



Project UNITE: Four Integrated Systems for School Violence Prevention

Course Length: 16 hours

Intended Audience: This course is designed for multidisciplinary school safety teams to attend together as a team. Ideally, teams should include one or more school administrator, school resource officer, and school mental health professional, and may also include other law enforcement or school safety professionals working in a school or school district, a school nurse, and and/or an educator or coach. At a minimum, a school administrator and school resource officer should attend the same class together.

Course Description: According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), a comprehensive and integrated approach to school safety addresses five components of planning: prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. *Project Unite: Four Integrated Systems for School Violence Prevention* focuses on the **prevention** of violence (i.e., the actions school and law enforcement officials can take to decrease the likelihood violence will occur).

The key components, or systems, of *Project Unite* are: (1) positive school culture and climate, (2) bystander reporting and response, (3) information sharing, and (4) behavioral threat and suicide assessment and management. *Project Unite* provides step-by-step guidance for implementing each component using a comprehensive approach informed by federal recommendations, research, and community policing principles. Schools can adapt implementation of these components to address their unique needs and resources, and students' age and developmental levels.

The multidisciplinary school safety team should lead this effort, and *Project Unite* shares information on the SARA Model for problem-solving (e.g., Scan, Analyze, Respond, and Assess) to help teams with this work. The SARA Model framework can be applied to each component of school violence prevention to help teams gather data on relevant violence prevention issues (e.g., climate, threats), analyze the data to identify patterns, respond to data-identified needs, and assess the impact of the response (e.g., programs, policies).

This training provides an overview of *Project Unite*, instruction on each key violence prevention system, and best practices for implementation. Modules include group discussion and team exercises to assist multidisciplinary school safety teams as they assess their current school safety systems and identify gaps and areas for improvement. Time is allotted for school safety teams to develop a violence prevention action plan in support of safety for their school.

Upon completion of this course, multidisciplinary school safety teams will possess knowledge to implement violence prevention initiatives using a systems approach and be equipped with an actionable plan and next steps for strengthening their own school's safety. Participants will also

receive a participant manual containing tools and resources to assist in planning and implementation efforts.

Course Overview: NASRO's Project Unite Course is designed to equip multidisciplinary school safety teams with an understanding of the key components of school violence prevention and how to implement them in integrated manner using research, federal recommendations, and best practices.

Course Objectives:

- Identify the key systems of violence prevention and their importance for school safety.
- Describe the multidisciplinary school safety team and its' roles and functions.
- Outline the steps of the SARA Model and how they can be applied in school safety planning.
- Summarize essential elements of each key system of violence prevention.
- Explain best practices for implementing each violence prevention system.

Teaching Methodology/Course Format: This course uses a combination of classroom instruction, interactive learning, PowerPoint presentations, videos, and practical scenarios. Students will be provided with a Project Unite Participant Manual containing tools and resources for use by multidisciplinary school safety teams.

Method of Evaluation: Successful completion of the course includes a written examination designed to measure knowledge gained. Students must pass the examination with a score of 70% or higher in order to receive a NASRO certificate.

Remediation Process: Attendees scoring below 70% will be given 14 days to complete remediation. Remediation will consist of reviewing material missed on the written exam and providing the course instructor with at least one written paragraph on each incorrect test question. The instructor will review the response and assign a PASS/ NOT PASS for the participant and notify the NASRO office of the determination. No extensions will be given. It will be the responsibly of the attendee to ensure course credit is received within the 14-days.

Attendance Policy: Due to the teamwork aspects of the training, attendees will be allowed to miss no more than 1 hour of the total course time. This requires pre-approval from the course instructor and must be an unavoidable absence (such as a court appearance).

Course Outline:

1. Introduction and Overview of Project Unite

Module Overview: This module establishes the rationale for school violence prevention efforts and the fundamental principles necessary to undergird this work. The core components of school violence prevention are introduced, readiness for implementation is discussed, and the SARA Model for application to school safety planning is presented.

Learning Objectives:

- Name the keys systems of Project Unite
- Describe the multidisciplinary school safety team members, roles, and functions.
- Explain the steps of the SARA model and how they can be applied in school safety planning.
- Recognize the dimensions of implementation readiness.

2. The Foundation of Violence Prevention – Culture & Climate

Module Overview: This module defines school culture and school climate, emphasizes how they are foundational to school safety, and provides characteristics of a positive school culture and climate. Best practices for creating and sustaining a positive school culture and climate are discussed.

Learning Objectives:

- Define and differentiate school culture and climate.
- Describe the characteristics of a positive school culture and climate and how they influence school safety.
- Name four best practices for enhancing school culture and climate.

3: Bystander Reporting & Response

Module Overview: Having a bystander reporting and response system is crucial for school safety, and it must be used, monitored, and effective in responding to reports. This module describes essential elements of a bystander reporting system and best practices for ensuring it is effective.

Learning Objectives:

- Summarize bystander reporting and response and why it is important for school safety.
- State the essential elements of a bystander reporting system.
- Explain best practices for bystander reporting and response systems.

4: Information Sharing

Module Overview: In past violent school attacks, information about an individual often was known yet information was not successfully shared and/or disseminated so that violence was prevented. This module provides guidance on building an information system that appropriately shares information with those who need it to prevent school violence through interventions and supports.

Learning Objectives:

- Review information sharing and why it is critical to school safety.
- Identify essential elements of successful information sharing systems.
- List four best practices for information sharing.

5: Behavioral Threat and Suicidality Assessment & Management

Module Overview: Behavioral threat assessment enables the multidisciplinary school safety team to appropriately respond to identified or reported concerns that warrant investigation and assessment to evaluate risk of violence a student or other individual may pose to school safety. When behavioral risk is identified, interventions, supports, and monitoring must be provided. In this module, the behavioral threat assessment and management process is explained, and essential elements and best practice considerations for behavioral threat assessment and management systems are discussed. Similarly, students who present a risk of suicidality also require assessment and management to ensure their safety and well-being, and best practices for addressing suicide risk are covered.

Learner Objectives:

- Define behavioral threat assessment and management.
- Summarize best practices for behavioral threat assessment and management.
- Explain best practices for suicide assessment and management.

Project UNITE Training Agenda

Day One

8:00 – 8:45 am	Welcome & Introductions
8:45 – 11:00 am	Overview of Project Unite: Four Key Systems of School Violence Prevention
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Culture & Climate
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Culture & Climate, continued
2:00 – 4:00 pm	Bystander Reporting & Response
4:00 – 5:00 pm	School Safety Action Planning

Day Two

8:00 – 8:30 am	Preliminary Investigative Checklist: Imminent Threat of School Violence
8:30 – 10:00 am	Information Sharing
10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Behavioral Threat Assessment & Management
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 – 1:45 pm	Suicide Risk Assessment & Management
1:45 – 2:30 pm	Course Review
2:30 – 3:30 pm	School Safety Action Planning
3:30 – 4:30 pm	Post-Test, Course Evaluation, and Closing

Agenda times are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.