to be made to this professional development?

The two themes that emerged from the responses to this question included 1) law enforcement officers need to be part of the training; and 2) training needs to remain relevant and current. These findings are consistent with the early study by Link (2010), who found the presence of law enforcement officers promotes safety. Also in the study, Link (2010) described the role of school districts is to provide a safe learning environment, and that to do so districts must remain vigilant in training staff on how to utilize the district crisis plan.

Interview question #8 (S). In addition to Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, are there any additional actions your district has taken to help ensure safety for students and staff?

All participants were unanimous in stating their district controls the access of visitors through buzz-in systems at entrances. These findings are harmonious with early studies by the NCES (2014b) that reported 88% of schools nationally control access to their buildings by using similar buzz-in entryways.

Interviews with Building Leaders

Interview question #1 (S). In your opinion, what is the impetus behind Senate Bill 75?

According to Senator Dan Brown, primary author of Missouri Senate Bill 75, this bill was submitted one day prior to the horrific school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary. While most participants noted this shooting incited the legislation, they also

agreed the fear and shock that occurred immediately following the tragedy motivated the passing of the bill. Literature supports these findings that the Sandy Hook shooting spawned several legislative efforts to better protect schools (Shah, 2013). In his report, Shah (2013) stated over 450 bills regarding school safety were introduced after Sandy Hook.

Interview question #2 (C). Prior to the mandates of Senate Bill 75, did you feel safe in your school? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Previous study of literature revealed in a national survey of teachers, administrators, and law enforcement officers, only 51% reported feeling safe at their schools (Lavarello, 2015). It would be reasonable to assume this percentage would decrease if only teachers and administrator responses were used. Participants' responses on perceptions prior to ASIRT were not in line with literature reviewed. Those interviewed for this study all stated they felt safe prior to ASIRT.

Interview question #3 (HSA). Prior to the implementation of Senate Bill 75, did you feel prepared to protect your students or yourself from an active shooter? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

The majority of administrators interviewed did not feel prepared to protect themselves or students from an active shooter, stating they had not thought of the scenarios or what tools they could utilize if a shooting were to occur. These findings matched with an early report by Geissler (2015), who found very few school personnel feel prepared to respond to violent acts that occur at school.

Interview question #4 (PDTP). Prior to Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, did you practice proper procedures for an intruder in your building? (Follow up: If yes, how often?)

In describing the preparation for an active shooter or intruder, all participants described their districts as being compliant in performing necessary annual drills. However, just as the teachers did, the administrators stated the lockdown method for an intruder drill was ineffective and did not heighten a person's sense of safety. Participants stated the drills were performed once a year at minimum, which is mandated by the MODESE (2014b).

Interview question #5 (SWA). After Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, were you more aware of detailed procedures for an active shooter listed in your District Crisis Plan? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Although participants were in agreement ASIRT was a beneficial training that increases safety in a school, opinions varied as to how this training corresponded with their current district crisis plans. Administrators cited the need to revise the old plans with more modern methods of crisis planning so staff members were more confident with adhering to the plans. These findings were also reflected in an early report by Geissler (2015), who found teachers and administrators show increased comfort levels and become more confident after participating in similar training opportunities.

Interview question #6 (PDTP). After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, do you feel more prepared to react properly in the event of an active shooter? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Participants responded to this question with positive sentiments regarding their feelings of preparedness for an active shooter after participating in ASIRT. Most attributed this increase in comfort to the ideas presented by trainers as to what can be used as weapons to fight back and how to properly barricade doors when necessary. These findings correspond with literature reviewed that teachers and administrators who are mandated to participate in intruder training are more prepared for a school shooting (School Safety Legislation since Newtown, 2014).

Interview question #7 (S). In your opinion, does Active Shooter Intruder Response Training increase your ability to provide a safe learning environment for your students and staff? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Participants were in agreement ASIRT increased their abilities to ensure a safe learning environment by preparing staff how to better handle violent acts at school. The administrators interviewed cited communication among all stakeholders as one of the primary reasons ASIRT provided a safer environment. These sentiments were also found in the study by Lezotte, who stated, "Effective schools have environments free from violence" (as cited in Link, 2010, p. 10).

Interview question #8 (C). In your opinion, does Active Shooter Intruder Response Training increase the climate of your school? (Follow up: Why or why not?)

