SCHOOL-BASED LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING EVALUATION

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Improving Community Health & Model Police Services

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OVERVIEW

The School-Based Law Enforcement Training (SBLET) curriculum was developed in collaboration between the Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice (CCJJ) and Utah State Board of Education (USBE). SBLET, which was based on an assessment of four school districts and five law enforcement agencies in Utah, was piloted in several judicial districts throughout Utah in 2016. SBLET was set to four hours and had the following topics: Roles of school administrators and school resource officers; multi-tiered systems of support; cultural diversity; juvenile court process; children's rights; mental health and trauma-informed care; adolescent development; legal documents; and active learning scenarios.

In early 2019, school districts within each judicial district were contacted to host SBLET. Once scheduled, other school districts and law enforcement agencies were invited to attend the training. School districts and police departments that were involved in a school-based law enforcement program sent principals, assistant principals, school district administrators, school resource officers, and law enforcement administrators, as well as attorneys, human resources staff, and board members. SBLET was conducted in all eight judicial districts in Utah from January to May 2019. A criminal justice researcher, a retired law enforcement officer, and local chief probation officers from each judicial district facilitated SBLET. Table 1 has a list of the judicial districts, counties, school districts and law enforcement agencies that participated in the training. Within the eight judicial districts, 26 school districts (2 Charter Schools) and 53 law enforcement agencies participated in SBLET (Table 2).

Table 1: SBLET Judicial Districts & Counties

JUDICIAL DISTRICT	COUNTY
1st District	Cache
	Box Elder
2nd District	Davis
	Morgan
	Weber
3rd District	Salt Lake
	Summit
4th District	Juab
	Utah

JUDICIAL DISTRICT	COUNTY
	Wasatch
5th District	Beaver
	Iron
6th District	Sanpete
	Sevier
7th District	Grand
	San Juan
8th District	Daggett
	Duchesne
	Uintah

Table 2: SBLET School Districts & Law Enforcement Agencies

SCHOOL DISTRICT	LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY
Granite School District	Granite Police Department
Salt Lake City School District	Murray Police Department
Murray School District	Unified Police Department
Uintah School District	Salt Lake Police Department
Jordan School District	Herriman Police Department
Alpine School District	West Jordan Police Department
Provo School District	Orem Police Department
Nebo School District	Spanish Fork Police Department
Box Elder School District	Logan Police Department
Juab School District	Cache County Sheriff's Office
Canyons School District	Sandy Police Department
Wasatch County School District	Cottonwood Heights Police Department
Davis School District	Layton Police Department
Weber School District	Syracuse Police Department

SCHOOL DISTRICT	LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY
Grand County School District	Weber County Sheriff's Office
Iron County School District	Centerville Police Department
Beaver County School District	Farmington Police Department
San Juan School District	Kaysville Police Department
Sevier School District	Grand County Sheriff's Office
South Sanpete School District	Beaver County Sheriff's Office
Cache County School District	San Juan County Sheriff's Office
North Sanpete School District	Blanding Police Department
Morgan School District	Sanpete County Sheriff's Office
Daggett School District	Ephraim Police Department
Duchesne County School District	Sevier County Sheriff's Office
Logan City School District	Uintah County Sheriff's Office
American International School of Utah Charter	Bingham City Police Department
Success Academy Charter	South Jordan Police Department
	Draper Police Department
	Wasatch County Sheriff's Office
	Lone Peak Police Department
	Provo Police Department
	American Fork Police Department
	Nephi Police Department
	Saratoga Springs Police Department
	Salem City Police Department
	Morgan City Police Department
	South Odgen Police Department
	Roy Police Department
	Harrisville Police Department
	Pleasant View Police Department

SCHOOL DISTRICT	LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY
	North Ogden Police Department
	Bountiful Police Department
	Davis County Sheriff's Office
	Clearfield Police Department
	Sunset Police Department
	Vernal Police Department
	Daggett County Sheriff's Office
	Cedar City Police Department
	Richfield Police Department
	Moab Police Department
	Kayenta Police Department
	Bureau of Indian Affairs Police

EVALUATION

Pretest surveys were administered at the beginning of each SBLET and posttest and satisfaction surveys were administered at the end of the trainings. Participants were asked to provide her/his profession (SRO/school administrator), institution (law enforcement agency/ school district), and answer 10 questions related to the topics taught in SBLET. Participants were instructed to not provide his/her name on the surveys but rather were given a random ID number to be placed on both surveys for the purpose of matching the pre/posttests. A total of 529 individuals participated in SBLET: 147 School Resource Officers and 382 School Administrators. Out of 529 participants, there were 346 (65%) match pretest and posttest surveys, with 181 school administrators and 116 SROs.

