

**The Bill Blackwood  
Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas**

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**Stopping the Threat of Terrorism  
In Schools**

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**An Administrative Research Paper  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
Required for Graduation from the  
Leadership Command College**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Stopping the threat of terrorism in schools is a scenario-based training plan that is implemented by local law enforcement and independent school districts to ensure the safety of the community and its children. This topic is relevant to law enforcement due to the increasing violence that has been occurring within schools, where once havens of secure learning have turned into battlefields. Local law enforcement agencies must be responsible in educating school faculty, administrators, and the community to react properly in order to save lives.

The purpose of the research is for law enforcement administrators and school officials to work together and plan to prevent an active shooter/terrorist incident through proactive training techniques that are within the public view. The research will prove that school districts who train are better prepared to meet the threat and are more able keep the threat from happening.

Methods of research were done based upon the incident at Beslan, Russia and other materials from David Grossman, a well-noted researcher in the effects of combat stress and terrorism. Several webpage periodicals were used to validate theories of active shooter/terrorists. A survey was conducted from different types of agencies and areas throughout the state to show that while progress has been made, schools are still vulnerable. Interviews from diverse agencies will also validate the survey.

The research will benefit both law enforcement and independent school districts by coming together to conduct scenario-based training, which will greatly enhance the effectiveness of the security of the schools by adopting a plan that fits the needs of the community and safeguarding the future.

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## INTRODUCTION

The problem or issue to be examined considers whether or not communities have learned the lessons since September 11, 2001 and whether or not they are any more prepared since that time. Since that fateful day, it appears society has turned its back, stuck its head in the sand, and now whole communities are in denial that a terrorist attack could happen, either due to location or because it has not happened since 2001. While steps have been made in an effort to protect schools, there is still much that needs to be done in order to accomplish complete security for the protection of children and those who teach.

The relevance of this study is to adopt techniques for counterterrorism. Doing so will enable law enforcement to save lives, reduce threats to children and schools, and pool the resources of the community to work together: this research will make it easier to understand, organize, and prepare in order to thwart a terrorist attack or any other type of active shooter incident. Using the lessons learned at the Beslan, Russia Middle School in September of 2004, where over 1,000 people were taken hostage for three days, law enforcement agencies have to educate and assist independent school districts throughout the nation to prepare for an event such as this.

The purpose of this research is to develop and propose Rapid Response Training in a realistic setting, while, at the same time, involving school faculty members, parents, the media, and other first responders. During this process, members of the institutions must plan and organize to meet and stop the threat with tactics that are easy for the small city or town or county agency to comprehend and put into practical use. The research question to be examined focuses on whether or not the community is

ready and willing to make a commitment to conduct this type of training or if it will continue to be in denial, thus becoming more complacent and possibly a more vulnerable target for terrorist to hit, whether the terrorist be a lone gunman wielding one gun or 30 armed men with explosives who are highly trained. All one has to do to see the vulnerability of schools is to look at the number of school attacks by a single gunman since the attack at Columbine High School. Attacks have been on the increase all across the country; according to Wikipedia-School Shootings (2008) (Appendix A), records of school shootings since 1966 have included institutions of higher education such as the tower massacre at the University of Texas in Austin, Texas, and the Virginia Tech University massacre in Blacksburg, Virginia in 2007. Every time there is an attack, this vulnerability is telegraphed to terrorist organizations.

The intended method of inquiry includes: a review of books, military manuals, articles from the Internet, and three different interviews of officers from different regions throughout the state. A survey of 24 different agencies from around the state was also conducted. The anticipated findings of the research are that most law enforcement agencies are able to conduct the training, and it can be done successfully, but it will take a cooperative, coordinated effort from independent school district supervisors, local law enforcement administrators, and other first responders such as fire, rescue, and paramedics. Cooperating agencies will need to make continuous improvements in training to create an overall plan in case it ever needed to be called on for an actual incident.

The field of law enforcement will benefit from the research or be influenced by the conclusions because it will have the training to respond in a timely manner if and

when it is needed. The research and training will help law enforcement build a rapport and trust within the community. School administrators would be prepared to react properly for the safety of their students and staff because a plan would be in place, practiced, and based on a real time scenarios, allowing the school to save lives when the situation actually happens. Other first responding agencies will benefit from having a plan and implementing training. The community as a whole will benefit because they will come to together to prepare and work as a team. A community's worst nightmare is an attack on children; therefore, it is imperative that communities, all across the nation, prepare because the community that is not prepared is the one that will be devastated by an attack. Research will reveal how the community, especially law enforcement agencies, should handle the media. Like it or not, the media is something that law enforcement agencies have to deal with, and how it is handled will make it a positive or negative reflection of the entire community.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Giduck (2005) examined an attack in 2004, where a group of Chechnya terrorists crossed the border into Beslan, Ossetia, Russia and took an entire middle school of 1,181 people hostage. The school was held for three days, and before the siege was over, a reported 700 people were wounded and 338 people had died, including 172 children. Eleven men from the Vypel and Alpha teams, the Russia Counter-Terrorism units, also gave their lives during the assault to save the people inside the Beslan School. During this time, female hostages were sexually assaulted, and young men were taken to the second floor and executed-their bodies were thrown into an empty lot below and left to rot. The Russian authorities failed to make adequate and timely

decisions due to a lack of leadership, which resulted in more loss of life. During the actual assault, the hostages who barricaded inside were used as human shields while the terrorists fired upon the soldiers who attempted a rescue. The media was detrimental to the entire operation, often advancing the terrorists' cause by referring to them as freedom fighters and separatists.

