



Valley Grove School District

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KEVIN M. BRIGGS Superintendent

August 29, 2018

Dear Parents & Guardians:

As you all know, school safety and security has been the center of discussions around the county, state, and nation in recent months. Schools across the country are evaluating procedures and practices in place for violent events related to violent or armed intruders.

In an effort to make sure our schools are using an updated and research based program in these circumstances, the Valley Grove School District has adopted the **ALICE** program. Schools are realizing that the traditional "lockdown" doesn't fit every situation or scenario that happens related to violent intruders. The **ALICE** program is designed to train our school community to evaluate the situation and make the best decisions they can with the information that is available. Last spring, the Valley Grove School District sent two of our administrators with one of our Sugar creek Borough Police officers to a two day training to certify them in providing **ALICE** training to our schools.

During our August 21, 2018, in-service day, we began training our teachers and aides on the **ALICE** principles. Moving forward, we will be working in building level teams to update our Critical Incident Plans to reflect our new training and understanding of best practice. A parent night will be scheduled this fall to explain the program prior to any training with students. Students will receive age appropriate training and education related to the practices that the district will be using during any such violent event.


The safety and security of students is our highest priority, and we will continue to evaluate all aspects of school safety. If you would like more information on the **ALICE** program, you can visit the program website at <https://www.alicetraining.com/>

Our local **ALICE** training team includes:

- Kelly Hart, Mid-Level Principal
- Jacob Saullo, Elementary Principal
- Lt. Ryan Ashbaugh, Sugar creek Borough Police

Please feel free to contact us with any questions as we move through the process. More information will be sent home regarding any scheduled parent nights or trainings.

Thank you,


Kevin M. Briggs
Superintendent

Mission Statement

The mission of the Valley Grove School District in partnership with the community is to provide the opportunity for each student to obtain a comprehensive and quality education.

AN EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITY AGENCY



Alert
Lockdown
Inform
Counter
Evacuate

K-12 SCHOOLS



CASE STUDY

A Lockdown-Only Response to an Active Shooter in Schools
does not meet Federal or State Recommendations

alicetraining.com



Introduction



Purpose

The purpose of this case study is to research Federal and State agencies recommendations on how schools may best respond during an active shooter event.

SCHOOLS: A DUTY TO PROTECT

Since Jefferson founded public education for the citizens of the United States, schools have been charged with the safety of children in their care - a *duty to protect*. Teachers and administrators have a responsibility to anticipate potential dangers and to take precautions to protect their students from those dangers.

ALICE: THE NEW STANDARD OF CARE

If a school district fails its *duty to protect* students from injury and an appropriate *standard of care* was not used, the district can be found negligent. The *standard of care* is not a statute or regulation that can be pointed to and expounded upon. The *standard of care* is a concept that is argued in courtrooms requiring school districts to answer questions like:

1. *Did you comply with federal & state recommendations?*
2. *Is your policy consistent with comparable schools?*
3. *Did you comply with your own stated policy?*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALICE: THE NEW STANDARD OF CARE

The purpose of this case study is to research federal and state agencies recommendations on how schools may best respond during an active shooter event.

Historically, these agencies have recommended a lockdown-only approach that includes students hiding under desks or against walls. Some of these techniques originated during the cold-war as a method of protection from a nuclear threat. As ridiculous as this now seems, it was accepted in the era.

Today, these agencies (including the US Department of Education) have spent considerable resources researching active shooting events. Their findings have resulted in a change in guidance - a movement away from the cold war era techniques typically used in a lockdown-only approach. ALICE protocols are used almost exclusively in all new guidance.

Following current federal and state recommendations is a major step in limiting a school district's liability by demonstrating they have met today's standard of care.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Document Title

Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans (June 2013 edition)

Case Study Findings

In its 2007 publication, The US Department of Education's guidance for active shooter response was limited to lockdown. The 2013 edition expands the guidance to include multiple options that go beyond lockdown including Run, Hide or Fight. It also recognizes that staff and students may have to use more than one option and that the decision to do so should be made using their own judgment.

Background

On June 18, 2013, Vice President Biden released new guidelines for school safety that align and build upon years of emergency planning work by the Federal government. This guide incorporates lessons learned from recent incidents, and responds to the needs and concerns voiced by stakeholders following the recent shootings in Newtown, CT.

Agencies Issuing Guidance

- U.S. Department of Education (US Dept of Ed)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)
- U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

LOCKDOWN IS NO LONGER ENOUGH

"There are three basic options: run, hide, or fight. You can run away from the shooter, seek a secure place where you can hide and/or deny the shooter access, or incapacitate the shooter to survive and protect others from harm." [Page 63]