Results for All Participants

Paired t-tests were conducted to analyze differences between pretest and posttest scores for the 10 survey items for all SBLET participants (Table 3). Overall, participants reported improvement in knowledge and attitudes in most topics. For example, participants had significantly higher scores at the end of SBLET as compared to the beginning of the training, in understanding SRO roles in school discipline and

addressing student behaviors, knowledge of student's rights, and attitudes towards the use of MOUs in guiding school practices. There was no changes in understanding how culture influences student engagement and adolescent experimentation with drugs and alcohol. This may be due to "ceiling" and "floor" effects. The responses to the cultural question in the pretest was fairly high (ceiling effect) and low (floor effect) for the adolescent question, revealing knowledge on those topics before attending SBLET. Specific results were:

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's understanding of SRO involvement in school discipline.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's understanding of SRO and school administrators roles when addressing student behaviors.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge of SRO inclusion within Tier I school strategies.

- There was no significant changes in participant's knowledge of culture's influence on student engagement with SROs and school administrators.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge of appropriate referrals to the juvenile courts.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge of student's rights.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge about how mental health may affect student behavior.

- There was no significant changes in participant's knowledge of adolescents experimentation with ATOD.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge about the ineffectiveness of fear-based programs on reducing problematic behavior.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's attitudes about how MOUs can help improve student behavior.

Table 3: Paired Samples T-Tests for ALL SBLET Participants

Questions	Survey	x̄	SD	N	p
Q1: A SROs should not be involved in daily discipline of students	Pre	1.81	.70	344	0.04
	Post	1.72	.74		
Q2: I understand the roles of school administrators & SROs when addressing student behavior	Pre	3.16	0.54	345	0.00
	Post	3.49	0.58		
Q3: The SRO should not be included with Tier I strategies	Pre	2.50	0.84	327	0.00
	Post	2.20	0.92		
Q4: Culture can influence how students engage SROs & school administrators	Pre	3.60	0.55	346	0.86/ NS
	Post	3.60	0.54		
Q5: All student-involved crimes that occur in schools should be referred to the juvenile courts	Pre	1.98	0.67	345	0.00
	Post	1.70	0.66		
Q6:An SRO may search a student's backpack at anytime she/he wishes	Pre	1.52	0.67	345	0.00
	Post	1.30	0.50		
Q7: Students with depression may show signs of aggressive behavior	Pre	3.15	0.55	344	0.01
	Post	3.27	0.67		
Q8: Only antisocial teenager experiment with alcohol, tobacco, & other drugs	Pre	1.38	0.59	346	0.55/ NS
	Post	1.36	0.54		
Q9: Programs based on fear & shaming are effective at reducing problematic behavior	Pre	1.45	0.62	346	0.05
	Post	1.38	0.62		
Q10: A memorandum of understanding can guide practices that help improve student behaviors	Pre	3.15	0.57	343	0.00
	Post	3.47	0.57		
Q11: What top 2 topics were most useful (1)?	Roles of SRO & School Administrators			346	67%

Q12: What top 2 topics were most useful (2)?	Active Learning: Scenarios	346	28%

NS = no significant changes between pretest and posttest

Results for School Resource Officers

Paired t-tests were conducted to analyze differences between pretest and posttest scores for the 10 survey items for SRO participants (Table 4). Results were were similar to the overall group of participants with the exception of the "adolescent experimenting" question. School resource officers actually increased understanding of adolescent development. Detailed results are below:

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's understanding of SRO involvement in school discipline.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's understanding of SRO and school administrators roles when addressing student behaviors.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge of SRO inclusion within Tier I school strategies.

- There was no significant changes in participant's knowledge of culture's influence on student engagement with SROs and school administrators.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge of appropriate referrals to the juvenile courts.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge of student's rights.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge about how mental health may affect student behavior.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge of adolescents experimentation with ATOD.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge about the ineffectiveness of fear-based programs on reducing problematic behavior.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's attitudes about how MOUs can help improve student behavior.