As a nation, it would be prudent to be prepared and not deny the warnings of that historic day of September 11, 2004. According to Remsburg (2007), who quoted Grossman, "Osama bin Laden has promised that what has happened in Russia will happen to us many times over" (The Terrorist's Tactical Model section, para 4). Ostensibly, this has made schools, the children, the future, and the American way of life a hard target. Research has shown that many American schools and the Department of Education are still in denial, refusing to admit that an incident like Beslan can happen in America (Giduck, 2005; Remsburg, 2007).

In a personal communication from Paul Fennewald, a 23-year veteran of the FBI and the homeland security coordinator for the state of Missouri, to Colonel Dave Grossman, Fennewald informed Colonel Grossman that he was to give a short lecture for the U.S. Department of Education during their seminar for "Emergency Management for Schools Training." Fennewald attempted to present a slide show that included a quote from Colonel Grossman mentioning the incident at Beslan. According to Fennewald, the morning before he was to make his presentation, he was told not to use the quote or mention what had occurred at Beslan by the director of emergency response and technical assistance center, U.S. Department of Education. The director of emergency response and technical assistance center cited that it would cause too

much emotional distress for participants, and it was their policy to not talk about or mention Beslan in any of their seminars. As Fennewald later put it, the inability for the educational community on the national level to engage in meaningful dialogue on the lessons learned at Beslan can only ensure that the same mistakes will be made here in the U.S. (P. Fennewald, personal communication, July 30, 2007).

A review of military manuals, including the Marine Corp Reference Publication (MCRP) 3-02E of what terrorism is and citing the definition of terrorism and identifying types of terrorism, will be looked at, with an emphasis on hostage taking. The U.S. Marine Corp MCRP (3-02E) defines terrorism as “the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological” (p.1-1). The most common type of terrorism is bombing, which is followed by kidnapping and hostage taking; after this, there are armed attacks and assassinations, arsons and firebombings, hijackings and skyjackings, and then miscellaneous types of terrorist incidents. The type of terrorist incident may be separate or a combination of the different types. Terrorists use kidnapping and hostage taking to establish a bargaining position and elicit publicity. This provokes a confrontation with authorities; it is an overt act designed to hold media attention. Law enforcement officers must be resolute in the fact that the terrorists do not intend to complete their mission or quest alive. Most active shooter incidents that have occurred in the U.S. have resulted in the shooter committing suicide, whether it is self-induced or suicide by cop, where the shooter making a standoff refuses to surrender and provokes the officer.

Other definitions include the ALERRT 3.1 manual (2007), where The National

Tactical Officers Association defines an active shooter as: One or more subjects who participate in a random or systematic shooting spree, demonstrating their intent to continuously harm others. The overriding objective appears to be that of mass murder rather than criminal conduct such as robbery, kidnapping, etc. However, David Grossman defined terrorism “as a successful attack is one we are not ready for” (Remsburg, 2007, Pt 1, para 2). The key elements within these definitions are violence, fear, and intimidation.

With this in mind, if an incident should occur within a community, it is imperative that every law enforcement officer within each jurisdiction be trained in techniques that are pro-active and with a mindset to have officers move toward the sound of gunfire tactically. Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) is a program designed to train officers to help solve this training issue. Giduck (2005) stated that the incident at Columbine caused law enforcement agencies to change tactics because officers need to move in the direction of gunfire in active shooter scenarios. However, most agencies across the U.S. have never contemplated a situation where officers are facing well-trained terrorists, in fortified positions, with hostages held in various locations. ALERRT 3.1 (2007) explained that a challenge of responding to a homicide-in-progress is that it requires physical and mental preparation. The immediate actions of the first responder will dictate who lives and who dies; therefore, the reactionary skills to respond properly to an active shooter situation must be learned, coordinated, and practiced to ensure a correct response.

After reviewing webpages and periodicals by author Charles Remsburg, who not only identified the problem but also identified solutions that, if placed into action through

cooperation and coordination of law enforcement agencies (LEA's) and independent school districts (ISD's), will enhance school safety. The solutions can be validated and corroborated by Giduck (2005). Buhrmaster's (2007) showed an example of a community conducting an exercise that involved a school where the police and other first responders worked through a scenario in order to evaluate and plan for a situation that they hope will never occur. Because of this, the community is more prepared than other communities throughout the nation.

Cooperation through local districts and jurisdictions is the cornerstone for the Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security, proving that working together can make a safer nation. Federal government entities are powerless at the time of an incident and can only assist after the fact. Solutions will be made into a recommendation that will hopefully culminate into a new cooperative effort for independent school district's and law enforcement's agencies within their perspective jurisdictions.

Recommendations through this research will be made to enhance security through training that makes sense to the common patrol officer, the police administrator, the school supervisor, the student body, and members of the community in order to preserve life without incurring a lot of cost. Interviews were conducted with a school resource officer, an officer from a mid size city who has the responsibility of a school cluster, and a former police chief. The police chief, who is now an assistant chief, set up a program that was proactive within the school where he was the top administrator. An interview was conducted with a patrol lieutenant from a large city whose agency conducts rehearsals on a regular basis.