Administrators all agreed the climates of their schools improved after having participated in ASIRT because of the focus now placed on safety. Each participant noted an increase in awareness and confidence after the training. These findings are also reflected in a prior study by the NSCC (2014), which found intruder training increases an employee's sense of safety, which is a major component to the framework of climate.

Interview question #9 (S). After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, what changes, either additions or subtractions, need to be made to this professional development?

Responses primarily focused on two main themes: 1) remaining current with the training and 2) utilizing law enforcement officers in the training. Most respondents felt a major strength of the training was using previous school shootings as learning opportunities and that future training should include the newest information available to apply to the professional development. Next, two of the participants stated their schools invite local police departments to attend and participate in the training. Both participants articulated how vital this was for teachers to see how law enforcement reacts, but also so officers become more familiar with the campus layout. These findings were similar to those of Link (2010), who found that due to the increase in crime at schools, officials must remain vigilant in preparing staff for violent acts and keeping the district crisis plans current.

Interview question #10 (S). Since the school shooting at Sandy Hook, what actions has your district taken to increase security and safety for students and staff?

All participants noted their districts control access at entryways by using a buzz-in system. While two of the administrators noted their districts had this capability prior to the shooting at Sandy Hook, the other two stated this feature was added as a direct result of the shooting. These findings mirror those of the NCES (2013), which found 88% of schools nationally control access to their buildings through buzz-in entrances.

Interview question #11 (S). What funding source was used for the actions taken to increase safety and security?

The two main sources of funding noted by participants were Capital Project monies, or Fund 4, and grant monies. Although all districts utilized Fund 4 money, only one administrator stated their district applied for grant monies to support a school resource officer. All participants agreed they would like to do more to ensure safety, but money is somewhat of a limitation. These findings are congruent with those of an early study by Severson (2013), who found financial burden is the most common limitation when determining what schools can and cannot do to better protect their students.

Conclusions

Conclusions for this study were reached based upon responses to the research questions that guided its design. Data for this study were gathered to allow for analysis of the perceptions of teachers and administrators from a sample of southwest Missouri high schools in regard to the effectiveness of ASIRT. Additionally, the responses from the interview with Senator Brown were obtained. These data were then used to answer the research questions.

Research question #1: In what ways has the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75 transformed the perceptions of district and building leaders with regard to school climate, sense of safety within the building, and district or building preparedness for an armed intruder?

School climate. Building leaders interviewed reported the climates in their buildings improved because of the attention placed on maintaining a safe learning environment. Many identified increase in communication as a primary reason for the

improvement in climate, citing all stakeholders collaborated during and after the training, bringing all of them to the same vision for the intended environment. Others thought the training provided stakeholders and law enforcement an opportunity to observe each other's actions to better promote the idea of safe environment.

Sense of safety. Administrators all agreed Missouri Senate Bill 75 transformed their perceptions of safety in their buildings. Although most admitted to feeling relatively safe prior to the professional development, all agreed their levels of confidence and awareness were heightened after participating in the training. Participants were quoted using the words "empowered" and "confident" after completing the training. These leaders all credited ASIRT with increasing their sense of safety, because they now have a plan of action in the event of an active shooter at their schools.

Preparedness for an armed intruder. While the majority of the administrators interviewed felt safe in their schools, most did not necessarily feel prepared for an armed intruder. In fact, after participating in ASIRT, three of the administrators noted how unprepared they actually were. Unfortunately, the school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary is the primary reason for much of the school safety legislation, but tragic events such as this can also be credited with the increased focus on armed intruders in schools. The administrators who participated were unanimous in stating how ineffective the lockdown method of intruder training was and that it did not prepare staff members for an actual active shooter. All agreed after participating in the training, they are far more prepared to react to this type of violent act.

Research question #2: In what ways has the passage of Missouri Senate Bill 75 transformed the perceptions of teachers with regard to school climate, sense of safety within the building, and building preparedness for an armed intruder?

School climate. Teachers interviewed for this study all credited Missouri Senate Bill 75 with improving the climates of their schools. Most of the teachers stated the increase in attention to safety taken by district officials promoted a safer learning environment for teachers and students. As the NSCC (2014) determined in their study on school climate, when focus is placed on school safety, the climate of the school will improve. Participants attributed the improvement to everyone knowing what the expectations of the district crisis plan were and having a better idea of how to protect themselves and their students.