Table 4: Paired Samples T-Tests for School Resource Officers

Questions	Survey	x̄	SD	N	p
Q1: A SROs should not be involved in daily discipline of students	Pre	1.93	0.66	115	0.00
	Post	1.75	0.61		
Q2: I understand the roles of school administrators & SROs when addressing student behavior	Pre	3.24	0.47	116	0.01
	Post	3.40	0.54		
Q3: The SRO should not be included with Tier I strategies	Pre	2.55	0.73	102	0.00
	Post	2.25	0.74		
Q4: Culture can influence how students engage SROs & school administrators	Pre	3.41	0.59	116	0.76/ NS
	Post	3.40	0.49		
Q5: All student-involved crimes that occur in schools should be referred to the juvenile courts	Pre	1.96	0.65	116	0.00
	Post	1.72	0.55		
Q6:An SRO may search a student's backpack at anytime she/he wishes	Pre	1.40	0.56	116	0.07
	Post	1.31	0.47		
Q7: Students with depression may show signs of aggressive behavior	Pre	3.03	0.47	116	0.00
	Post	3.22	0.61		
Q8: Only antisocial teenager experiment with alcohol, tobacco, & other drugs	Pre	1.48	0.60	116	0.50/ NS
	Post	1.45	0.58		
Q9: Programs based on fear & shaming are effective at reducing problematic behavior	Pre	1.72	0.71	116	0.01
	Post	1.56	0.65		
Q10: A memorandum of understanding can guide practices that help improve student behaviors	Pre	3.02	0.51	115	0.00
	Post	3.32	0.49		
Q11: What top 2 topics were most useful (1)?	Roles of SRO & School Administrators			116	73%

Q12: What top 2 topics were most useful (2)?	Active Learning: Scenarios	116	27%

NS = no significant changes between pretest and posttest

Results for School Administrators

Paired t-tests were conducted to analyze differences between pretest and posttest scores for the 10 survey items for school administrator participants (Table 5). Results were were similar to the overall group of participants with the exception of the "fear-based" question. School administrators appeared to already have understood before the training that fear-based programming does not improve behavior. Detailed results are below:

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's understanding of SRO involvement in school discipline.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's understanding of SRO and school administrators roles when addressing student behaviors.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge of SRO inclusion within Tier I school strategies.

- There was no significant changes in participant's knowledge of culture's influence on student engagement with SROs and school administrators.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge of appropriate referrals to the juvenile courts.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge of student's rights.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's knowledge about how mental health may affect student behavior.

- There was no significant changes in participant's knowledge of adolescents experimentation with ATOD.

- There was no significant changes in participant's knowledge about the ineffectiveness of fear-based programs on reducing problematic behavior.

- There was a **significant** improvement in participant's attitudes about how MOUs can help improve student behavior.

Table 5: Paired Samples T-Tests for School Administrators

Questions	Survey	x̄	SD	N	p
Q1: A SROs should not be involved in daily discipline of students	Pre	1.73	0.74	180	0.05
	Post	1.69	0.83		
Q2: I understand the roles of school administrators & SROs when addressing student behavior	Pre	3.12	0.56	180	0.00
	Post	3.56	0.58		
Q3: The SRO should not be included with Tier I strategies	Pre	2.47	0.91	180	0.00
	Post	2.17	1.01		
Q4: Culture can influence how students engage SROs & school administrators	Pre	3.71	0.50	181	0.37/ NS
	Post	3.75	0.48		
Q5: All student-involved crimes that occur in schools should be referred to the juvenile courts	Pre	1.97	0.69	180	0.00
	Post	1.66	0.69		
Q6: An SRO may search a student's backpack at anytime she/he wishes	Pre	1.54	0.67	180	0.00
	Post	1.28	0.52		
Q7: Students with depression may show signs of aggressive behavior	Pre	3.21	0.60	180	0.04
	Post	3.32	0.67		
Q8: Only antisocial teenager experiment with alcohol, tobacco, & other drugs	Pre	1.30	0.57	181	0.73/ NS
	Post	1.29	0.51		
Q9: Programs based on fear & shaming are effective at reducing problematic behavior	Pre	1.30	0.53	181	0.31/ NS
	Post	1.25	0.58		
Q10: A memorandum of understanding can guide practices that help improve student behaviors	Pre	3.24	0.57	179	0.00
	Post	3.59	0.59		
Q11: What top 2 topics were most useful (1)?	Roles of SRO & School Administrators			181	65%

Q12: What top 2 topics were most useful (2)?	Active Learning: Scenarios	181	30%

Observations & Participant Comments

The Juvenile Courts from the Administrative Office of the Courts provided personnel, usually Chief Probation Officers, to present the juvenile court process within SBLET. This training would provide the school administrators and school resource officers a better understanding on what actually occurs when a student comes into contact with the juvenile courts and therefore be better able to refer students more appropriately.