Research shows the necessary training, tactics, and equipment the individual patrol officer will need to employ based on the ALERRT 3.1(2007) model, and if employed correctly, it can be successful in saving lives. The research also showed the model of one town that conducted a scenario exercise that taught first responders and school faculty valuable lessons that a jurisdiction could face if the threat of an active shooter became real (Burhrmaster, 2007). Due to his expertise, many references will be made to Colonel Dave Grossman through various authors, as already noted, but Colonel Grossman's (2004) publication will illustrate the importance of debriefing from a scene where a school has paid the ultimate price from an active shooter incident. Finally, the research will show documented evidence regarding the need for the recommended training in order to comply with the Department of Homeland Security's directive for a vision of the overall plan, and how the nation can no longer afford for it to be ignored anywhere within the United States.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The research conducted will examine and consider law enforcement agencies and independent school districts that are cooperating enough to prevent an active shooter/terrorist incident. While many improvements have been made regarding protocols and plans, this research hypothesizes that law enforcement agencies have a difficult time in reaching out to school administrators and school boards to make recommendations and help oversee the overall security for the school.

Other research conducted will also include three unstructured interviews of law enforcement officers from different parts of the state of Texas with diverse assignments. The officers include a school resource officer of a cluster of elementary schools and one

middle school of Amarillo, a mid size city in the Panhandle; a former Chief of Police of a small town agency who is currently assigned as an Assistant Chief of Police of another small agency; and a lieutenant of a patrol division of a large city in the Dallas/Ft Worth metroplex. Each of the interviews was unique in perspective and confirmed similar problems that exist, but which can be overcome through a cooperative effort between law enforcement and school administrations.

A survey of nine questions to 24 participants will be conducted in October 2007. The result of the survey is intended to show where different law enforcement agencies stood in regards to a training program within their jurisdiction and to compare it with other agencies that lack training and an effective secure program.

The field of law enforcement will benefit greatly due to the fact it will make children and communities more secure. Officers working with local school districts will begin to build rapport, which will set good examples for young people, while a police presence within the school will enhance the overall security in schools.

## **FINDINGS**

Make no mistake about it, whether the attack comes from a single person like Seung-Hui Cho at Virginia Tech University on April 16, 2007, a pair of individuals such as Harris and Klebold at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999, or a group of 30 Chechnyan Al Queda terrorist members the result is the same: the mass murder of children which induces fear into society and is difficult for some to reason through or understand. According to Armellino (2007), many agencies in the U.S. still require officers to respond to an armed school invasion as if a bank robber had gone into a school while fleeing pursuing police officers. A perimeter is established and negotiators

are contacted to speak to the suspects if there are no shots being fired. Armellino (2007) continued to describe that bank robbers who steal money are good candidates for trained negotiators; however, homicidal and suicidal predators aimed at killing children for a cause and before killing themselves should not be afforded the time to talk to anyone. An active shooter situation will usually be random, and the scene can die down and then erupt violently again and again. The suspect(s) must be neutralized at the earliest opportunity, whether the threat to children is domestic or an international terrorist based one. Armellino (2007) stated, "The key to saving lives is early police contact. Individual law enforcement agency policy must be established to allow pursuit and contact with the threat at the earliest possible opportunity" (para 3).

Understanding the mindset of a person who commits themselves to an act of such violence goes through phases; recognizing these phases can help teachers and law enforcement to identify an active shooter or terrorist group before the atrocity occurs. According to Marcou (2008), the person contemplating the act will first go through a fantasy stage, where the shooter will imagine themselves in the act, then the headlines, and may even draw pictures and tell others about the plans. Next is the planning stage, where the shooter will decide who, what, when, and where. The person will plan what type of weapons and, more than likely, will have written down notes or a list of items needed in the assault. The shooter will go through a preparation stage and will reconnoiter the chosen target and may prepare improvised explosive devices. The shooter will use any means available to acquire what the needs are, even if it means committing other criminal acts.

When all is complete, the shooter will be in the approach stage, a very

dangerous time due to the decision to kill. Finally, there is an implementation stage where the shooter has entered the target and will shoot indiscriminately until running out of ammunition, or is killed by an act of suicide, or by someone who displays an effective and efficient act of courage. Marcou (2008) pointed out that in the four stages prior to the implementation stage; the killer can be stopped without bloodshed and violence. In order to stop someone from carrying out such a plan, it takes those who know and are involved with the person, such as parents, teachers, friends and associates, and law enforcement to recognize warning signs and to do something proactive to prevent a tragic event from becoming a reality (Marcou, 2008).

Taking a look at the nation's independent school districts as a whole, it is apparent schools, much less other public forums, such as churches and malls, are unaware and not prepared. One only has to follow the headlines to see the frequency of events that involve an active shooter. Remsburg (2007, Pt 1) pointed out that in the U.S., the value on human life is much higher and cited Colonel Grossman as stating, "Terrorists see this effort as an attempt to defile our nation by leaving it stunned to its soul" (Why Schools? Two Reasons section, para 1). Remsburg (2007) reported that this is a law enforcement problem, due to the military not being able to assist, which makes it harder to prepare. Police agencies deal with acts of a criminal nature. Terrorism is closely associated as an act of war but, because of the law, the military is not able to be involved in domestic law enforcement.

