



Safe Schools Agenda

Volume 11, Issue 7

July 2004

Route to:
_ Superintendent
_ School Business Off.
_ Athletic Director
_ Supt. Bldgs/Grounds
_ Site Administrators
_ Transportation Dir.
_ Lunch Director
_ Classroom Teachers
_ _____

A monthly service provided to help you with your efforts to make your school safe for students, staff and the public

Safety Management by Committee?

Looks like a contradiction in terms, doesn't it? Who really believes that a committee can be an effective "manager"? It probably can't; but it can be an invaluable component in the safety management program, if it is organized and operated on the basis of key principles.

Principle #1: Management has to get its act together before even thinking of establishing a safety committee. First determine if your safety management program measures up to Principles 2-7.

Principle #2: Top management, that is, the Board of Education and the Superintendent, must be actively supportive of the committee. That requires Board Policy and Administrative Regulations that define safety policy and establish actions and assign responsibility for those actions.

Principle #3: A single manager, reporting directly to the Superintendent, is identified as the Risk Manager. Her/his duties and authority are clearly specified.

Principle #4: Safety policy and regulations clearly address the need to correct behavioral causes of injuries as well as environmental causes.

Principle #5: Safety is "on the agenda" for all management meetings and for all staff meetings. Injury data and results of accident investigations are addressed.

Some basic functions that can be built into your charge to the committee:

Principle #6: A formal inspection program, which identifies hazards and leads to corrections, is alive and well.

Principle #7: Accident investigation procedures identify behavioral as well as environmental causes of accidents. More often than not, the "root cause" of an accident is an action or inaction by an individual which creates or augments the physical hazard.

A frank evaluation of your safety management program based on these principles will tell you whether you should even think of forming a safety committee. If your program falls short, make it a priority to address the shortcomings. An active safety program run by management sends the right message when you are ready to start a safety committee.

Safety committees can be invaluable by providing a forum for active participation of staff members. To be successful, a committee must have a defined purpose and structure, and the active support and involvement of top management.

Take the time to carefully consider what you want the committee to do and how you want it to be organized and staffed. Develop a clear policy or administrative regulation covering the scope of committee activity, extent of its authority, procedures for meetings and membership.

Visit our Website at www.nysgroup491.com

Email: info@nysgroup491.com

Program Administrator: Professional Underwriters, 1-800-833-8822



1. Discuss safety policies and recommend their adoption by management.
2. Discover unsafe conditions and practices and determine their remedies.
3. Teach safety to the committee members, who in turn will promote and teach safety to other staff members.
4. Stimulate and maintain the interest of managers as well as other employees and keep them informed on safety issues.
5. Make safety activities an integral part of operating policies and methods and a function of operation.
6. Discuss accident problems and preventive measures.
7. Help management evaluate safety suggestions.

Membership of the Safety Committee:

The committee should have at least five and less than 15 members, depending on the size of your organization and the number of major locations. All major departments should be represented, especially buildings and grounds. Management may need to chair the first meeting, but the permanent chair should be elected by the committee. The Risk Manager (safety director) should act as key advisor to the committee, providing support in agenda development, communications and data on accidents. The buildings and grounds superintendent should not serve as chairman or safety director, for the reason that he/she has power to change physical hazards, but no power to change behaviors of the largest group of staff members.

In the call for volunteers to serve on the safety committee, staff should be encouraged to nominate candidates who are receptive to new ideas, familiar with work processes, interested in safety and health issues and able to express their

ideas. They should be willing to compromise when necessary, be respected by their co-workers and willing to take the time to attend meetings and work on projects.

Appointments to the committee should be staggered so that a complete turnover of the members does not occur at the same time.

Training the committee:

If you want the committee to be successful, make sure that it has the training it needs to do its job. The first bit of training is to clarify its objectives and structure. Then, further training might include:

1. How to train others
2. How to conduct an inspection
3. How to write a monthly report
4. How to interpret injury data
5. How to investigate an accident

Sample committee meeting agenda:

1. Call to Order at the appointed time
2. Roll Call by the Secretary
3. Introductions
4. Minutes of previous meeting*
5. Unfinished business*
6. Review of accidents and statistics
7. Safety education
8. Inspections and recommendations
9. Posters
10. New business
11. Adjournment

*Make sure this includes reports of follow-up actions taken to correct hazards or unsafe behaviors identified at previous meetings.