Sense of safety. All teachers who participated in this study ascribed to the fact ASIRT had a direct impact on their sense of safety at school. Most of the participants attributed this training to giving them more confidence to handle a tragic event. Others revealed ASIRT allowed them to understand the roles they play, along with the roles others play during a crisis. Much of this confidence is due to the training style of ASIRT, one that uses mock scenarios of previous school shootings in order to prevent similar tragedies from occurring. This increase in self-efficacy is due to the meaningful and impactful training, as determined by Geissler (2015).

Preparedness for an armed intruder. Two of the participants claimed they were comfortable prior to ASIRT training, while the other two expressed different feelings. It is worth noting the two who felt comfortable were both male teachers, one of whom is also a wrestling coach. Although the responses varied, all agreed after participating in the

training, they felt far better prepared to handle an active shooter scenario if it were to happen at their schools. Teachers attributed their preparedness also to now having a plethora of ideas as to what can be used to fight back when an armed intruder enters their buildings.

Research question #3: According to the primary author of Missouri Senate Bill 75, what were the motivating factors that contributed to the writing of the bill? To what extent, if any, were Missouri school leaders involved in the writing of Missouri Senate Bill 75?

Motivating factors to sponsor Missouri Senate Bill 75. In his interview, Senator Dan Brown was clear his motivating factor was to create a safe learning environment for all school children and personnel. The senator noted school safety is very important to him, as he has two family members who are teachers, along with grandchildren who attend public schools. With the increase in school violence Senator Brown was inspired to author the original bill, which was submitted one day prior to the school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary. Senator Brown concluded observing countless acts of school violence in some of Missouri's urban districts also motivated this legislation.

Missouri school leaders involved in the writing of Missouri Senate Bill 75. Senator Brown explained he sought the input of many school officials, most of whom were from his region, asking for input and vision for the bill. The senator explained the majority of superintendents who responded were adamant in allowing each school to determine how to utilize training best for their districts, maintaining the premise of local control. These sentiments were verbalized in the interview with Senator Brown, as he too expressed the desire to maintain local control for each district. Although Senator Brown

did receive input from school officials, he credited a judge from central Missouri with the most influence on the language of the bill.

Implications for Practice

It is clear from these findings building leaders and teachers feel safer at school and more prepared for an armed intruder after participating in ASIRT. Many of them have a greater sense of awareness and confidence due to this professional development. Geissler (2015) credited this increase in self-efficacy to meaningful training like ASIRT.

Based upon the findings of this study, there are two recommendations for district leaders, legislators, and other stakeholders who desire safe learning environments in public schools to consider:

Use law enforcement during the training. During the interview process, it was determined the presence of law enforcement during ASIRT has great value. Two of the teachers and three administrators noted their districts involve local law enforcement. One district went as far as involving the Missouri State Highway Patrol, county sheriff, local police department, local fire department, and Emergency Medical Technician personnel in their training. From the districts that did not use law enforcement, participants could see the value and would like to see this added in their districts as well.

Teachers valued the presence of law enforcement, because they felt more aware of what role the police would play in the event of a school shooting. One teacher explained that this "allowed everyone to understand their role and what they are supposed to do." Others explained the law enforcement who attended their trainings also offered valuable suggestions on how best to protect students in a classroom in the event of a school shooting.

Administrators had many of the same sentiments regarding the presence of law enforcement. However, administrators did add law enforcement officers were unfamiliar with the campus layout prior to the trainings. Because of ASIRT, all stakeholders were in communication regarding best practices, while absorbing the feedback from the company conducting the training. Of the administrators interviewed who utilize law enforcement, all felt it was invaluable to have them on campus. The presence of law enforcement in a school has many positive attributes, as was found by Link (2010).

Contract certified trainers. The majority of teachers and administrators interviewed for this study revealed their districts contracted certified companies to conduct ASIRT. Of the participants whose districts did not, it was apparent the professional development they participated in was not as in-depth as the others and did not employ many of the same strategies of preparation for an armed intruder. The districts choosing not to hire certified trainers noted their districts used school resource officers on staff to provide the training and did not conduct actual shooting scenarios for learning opportunities.