Rensburg (2007, Pt1) quoted Grossman as saying: "the U.S. is the one nation in the world where the military is not the first line of defense against domestic terrorist attacks" (Why Schools? Two Reasons section, para 3). Due to the Posse Comitatus

Act of 1878, the law limits the military from being used as law enforcement; therefore, law enforcement takes the responsibility of going in, while in most other nations, the police wait for the military to intervene. This puts an ever-increasing strain on agencies with limited budget resources, which try to stretch every dollar. This places a burden for independent school districts not to be in denial as they are prone to be. The danger is, school personnel are not mentally and physically prepared, so most school faculty members are not prepared for handling a single active shooter. School faculty and administrators are meant to care and nurture, and do not want to deal with the nature of this subject, which makes the crisis all the more shocking each time it happens (Remsburg, 2007).

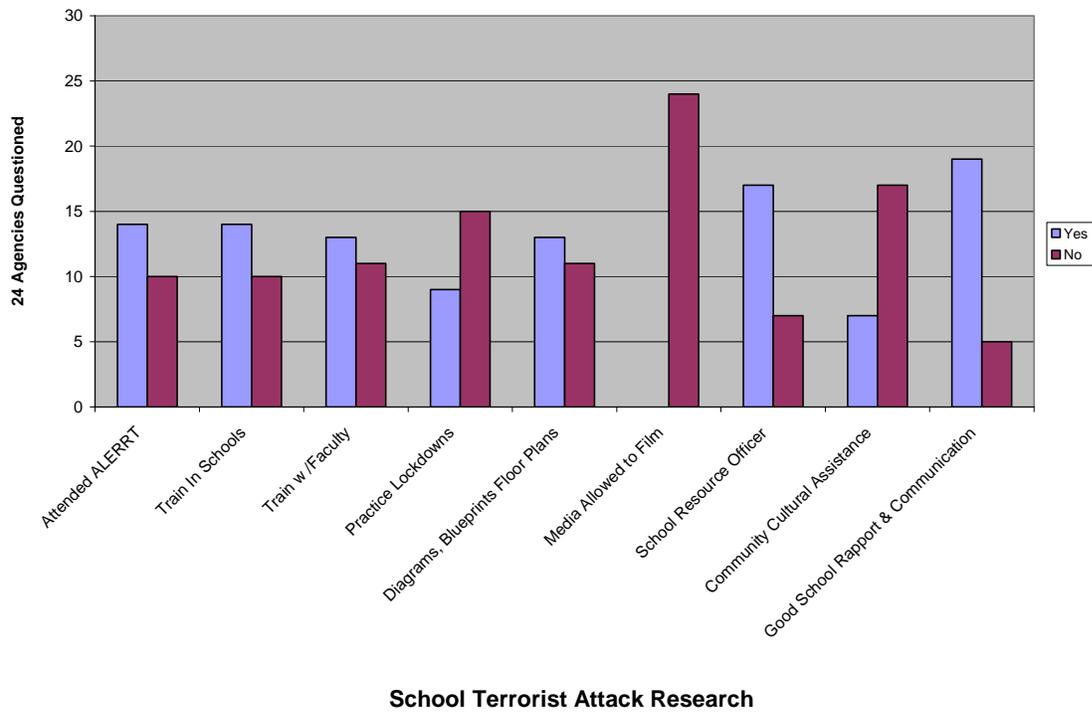
Giduck (2005) believes responsibility to children starts at home, and the responsibility of being prepared for such an event not only lies with law enforcement and military, but it is also the responsibility of every American citizen: "It is the preparation of every citizen and school employee, but most importantly, of every parent across our great nation" (p. 277). Every person has to be an integral part of the nationwide intelligence network and be ever vigilant and alert to the signs of danger to the schools and the children. Remsburg (2007), again cited Grossman, who said that U.S. schools continue to take extensive and overt measures to guard students against the threat of fire with drills, alarms, sprinkler systems, building codes, etc. However, there has not been a single child killed by fire in any American school in the last 25 years, according to Wikipedia (2008), but since 1966, more than 175 deaths have occurred from school violence by active shooters and other non-terrorist offenders. Islamic fundamentalists are believed to be plotting attacks that will claim hundreds of

child casualties in a single blow. Yet efforts to significantly harden schools as a target of violence have, for the most part, been slow, timid or nonexistent (Remsburg, 2007).

The nation's educational system from the elementary to the university level is beginning to realize the importance of tighter security, but there is a long way to go to make the nation's school systems safe. In an interview conducted with a former chief of police, who is now currently an assistant chief of another small agency, he stated how frustrating it is to try work with school boards and superintendents of a local jurisdiction. The chief explained how a superintendant claimed to have had one the safest schools around. This police administrator noticed that no one at the school carried an identifying nametag of any kind, so he asked several people of diverse race, gender, and age to go to the schools and walk through the halls talking to students and faculty members. The chief reported the people sent to do this were wearing a small camera and were not challenged or stopped at any time walking through the school. After showing the video to the superintendant, the school started implementing better habits in security and working more diligently with law enforcement.

