



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Press Release

District Attorney Morrissey hosts training on Helping students who come to school impaired

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Almost 60 school administrators, nurses, teachers and police officers from 23 communities attended a full-day "Drug Impairment Training for Educational Professionals" seminar provided by Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey Jan. 28, 2014.

"When a student is running into problems with drugs, you need to know what you are dealing with," District Attorney Morrissey said after the training, which drew educators and police professionals from across Norfolk County. "Different drugs provide different forms of intoxication and different symptoms. Speech patterns, statements, coordination, pupil dilation. And they may require different intervention by school officials."



The training was held in amphitheater space donated by the Bank of Canton at their headquarters. The trainers were Jack E. Richman, OD, retired Nahant police Sgt. Don Decker and Middleboro Police Sgt. Deborah Batista.



"Connecting drug-involved students with the services they need has to start with establishing and documenting what is really happening," DA Morrissey said. "Whatever we can do to help schools stem destructive behavior – before it becomes a problem for the courts and my office – I'm all for it."



Early intervention also has a long-term impact, Sgt. Decker said. "If you teach the lesson at a young age, hopefully it will carry over."

Morrissey called the training a natural step in his work to improve school safety and security across the Norfolk District, which has included grants for security upgrades and several other seminars. "It is another layer of school security. The environment in a school is most stable when students aren't abusing illegal drugs, and when students who have prescribed substances are taking what they should."

Earlier this month, Morrissey provided training to 40 Norfolk County educators on established guidelines for risk-assessment when a student is re-entering a school population after a substance abuse or mental health intervention. "These are important issues for individual students and school populations as a whole," Morrissey said. "I appreciate the partnership of so many towns and their shared dedication to safe schools."