The majority explained certified trainers offer valuable insight into other school shootings, how staff reacted, and how they could have reacted to save more lives. Also, trainers provided vast knowledge as to what ordinary classroom items can be used to protect students and staff in the event of an active shooter. Administrators also mentioned the trainers oftentimes help train the local law enforcement on proper procedures of seeking and taking down an active shooter, something staff members also appreciated learning.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although this study contributes to the knowledge of how ASIRT increases sense of safety, school climate, and preparedness for an active shooter, it is by no means exhaustive. In fact, other studies could be conducted to gain a more rounded understanding of how this professional development is a valuable proactive approach to school safety. Future studies could potentially influence other states to pass similar legislation that focuses on preparing for an active shooter in school by training staff members how to react to such an event.

This study only addressed the perceptions of the impact of ASIRT from a random sample of four teachers and four administrators from southwest Missouri high schools. By increasing the number of participants from each group, a more rounded perception of the impact ASIRT provides could be given. This future study could also be a qualitative study, analyzing the perceptions of a larger group. However, using a focus group interview for this study would not be advised, as transcribing the responses and analyzing the data would be overwhelming.

Another qualitative study could be conducted comparing the differences of perceptions of ASIRT from rural school staff members to urban school staff members. By comparing these two dynamics, a better understanding could be formulated in regard to the levels of preparedness of urban and rural districts. Although literature was limited regarding intruder training prior to Sandy Hook, it was discovered some larger, more urban school districts practiced similar techniques before the bill was signed into law. Ponche (2010) reported Jefferson City schools were practicing intruder response drills as early as 2010.

A qualitative study could also be conducted where students and parents were surveyed regarding their perceptions of safety after their school completed intruder response training. These surveys could provide a sense of the school's climate, which can affect student achievement. A report from the NSCC (2014) revealed an improvement in school climate has a direct impact on student performance.

Further research could also be conducted on the philosophies of the ASIRT-certified training companies. Through the research conducted, it was determined each company injects their beliefs into the training. For example, one company has a philosophy of fighting back immediately, using any method possible. This company also conducts training for districts who desire for school personnel to conceal and carry firearms for better protection. Other companies certified to administer ASIRT training were found to implement a philosophy to flee, or retreat, if possible. The second step would be to barricade themselves and their students with all resources available. The last step to this philosophy was to then fight, using any available item as a weapon. Administrators should research the trainers by interviewing them and choosing the company that best meets the needs of each individual district. This could be a qualitative study, comparing the perceptions of the trainers and trainees after participating in the professional development.

Summary

This qualitative study, using a constructivist design in a grounded theory, was intended to discover the perceptions of teachers and administrators in regards to sense of safety, school climate, and overall preparedness for an active shooter. This study also involved finding motivating factors for Missouri Senate Bill 75, along with the resources

used by the bill's primary sponsor, Senator Dan Brown. These perceptions were gathered through focus group interviews of the teachers and administrators and an individual interview with Senator Brown.

By using open-ended focus group interviews, participants were given an opportunity to fully answer questions, further expanding after hearing responses from others, as explained in Creswell (2014). Participants for this study were chosen through a random sampling of teachers and administrators in southwest Missouri high schools. Schools were first chosen from a stratified cross-section based on their student enrollments. Teachers and administrators with more than five years of experience were randomly selected from these schools to participate in the interviews.

The theoretical framework for this study was Maslow's (1954) theory of motivation–hierarchy of needs. In his theory, Maslow (1954) claimed all humans have basic needs, with safety being one of those. Maslow (1954) further explained this basic human need for safety must be met before a person can further develop. Understanding the importance of safety as described by Maslow (1954), a review of literature was conducted to determine how safety correlates to schools.

The findings for this study revealed five main themes and how literature from Chapter Two paralleled with the themes. The themes that emerged from the study included safety, climate, heightened sense of awareness, strengths and weaknesses of ASIRT, and professional development. Findings for this study were consistent with other research, which determined safety for schools is vital and professional development training can improve the overall climates of schools.

The data gathered from interviews led to the conclusions, thereby answering the research questions that guided this study. The overall consensus was teachers and administrators both felt ASIRT was beneficial in maintaining a safe environment. Both focus groups reported a greater feeling of safety, a higher sense of awareness, and feeling more prepared for a shooter in their schools after the training.