Schools from around the state of Texas are beginning to work on the problem; however, while much has been done, there are jurisdictions and school districts that still lack training and are vulnerable to attack. A survey of 24 jurisdictions conducted October of 2007 showed that a little over 50% of officers have been through the ALERRT training program, and little more than half conducted the ALERRT training within their local school. The survey resulted in 15 of the 24 law enforcement agencies conducting lockdown drills on a regular basis, and only half of the agencies had access to floor plans and diagrams during off hours. None of the participants had any relation

with their local media, and only 17 of the schools had a School Resource Officer, but most of the agencies, 19, reported they had a good rapport with their schools. The following graph, see Figure 1, shows the results of the survey. For a list of questions and results of the survey, see appendix B.



**Figure 1.** Respondents’ answers to a survey with regards to type of training and resources utilized within an agency’s program in the community.

Remsburg (2007) began an outline for schools and law enforcement to work together to resolve and plan to make schools safer for the children. Besides eliminating the big “D,” denial, communities need to focus on deterring, detecting, delaying, and destroying. The first element is a deterrent, such as an armed police presence in a school, which can provide a strong deterrence against an attack. An armed officer, the school resource officer who is trained, is the best asset a school can have when

something is suspicious or not right. There is someone there who has the legal authority to take immediate action if necessary, to advise school faculty of legal aspects, and to prevent other crimes. Schools that do not have or are hesitant about having an armed officer should maybe consider the perspective that having an unarmed security in or around schools is both pointless and ethically derelict (Remsburg 2007). Remsburg (2007, Pt 2) quoted Grossman: “Do not give someone the responsibility for human lives and not give them the tools to do the job. You wouldn’t give a firefighter just a hat, uniform and badge, with no hose or water” (Deter section, para 3).

The second tier of prevention for an attack on a school is detection. Officers should use sound patrolling techniques, make good traffic stops, and conduct field interviews in and around school zones and neighborhoods. Officers should watch for suspicious activities, ask probing questions, and be alert for contradictions, inconsistencies, and irrationalities, including unduly nervous behavior and other indicators of deceit and guilty behavior. Remsburg (2007) stated for officers to be aware of what is inside vehicles or on subjects that may merit closer investigation. Remsburg (2007, Pt2) advised, “Watch for signs of static or mobile surveillance of potential targets. Terrorists always conduct a recon, which may involve photographing or videotaping a prospective site” (Detect section, para 3).

Giduck (2005) recommended that school officials should conduct counter-intelligent measures by taking the time and effort to check who has had access to their records through the Open Records Act. Records, such as blueprints, plans, and diagrams are public records. Every single school should take time to find out who has asked to see these records, by biannually filing a Freedom of Information or Open

Records Act request to learn who has sought information on their buildings and systems. Another topic Giduck (2005) referred to is for law enforcement to locate members of diverse cultures and backgrounds who might work with the agency as a translator and negotiator. During the survey conducted in October, only seven agencies out of the 24 had completed this important and proactive step for their community.

Remsburg (2007) explained the third act of prevention: whoever is a threat has to be delayed at the first hint of trouble. Teachers and children should have a preemptive plan and frequently rehearse the three-step lock-down model, such as sheltering children in place. This has been attempted in various school shootings, but it can also become more dangerous than protective. If that occurs, Remsburg (2007, Pt 2) listed what Grossman suggested, which was to move away from the violence, even though it tends to be mesmerizing and paralyzing. Teachers and students should move to a pre-selected secure location-some place that is secure enough to keep the criminals out until the police arrive. If necessary, they should move again if they have reason to believe the location is compromised: "Lock-down does not mean hunker down and die" (Remsburg, 2007, Delay section, para 2).

In an interview conducted with a School Resource Officer in Amarillo, Texas, information indicated that schools do conduct lockdown drills but only on a limited volunteer basis, and while there is an evacuation plan in place, it has never been rehearsed. The officer stated that faculty members complain about having to go along in conducting an exercise, due to it being time consuming and not feasible. Remsburg (2007, Pt 2) reminded of what Colonel Grossman had said, "Plans on paper mean nothing. You have to get the schools to rehearse anti-terrorist scenarios. Principals

have been fired for not doing fire drills and yet the terrorist threat these days is so much greater” (Delay section, para 4).

In contrast, an interview was conducted with a lieutenant from a large city within the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex who stated their agency had conducted an actual evacuation when there was strong intelligence of a person in the parking lot with a gun. The lieutenant stated their agency conducted lock down drills within the schools on a fairly regular basis, and the officers give assistance with the training of school personnel and help in a debriefing process. Through this, teachers and students are more prepared about what to do and what not to do in a real situation.

Finally, the fourth “D” is destroying (Remsburg, 2007). A responding officer has to be mentally and physically prepared to seek and destroy a person and to use deadly force to stop the killing. Training for this type of event is essential for officer development because when the time comes for an officer to meet the threat, it will be the hardest encounter to face of anyone’s career. The ALERRT 3.1 (2007) program is the basic guide to prepare law enforcement to make a timely assault as a team, utilizing a four-man diamond formation and incorporating rifles and shotguns as well as the handgun.