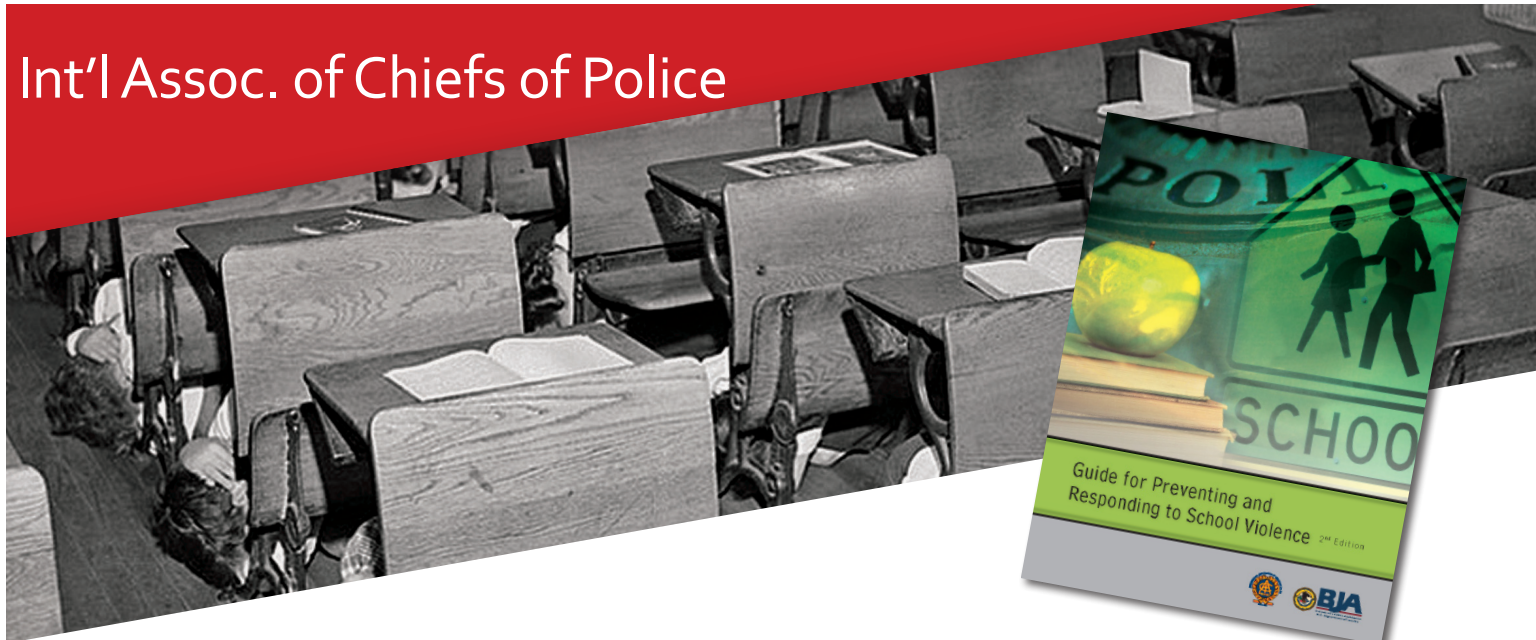
"If running is not a safe option, hide in as safe a place as possible. Students and staff should be trained to hide in a location where the walls might be thicker and have fewer windows. In addition: Hide along the wall closest to the exit but out of the view from the hallway (allowing for an ambush of the shooter and for possible escape if the shooter enters the room)." [Page 65]

MULTIPLE RESPONSE OPTIONS NEEDED

"As the situation develops, it is possible that students and staff will need to use more than one option." [Page 64]

THOSE IN HARM'S WAY SHOULD MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS

"While they should follow the plan and any instructions given during an incident, often they will have to rely on their own judgment to decide which option will best protect lives." [Page 64]



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF CHIEFS OF POLICE (IACP)

Document Title

Guide for Preventing & Responding to School Violence (2009)

Case Study Findings

In its 1st edition, the IACP guidance for active shooter response was limited to lockdown. The most current edition expands the guidance to include multiple options that go beyond lockdown including evacuation and active resistance. It also contemplates the absence of adult direction that sometimes unfortunately happens during an active shooter event.

Background

Founded in 1893, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) is the world's oldest and largest association of law enforcement executives, representing over 22,000 members in 100 countries. The document presents strategies and approaches for members of school communities to consider when creating safer learning environments.

Agencies Issuing Guidance

- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
- Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
- US Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Bureau of Justice Statistics
- Office of Juvenile Justices and Delinquency Prevention

LOCKDOWN IS NO LONGER ENOUGH

"Active resistance is fighting back with any objects of opportunity, such as chairs, desk, and books. Active resistance is a last resort and should only be used if potential victims are trapped in a room with an active shooter, there are already victims, and all other personal survival recommendations are no longer an option. There have been cases where active resistance has been successfully used, such as a shooting in Springfield, Oregon." [Page 24]

THOSE IN HARM'S WAY SHOULD MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS

"Teachers should make decision about lockdown or evacuation on their own only in life-threatening situations, as specified in the school crisis management plan." [Page 24]

"In the absence of adult direction, decide where it is safest to be and remain there." [Page 25]

OUR MISSION IS TO SAVE LIVES. PERIOD!

The ALICE Training Institute is changing how schools, universities, places of worship, hospitals, and businesses respond to armed intruders. ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) is a set of proactive strategies that increase chances of survival during an armed intruder event. While no one can guarantee no casualties or injuries, we can guarantee that passing on knowledge will empower people with options of survival.

U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL -ERIC HOLDER

On October 21, 2013, the U.S. Attorney General, Eric Holder, told leaders at the 120th Annual International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference that new strategies and a more aggressive response needs to be taken as the number of active shooter incidents continues to rise.

Holder went on to say, "Since 2009, the annual average of active shooter incidents during the previous eight years has tripled, and so far in 2013, there have been 12 such situations that officers have responded to. In the last four years, there has been a nearly 150 percent increase in the number of people shot and killed in connection with active shooter incidents."

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- US Attorney General Eric Holder 10/21/2013



Alert
Lockdown
Inform
Counter
Evacuate

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Thank you for your interest in ALICE.

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