Geissler (2015) reported this increase in self-efficacy was a result of professional development the teachers participated in, which familiarized them with what to do specifically to ensure safety. Also, Senator Brown's goal when he originally sponsored the bill was to promote safer learning environments in Missouri schools by allowing each district the opportunity to make decisions as to how that is accomplished. Maintaining local control was the most consistent piece of feedback received from those he consulted with when authoring the bill.

Appendix A

SENATE BILL NO. 75

AN ACT

To amend chapters 170 and 171, RSMo, by adding thereto two new sections relating to safety in public elementary and secondary schools.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapters 170 and 171, RSMo, are amended by adding thereto
2 two new sections, to be known as sections 170.315 and 171.410, to read as follows:

170.315. 1. There is hereby established the Active Shooter and
2 Intruder Response Training for Schools Program (ASIRT). Each school
3 district and charter school may, by July 1, 2014, include in its teacher
4 and school employee training a component on how to properly respond
5 to students who provide them with information about a threatening
6 situation and how to address situations in which there is a potentially
7 dangerous or armed intruder in the school. Training may also include
8 information and techniques on how to address situations where an
9 active shooter is present in the school or on school property.

10   2. Each school district and charter school may conduct the
11 training on an annual basis. If no formal training has previously
12 occurred, the length of the training may be eight hours. The length of
13 annual continuing training may be four hours.

14   3. All school personnel shall participate in a simulated active
15 shooter and intruder response drill conducted and led by law
16 enforcement professionals. Each drill may include an explanation of its
17 purpose and a safety briefing. The training shall require each
18 participant to know and understand how to respond in the event of an

19 actual emergency on school property or at a school event. The drill
20 may include:

21   (1) Allowing school personnel to respond to the simulated
22 emergency in whatever way they have been trained or informed; and

23   (2) Allowing school personnel to attempt and implement new
24 methods of responding to the simulated emergency based upon
25 previously used unsuccessful methods of response.

26   4. All instructors for the program shall be certified by the
27 department of public safety's peace officers standards training
28 commission.

29   5. School districts and charter schools may consult and
30 collaborate with law enforcement authorities, emergency response
31 agencies, and other organizations and entities trained to deal with
32 active shooters or potentially dangerous or armed intruders.

33   6. Public schools shall foster an environment in which students
34 feel comfortable sharing information they have regarding a potentially
35 threatening or dangerous situation with a responsible adult.

          171.410. 1. Each school district and charter school may annually
2 teach the Eddie Eagle Gunsafe Program to first grade students. School
3 districts and charter schools may also teach any substantially similar
4 program of the same qualifications or any successor program in lieu of
5 the Eddie Eagle Gunsafe Program.

6   2. The purpose of the educational program shall be to promote
7 the safety and protection of children. The educational program shall
8 emphasize how students should respond if they encounter a
9 firearm. School personnel and program instructors shall not make
10 value judgments about firearms.

11   3. No school district or charter school shall include or use a
12 firearm or demonstrate the use of a firearm when teaching the
13 program.

14   4. Students with disabilities shall participate to the extent
15 appropriate as determined by the provisions of the Individuals with
16 Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
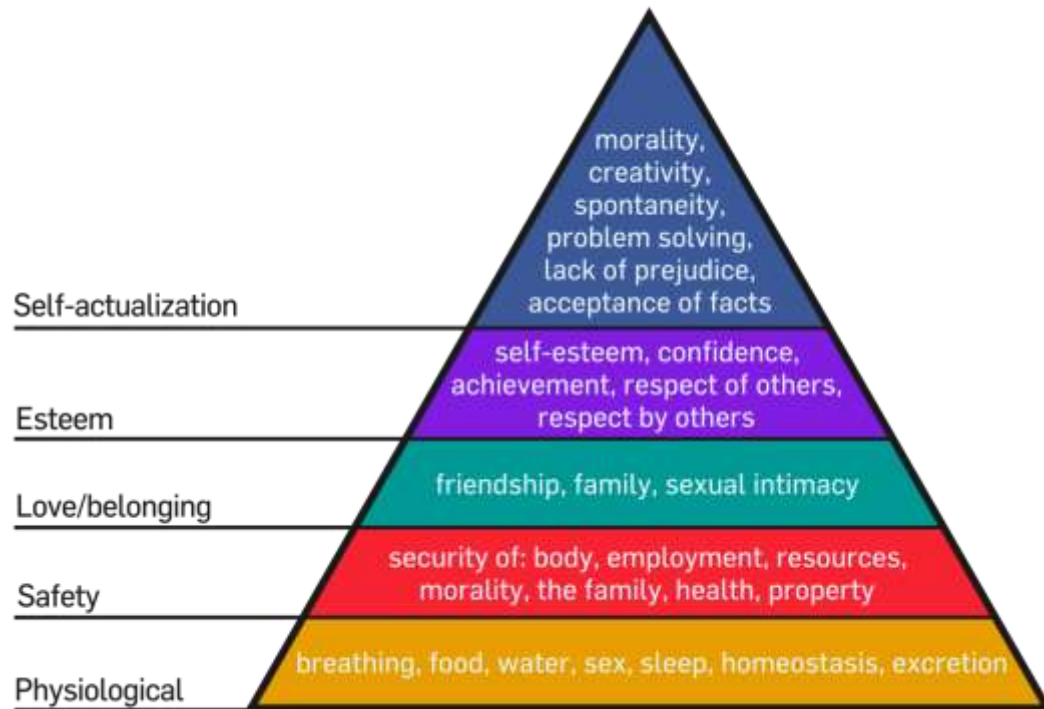
17   5. School districts and charter schools may seek grant funding
18 for the program from public, private, and non-profit entities.