Rapid response training inside the law enforcement’s jurisdictions schools is a major part of this training. It is encouraged that school faculty members be involved in the training, while using the older and more mature student body as role-play models. Giduck (2005) concurred with this philosophy and suggested that schools must contact law enforcement to deal with hostage and assault situations. Giduck (2005) explained that it is important for police departments to prepare programs and provide training for

local teachers and school officials that include parents. Schools must work hand-in-hand with local agencies to consider and develop protocols for mass emergency situations. Training should be shared with a chronology of the events to be anticipated in a hostage situation. This includes lockdown drills; police officers must have school diagrams, utilize tactical videotaping, and establish communication between law enforcement and local schools (Giduck, 2005).

Buhrmaster (2007) proved that effective role model training was a beneficial tool for the entire community and citizens of Beloit, Wisconsin. The training not only developed the school faculty and police agencies, but also other first responding personnel that included fire and rescue, ambulance service, communications, and hospital personnel. The training, though challenging, brought to the forefront for the community as a whole lessons that will not be forgotten and can be developed over time for improvement to the community's overall plan.

The Buhrmaster (2007) example listed protocols that ensured training was successful, such as the development of a multi-agency command hierarchy, plans on how to quickly locate key players at the school and create a process for maintaining contact. The listed protocol also ensures that communication equipment is sufficient to handle mass emergency and is serviceable to meet the needs of the crisis. The training included the presence of emotional support professionals on the scene and involved hospital personnel in the exercise so hospitals could be properly equipped to handle mass casualties. Other benefits of the training included a plan for adverse weather, air space difficulties and traffic control, and a plan for handling belligerent people.

The training was educational regarding having an alternative emergency

command center location available, which made sure fire department and ambulance vehicles were able to make contact with police. The exercise also ensured that everyone was thoroughly debriefed after the exercise, and everyone was able to provide input about the lessons learned. After this, they made mass emergency training exercises a consistent part of training. The importance of this training was clear from a statement made by one of the officers: "We were able to identify shortcomings and make changes necessary to ensure that their next response--be it during a training exercise or, God forbid, the real thing--would be even stronger" (Buhrmaster, 2007, p. 4).

The community of Beloit, Wisconsin did one thing in this training exercise that Colonel Grossman (2004) believes in, which is the importance and the relevance of allowing participants to debrief during the training exercise and having emotional support on hand during the training. Grossman (2004) told an example of how he was training and assisting mental professionals during the aftermath of one major school shooting. A teacher who was upset stated he believed he had failed, even though fellow staff members reassured him, but he had a memory loss linked into his sense of guilt. The teacher was debriefed and was provided an opportunity to speak with other individuals who had experienced the same event. This helped the teacher with his guilt about feeling like he had failed and was responsible for the death of an innocent person. The debriefing is the most essential element for every first responder, school faculty member, and student immediately after such an incident, whether incident is real or done in training (Grossman, 2004).

Both law enforcement and independent school districts should be aware of the

sensitive nature in the handling of the media. It is an integral part of an incident of this magnitude, and if the media is left out of the communicative process, it could be detrimental to the community. Local media outlets want to be a part of their community, and when law enforcement agencies are open and allow the involvement of the media during such training exercises, it allows a powerful positive influence in the community. Parents feel the children are safe because school faculty is working with law enforcement to ensure the safety of the children. Referring to the aftermath of a crisis, Giduck (2005) questioned whether law enforcement is ready to deal with a tidal wave of news media reporters and their actions, which can include constant questioning and a bombardment of accusations regarding incompetence.

The media, if not handled correctly, can become an intelligence source that undermines the efforts of an agency and gives away intelligence to other terrorists or anyone who may be assisting on the outside to the terrorists on the inside. One theory and benefit is that when a terrorist or a potential active shooter sees training being conducted in one particular school or district via the media, the person who has planned the act will, more than likely, retreat or look for another target. When the media airs the training, the possible target then appears to be prepared for such an event; therefore, the terrorist or active shooter will stop the plan before it starts (Giduck, 2005).

The research that has been presented thus far has shown the effectiveness and the benefits to a cooperative training effort, and meets the plan for the Department of Homeland Defense, along with FEMA and other federal bureaucracies. Education starts at home at each local jurisdiction. It is impossible for the federal government to have a one-size fits all type of solution for every state, county, and city, which is why it is

imperative that it be initiated at the local level. The federal government can only assist after the initial crisis has been handled and only in a supporting role (Davies & Plotkin, 2005). The local entities, such as schools and the law enforcement agencies of each jurisdiction, will have to see to what works best for the individual community.

According to Davies and Plotkin (2005), the approach is one of communities and myriad of disciplines: the private sector and government, individuals, and families. Homeland security is less about who gets what and plays which role and more about what actually gets done. Davies and Plotkin (2005) emphasized, "Planning is an iterative process in which information from one level of government continually influences the other" (p. 23).

## **DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS**

The issue that has been considered by the researcher is a whether or not law enforcement agencies and independent school districts can cooperate and work together to make a safe environment for children in order to prevent an active shooter or terrorist incident. The research considered the best method in achieving this goal and saving lives in the process.

The purpose of this process was to stop the threat of terrorism before it even materializes through effective training based on the ALERRT program and scenario-based training. The training would involve not only law enforcement, but school faculty, select individuals from the student body, and other first responders and medical personnel. In review of the of the research findings, the cooperation between local law enforcement agencies and independent school districts is the most effective way to enhance school security and prevent an active shooter.

