

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: A Multidisciplinary Approach on School Rampage Violence:

Perspectives from Law Enforcement, A Legislator, and School Administrators

STUDENT: Julie Kay Lauck

DEGREE: Doctor of Education

COLLEGE: School of Education

DATE: May 2016

PAGES: 113

This qualitative study examined specific perspectives of school rampage violence from law enforcement, a legislator, and school administrators. School violence is not a new phenomenon, nor is it prevalent as a major cause of death to youth. However, one incident of school rampage violence is one too many. This study focused on three research questions aimed to categorize common characteristics of students who show a propensity toward violence, compare similarities and differences of perspectives of why violence occurs, and to examine effective approaches for averting future incidents of school rampage violence. The three categories of participants were interviewed, and their responses were coded to find emerging themes and categories. This study found that family dysfunction is a common characteristic among students with indications of school violence. Additionally, this study found that all three participant groups believe early identification and building relationships are important factors in preventing school violence. Further, it was noted that law enforcement found a greater need for communication among various agencies than did school administrators or the legislator. A significant finding of this study was that school administrators need to empower all

staff to avert incidents of school rampage violence. It is recommended that school leaders must be willing to surrender their level of authority when it comes to formally empowering all staff to initiate safety drills, take precautionary actions, and report unusual or suspicious behavior in their students. This will result in all staff realizing they should take the initiative to be the first line of defense in an emergency.