Appendix B

Abraham Maslow's Theory of Motivation:

Hierarchy of Needs Pyramid

Self-actualization — morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, acceptance of facts

Esteem — self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others

Love/belonging — friendship, family, sexual intimacy

Safety — security of: body, employment, resources, morality, the family, health, property

Physiological — breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis, excretion

Appendix C

Interview Questions

Interview questions for Senator Dan Brown, primary sponsor of Senate Bill 75

1. In your opinion, what role should teachers have in the event an active shooter enters their building?

2. In your opinion, what role should an administrator have in the event of an active shooter in their building?

3. What was the greatest catalyst that led you to sponsor Senate Bill 75?

4. What was your objective, or vision, in regards to the impact of Senate Bill 75?

5. What sources did you use, or data, to drive your decision to sponsor Senate Bill 75?

6. Did you consult with school superintendents, superintendent organizations, or other stakeholders prior to sponsoring Senate Bill 75?

   If yes, who and why?

7. Now that Senate Bill 75 has been signed by the Governor, is there anything that you would like to change in the bill?

8. Are there any additions or subtractions from the original bill's identity?

   If yes, why do you believe changes were made to the original bill?

Interview questions for Teacher Focus Groups

1. Prior to the mandates of Senate Bill 75, did you feel safe in your school?

   Why?

   Why not?

2. Prior to the implementation of Senate Bill 75, did you feel prepared to protect your students or yourself from an active shooter?

   Why?

   Why not?

3. Prior to Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, did your district practice proper procedures for an intruder in your building?

   If yes, how often?

4. After receiving the Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, did you become more aware of detailed procedures for an active shooter listed in your District Crisis Plan?

   Why?

5. After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, do you feel more prepared to protect yourself and students in the event an active shooter entered your building?

   Why?

   Why not?

6. In your opinion, has the Active Shooter Intruder Response Training produced a greater overall climate of safety at your school?

   Why?

   Why not?

7. After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, what changes, either additions or subtractions, need to be made to this professional development?

8. In addition to Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, are there any additional actions your district has taken to help ensure safety for students and staff?

Interview questions for Building Leader Focus Groups

1. In your opinion, what is the impetus behind Senate Bill 75?

2. Prior to the mandates of Senate Bill 75, did you feel safe in your school?

   Why?

   Why not?

3. Prior to the implementation of Senate Bill 75, did you feel prepared to protect your students or yourself from an active shooter?

   Why?

   Why not?

4. Prior to Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, did you practice proper procedures for an intruder in your building?

   If yes, how often?

5. After Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, were you more aware of detailed procedures for an active shooter listed in your District Crisis Plan?

   Why?

   Why not?

6. After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, do you feel more prepared to react properly in the event of an active shooter?

   Why?

   Why not?

7. In your opinion, does Active Shooter Intruder Response Training increase your ability to provide a safe learning environment for your students and staff?

   Why?

   Why not?

8. In your opinion, does Active Shooter Intruder Response Training increase the climate of your school?

   Why?

   Why not?

9. After participating in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training, what changes, either additions or subtractions, need to be made to this professional development?