The research focused on problems encountered between law enforcement, school superintendents, school boards, and faculty members and identified a resistance to plan for an event. School officials are accustomed to nurturing and caring for their students; however, the research also focused on proactive measures that will enhance overall school safety, including measures like implementing ID card systems, performing lockdown and evacuation drills with the regularity of fire drills and involving law enforcement, performing scenario exercises with media publicity, and allowing the public and parents see that children's safety is the number one concern.

The question that was researched was the cooperation between law enforcement and school officials and whether or not they can come together. It was hypothesized that while steps were being made, there were schools who do not participate in any kind of training program or in a very limited capacity and without law enforcement's involvement. From the interviews of the three officers from around the state, it was confirmed that steps are being made, but each jurisdiction is unique and different; therefore, there is not a uniform measure that will fit each and every school system. A survey of 24 different agencies was conducted and from the overall results, it was concluded that approximately half of the agencies had some kind of a training program within their jurisdiction and school district. The hypothesis of this research was that law enforcement agencies have a difficult time in getting the school districts to cooperate and conduct training in conjunction with their respective jurisdiction. The results of the survey, along with the three interviews, showed that training and effective security within school districts was split, and it varied between each jurisdiction.

While each school system and community is diverse, the research did prove

there are certain measures by putting the four “D’s” into practice; by deterring, detecting, delaying, and destroying, all schools can achieve a safer environment. A trained officer behind cover is an immediate response to any dangerous situation and can hold the situation at least until other responding units can arrive on the scene. Law enforcement agencies can be effective by making sound traffic stops and getting accurate information of persons who might be surveying the school. Making a plan, practicing lockdown or evacuation, reporting, and having trained officers with a ready mindset to protect the innocent at all cost is vital.

Colonel Grossman (2004) described the sheep, the wolves, and the sheepdogs. The sheep are the faculty and the students: people who are there to learn and grow, who do not want anything but to make a contribution to society. Then, there are the wolves, the predators: people, who come in and, for no rhyme or reason, prey on victims and do violence to the sheep. Finally, there is the sheepdog: the school resource officer or the patrol officer who is the protector that responds at all cost to save the sheep. Sometimes, the sheep do not like or understand the sheepdog because he is a reminder of the wolf (Grossman 2004). Using this metaphor, it could also be submitted that there is another element, which is the shepherds; these are the superintendents, the school board, the law enforcement chief administrators, along with other elected officials and the leaders of the community who bear the responsibility for the safety of the citizens in the community. These are the persons whose endorsement of such a training program is essential because they can approve and support through financial means for a proactive plan to enhance school safety.

In conclusion, this type of interactive training is a relevant positive influence to

schools, law enforcement, and individual communities as whole. Ultimately, not only the state of Texas, but the United States of America can be made stronger. Edmond Burke, British orator, philosopher, and politician during the Revolutionary War stated, "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing." The harsh reality is that Americans are living in a society that can produce danger at virtually any moment. This does not mean that danger will actually materialize, but danger can present itself with little or no warning. Americans live in a post 9/11 world, and the world has changed forever, but through interaction and cooperation in each jurisdiction, it can all make a difference for the future of the country, community, and give children the best of what this country has to offer.

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## APPENDIX A

### List of School shootings since 1966-2008

#### Wikipedia.org School Shooting

#### North America

#### USA

| Name  | Location                                       | Date         | Year | Victims |
|---|--|--------------|------|---------|
| University of Texas at Austin massacre                                    | Austin, Texas, United States                   | August 1     | 1966 | 18      |
| Orangeburg massacre   | Orangeburg, South Carolina, United States      | February 8   | 1968 | 3       |
| Kent State shootings *not a "School Shooting" in the contemporary sense   | Kent, Ohio, United States                      | May 4        | 1970 | 4       |
| Jackson State killings *not a "School Shooting" in the contemporary sense | Jackson, Mississippi, United States            | May 14-15    | 1970 | 2       |
| California State University, Fullerton library massacre                   | Fullerton, California, United States           | July 12      | 1976 | 7       |
| Cleveland Elementary School shooting                                      | San Diego, California, United States           | January 29   | 1979 | 2       |
| Parkway South Junior High School shooting                                 | Saint Louis, Missouri, United States           | January 20   | 1983 | 2       |
| Oakland Elementary School shooting  | Greenwood, South Carolina, United States       | September 26 | 1988 |         |
| Cleveland Elementary School shooting                                      | Stockton, California, United States            | January 17   | 1989 | 6       |
| University of Iowa shooting   | Iowa City, Iowa, United States                 | November 1   | 1991 | 6       |
| Lindhurst High School shooting  | Marysville, California, United States          | May 1        | 1992 | 4       |
| Simon's Rock College of Bard shooting                                     | Great Barrington, Massachusetts, United States | December 14  | 1992 | 2       |
| East Carter High School shooting  | Grayson, Kentucky, United States               | January 18   | 1993 | 2       |
| Richland High School shooting   | Lynnville, Tennessee, United States            | November 15  | 1995 | 2       |
| Frontier Junior High shooting   | Moses Lake, Washington, United States          | February 2   | 1996 | 3       |
| Hetzel Union Building shooting  | State College, Pennsylvania, United States     | September 17 | 1996 | 1       |
| Bethel High School shooting   | Bethel, Alaska, United States                  | February 19  | 1997 | 2       |
| Pearl High School shooting  | Pearl, Mississippi, United States              | October 1    | 1997 | 3       |
| Heath High School shooting  | West Paducah, Kentucky United States           | December 1   | 1997 | 3       |
| Westside Middle School shooting   | Jonesboro, Arkansas, United States             | March 24     | 1998 | 5       |