Court participation also allowed the school administrators and school resource officers to come in contact with Chief Probation Officers or Probation Supervisors from the local judicial districts, which allows for better communication between school districts, law enforcement and the juvenile courts. In one training, personnel from the Juvenile Justice Services also co-presented with the courts to teach participants the detention process. This was extremely helpful for SBLET participants to understand the purpose of detention and when can youth be booked into the detention centers.

School administrators and school resource officers, especially those persons who recently attained the positions, appreciated clarification of the roles when addressing problematic behaviors among students in different situations. Participants learned that school resource officers can play a vital role as "informal counselor". School resource officers can be positive role models and mentors and reinforce the vision and culture of the school, which allow school resource officers to more easily identify at-risk youth, assist at improving student academics and preventing delinquent behavior. School administrators specifically mentioned inclusion of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) in SBLET was helpful in the implementation process.

Executive leadership from school districts and law enforcement agencies also attended SBLET, including superintendents, chiefs of police, attorneys, and human resources directors. These participants were pleased to be informed about the current laws and assistance with the development of memorandum of understandings between school districts and law enforcement agencies.

Lastly, providing SBLET statewide assists in developing a list of how many school-based law enforcement programs and school resource officers exist in the State of Utah.

Limitations

A major limitation of SBLET is that teachers are not receiving the information regarding the roles of the school resource officers and school administrators when addressing problematic behaviors among students. SBLET was develop for school administrators and school resource officers as those school positions are most likely refer students to the juvenile courts. SBLET participants reported that teachers often reach out to school resource officers to address student classroom behaviors. Refusing to assist the teacher may damage the relationships between the school resource officers and teachers. However, the student conduct that teachers are requesting assistance are not appropriate for school resource officers intervention. Teachers have not been made aware of the roles of the school resource officers when addressing student behavior. Therefore, teachers should participate in SBLET, specifically the roles, the juvenile court process and memorandum of understanding.

Another limitation is the lack of time to fully present on all prescribed topics. SBLET is scheduled for four hours and the focus is on understanding the different roles of school administrators and school resource officers when addressing problematic student behaviors. The roles are not only taught at the beginning of the training, but are also threaded throughout the training topics to teach and reinforce how the roles may differ in a variety of situations. For example, a school resource officer may be asked to engage a student who is diagnosed with attention-hyperactivity disorder but not in the role as a law enforcer but rather as an informal counselor and mentor. The officer may have a great relationship with the student and therefore be able to de-escalate the situation much quicker than other personnel. However, the officer should also have an "exit strategy" in case the student reacts negatively towards the officer. The officer does not want to escalate an incident that had started as a non-criminal act (classroom disruption) and has escalated to a criminal act (aggravated assault) and the officer would need to act in the role of the law enforcer. This example brings to light the importance of including the school resource officer in Tier I strategies (services and resources provided to all students) and explicitly state that the officer will engage students for the purpose of building positive relationships and becoming a role model. This example also reveals how engaging students is not always a "cut and dry" decision. Not only should the decision be on whether the school administrator and/or the school resource officer should address a problematic behavior but in what role or capacity should each engage the student. Should the school resource officer acts as a law enforcer, an educator, and/or informal counselor? Should the school administrator respond as a leader, manager, and/or collaborator? Although some of the topics are not fully taught, the main goal of teaching the roles in a variety of settings is consistently taught at every training.

Lastly, it was not possible to provide SBLET in all Utah school districts. Therefore, there are still several school districts that have not received SBLET. Although not all school districts will have school-based law enforcement programs, many will still interact with law enforcement agencies and should understand the roles of police and educators when engaging students in schools. Additionally, there will be newly appointed school resource officers and school administrators that have not received SBLET.

Recommendations

Based on the quantitative findings, it is recommended that SBLET continue to focus on the roles of the school resource officers and school administrators and provide several different scenarios for participants to practice the decision-making process on how to appropriately address student misconduct.

School administrators and school resource officers comments on the high volume of contact between teachers and school resource officers lead to the recommendation that SBLET should be provided to teachers statewide. SBLET for teachers should be piloted in various venues to reveal the best method of providing a version of the training for all educators.

Another recommendation would be to include personnel from Utah Juvenile Justice Services in SBLET to co-present with the Chief Probation Officers. Explanation of the juvenile court process has been extremely valuable to participants and the one time the detention process was explained by juvenile justice personnel, it was well received by SBLET participants.

Lastly, SBLET should be provided to the remaining Utah school districts that have not received the training, as well as provide opportunities for new school administrated and school resource officers to attend SBLET as soon as possible. A longterm plan should be implemented that would provide new school resource officers and school administrators in a yearly, consistent manner.