10. Since the school shooting at Sandy Hook, what actions has your district taken to increase security and safety for students and staff?

11. What funding source was used for the actions taken to increase safety and security?

Appendix D

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

LINDENWOOD

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY · ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

DATE: March 10, 2015

TO: Jerry Moore, Ed.D
FROM: Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board

STUDY TITLE: [719378-2] Missouri Senate Bill 75: Active Shooter Intruder Response
Training Perceptions of Building Leaders and Teachers from Southwest
Missouri High Schools

IRB REFERENCE #:
SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: March 10, 2015
EXPIRATION DATE: March 10, 2016
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this research project.
Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is
based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All
research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and
insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must
continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal
regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to
initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the
appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should
also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to the
IRB.

This project has been determined to be a Minimal Risk project. Based on the risks, this project requires
continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the completion/amendment form for
this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review
and continued approval before the expiration date of March 10, 2016.

Generated on IRBNet

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

If you have any questions, please contact Robyne Elder at (314) 566-4884 or relder@lindenwood.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

If you have any questions, please send them to relder@lindenwood.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board's records.

Appendix E

E-mail Recruitment Letter

Focus Group Interview

Dear Colleague,

  This is an invitation for your school to have a teacher and principal from your high school participate in a focus group interview for a research study entitled, *Missouri Senate Bill 75: Active Shooter Intruder Response Training- Perceptions of Building Leaders and Teachers from Southwest Missouri High Schools.* I am completing this study in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctorate in Educational Administration through Lindenwood University. If you would be willing for a participant from your school to participate in this study, please forward to building leaders and teachers who have a minimum of five years of experience.

  Assurances of confidentiality and anonymity are detailed in the Informed Consent Form. No personal identifiable information will be released in any presentation or written document. All electronic data will be contained on a secure, password protected computer, and hardcopy data will be located in a locked cabinet under my supervision. The results of the study will be contained in the dissertation and will be available upon request once the dissertation has been uploaded on the Lindenwood Butler Library site.

  The purpose of this study will be to analyze the perceptional differences between key stakeholders who have participated in Active Shooter Intruder Response Training. The benefits of this study will be to gain more understanding of the effectiveness of this training in relation to school climate and sense of safety. Those who qualify and are interested may click here: <link> to access the letter of informed consent.

Yours truly,

Jerry Nathan Moore

Doctoral Candidate

Lindenwood University

Appendix F

Letter of Consent

LINDENWOOD

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Missouri Senate Bill 75: Active Shooter Intruder Response Training
Perceptions of Building Leaders and Teachers from
Southwest Missouri Schools

Principal Investigator: Jerry Nathan Moore
            Telephone: ▇▇▇▇▇▇▇   E-mail: JNM902@lindenwood.edu

Participant _____ Contact info _____

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Jerry Nathan Moore, under the guidance of Dr. Phillip Guy, Faculty Advisor for Lindenwood University. The purpose of this study is to examine ways Missouri Senate Bill 75 transformed the perceptions of building leaders and teachers with regard to school climate, sense of safety, and preparedness for an armed intruder.

2. Your participation will involve:

    a) Participating in a focus group, answering questions pertaining to your perceptions of school climate, sense of safety, and preparedness for an armed intruder.

    b) The amount of time involved in your participation will be one hour.

       Approximately six subjects will be involved in each focus group interview.

3. There are no anticipated risks associated with this research.

4. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the knowledge about active shooter intruder response training.

4. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.

6. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation that may result from this study, and the information collected will remain in the possession of the investigator in a safe location. Electronic data will be located on a secure, password protected computer, and hardcopy data will be located in a locked cabinet under the supervision of the investigator.

7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the Investigator, Jerry Nathan Moore, ██████████ or the Supervising Faculty, Dr. Phillip Guy, ██████████. You may also ask questions of or state concerns regarding your participation to the Lindenwood Institutional Review Board (IRB) through contacting Dr. Jann Weitzel, Vice President for Academic Affairs at 636-949-4846.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my participation in the research described above.

_____   _____

Participant's Signature   Date   Participant's Printed Name

_____   _____

Signature of Principal Investigator   Date   Investigator Printed Name

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Vita

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Prior to his current role, Moore served the Mansfield R-IV School District as elementary principal, a position he held for eight years. Moore started his educational career in the Mansfield R-IV Middle School, where he taught for four years.