|  |   |              |      |    |
|--|---|--------------|------|----|
| Parker Middle School shooting                    | Edinboro, Pennsylvania, United States                       | April 24     | 1998 | 1  |
| Thurston High School shooting                    | Springfield, Oregon, United States                          | May 21       | 1998 | 4  |
| Columbine High School massacre                   | Littleton, Colorado, United States                          | April 20     | 1999 | 15 |
| Heritage High School shooting                    | Conyers, Georgia, United States                             | May 20       | 1999 | 0  |
| Buell Elementary School shooting                 | Mount Morris Township, Michigan, United States              | February 29  | 2000 | 1  |
| Santana High School shooting                     | Santee, California, United States                           | March 5      | 2001 | 2  |
| Granite Hills High School shooting               | El Cajon, California, United States                         | March 22     | 2001 | 0  |
| Appalachian School of Law shooting               | Grundy, Virginia, United States                             | January 16   | 2002 | 3  |
| University of Arizona School of Nursing shooting | Tucson, Arizona, United States                              | October 28   | 2002 | 4  |
| John McDonough High School shooting              | New Orleans, Louisiana, United States                       | April 14     | 2003 | 1  |
| Red Lion Area Junior High School shootings       | Red Lion, Pennsylvania, United States                       | April 24     | 2003 | 2  |
| Case Western Reserve University shooting         | Cleveland, Ohio, United States                              | May 9        | 2003 | 1  |
| Rocori High School shootings                     | Cold Spring, Minnesota, United States                       | September 24 | 2003 | 2  |
| Fairleigh Dickinson University shooting          | Florham Park, New Jersey, United States                     | April 3      | 2003 | 1  |
| Red Lake High School massacre                    | Red Lake, Minnesota, United States                          | March 21     | 2005 | 10 |
| Campbell County High School shooting             | Jacksboro, Tennessee, United States                         | November 8   | 2005 | 1  |
| Pine Middle School shooting                      | Reno, Nevada, United States                                 | March 14     | 2006 | 0  |
| Essex Elementary School Shooting                 | Essex, Vermont, United States                               | August 24    | 2006 | 2  |
| Platte Canyon High School shooting               | Bailey, Colorado, United States                             | September 27 | 2006 | 2  |
| Weston High School shooting                      | Cazenovia, Wisconsin, United States                         | September 29 | 2006 | 1  |
| Amish school shooting                            | Nickel Mines, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, United States | October 2    | 2006 | 6  |
| Virginia Tech massacre                           | Blacksburg, Virginia, United States                         | April 16     | 2007 | 33 |
| Delaware State University shooting               | Dover, Delaware, United States                              | September 21 | 2007 | 1  |
| SuccessTech Academy shooting                     | Cleveland, Ohio, United States                              | October 10   | 2007 | 1  |
| Notre Dame Elementary shooting                   | Portsmouth, Ohio, United States                             | February 7   | 2008 | 1  |
| Louisiana Technical College shooting             | Baton Rouge, Louisiana, United States                       | February 8   | 2008 | 3  |
| Mitchell High School shooting                    | Memphis, Tennessee, United States                           | February 11  | 2008 | 0  |
| E.O. Green School shooting                       | Oxnard, California, United States                           | February 12  | 2008 | 1  |
| Northern Illinois University shooting            | DeKalb, Illinois, United States                             | February 14  | 2008 | 6  |

## APPENDIX B

### Law Enforcement Survey

#### Research on Agency Planning for a Terrorist Incident Involving an Attack on Schools

10-23-2007

LEMIT

LCC

Please answer the following questions

YES

NO

- |  |          |        |
|--|----------|--------|
| 1. Have you attended Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Training.....   | _14_     | 10     |
| 2. Does your agency conduct ALERRT Training inside the Independent School Districts (ISD) within your jurisdiction .....   | _14_     | 10     |
| a. Once.....   | _3_      | ___    |
| b. Twice.....  | _3_      | ___    |
| c. On a regularly scheduled basis.....   | _5_      | ___    |
| 3. Does your agency conduct training with school faculty.....  | _13_     | _11_   |
| 4. Do the schools conduct regular lockdown drills.....   | _9_      | 15_    |
| 5. Does your agency have the necessary school diagrams, blueprints, and floor plans and are they accessible to supervisors who are off hours, weekends and holidays?   | _13_     | _11_   |
| 6. Does your agency allow the media to film the training?  | ___      | _24_   |
| 7. Do the schools within your jurisdiction have an officer working at the ISD's as an assigned position? School Resource Officer (SRO)   | _17_     | 7      |
| 8. How would you rate the rapport and communication between the school and your agency .....   | Good_19_ | Bad_5_ |
| 9. Has your agency identified critical personnel of different cultures within your community who can and are willing assist Law Enforcement in negotiations or intelligence gathering during a critical incident?..... | _7_      | _17_   |

Please return survey to SGT Robert Huddleston as soon as possible.