Educators in Washtenaw County to Receive Active Shooter Response Training Local law enforcement to teach program to educators

Washtenaw County Schools, in partnership with Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD), Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office and local law enforcement agencies, are implementing an active shooter response program. During the 2013-14 school year trained law enforcement officials and school personnel will provide staff training that is based on current research shown to increase survival rate during an active shooter incident.

This action was precipitated by the dramatic increase in school violence and school shootings across the nation. Law enforcement officials have been working in conjunction with WISD and local districts to select and implement a response method. The group adopted the Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate (A.L.I.C.E.) program, which provides tactical advantages teachers and students can use in the event an intruder/shooter enters a school.

An overview of the ALICE approach is:

Alert: Sound an alarm of the situation at hand and call 9-1-1. Information of the situation should be provided by all means possible including the Public Address system. (Ex. gunman in cafeteria)

Lockdown: Doors should be locked to provide a time barrier and give students and teachers time to recognize the threat. If they are not in the danger zone they should evacuate as fast as possible.

Inform: If possible keep teachers, students, and police up to date on the shooters location inside the school. **Counter**: Interrupt the physical act of the shooting. If the shooter walks into a classroom or hall and you have no escape route start throwing anything and everything you can at him to interrupt his shooting and his accuracy. This is a last resort and is a survival process to stay alive. If the gunman can be overpowered by multiple people after being distracted and hit with items swarm the shooter and detain him.

Evacuate: We want as many people away from the situation as possible. If during the alert stage or any other stage the student is not near the shooter, students should evacuate as fast as possible.

Washtenaw County Sheriff Jerry Clayton is committed to responding uniformly to this type of emergency and to making sure school personnel are equipped with as much information as possible.

"The Sheriff's Office strongly advocates a pro-active and coordinated approach to community safety. We believe that The A.L.I.C.E. program is a central part of our overall Washtenaw County strategy for managing our community response to a situation involving an active shooter," Clayton said. "A.L.I.C.E. provides a systematic response and decision-making options so that civilians trained in this method are better positioned to respond to a perceived threat in a more organized and effective manner. When confronted with an armed suspect who has employed or is threatening to employ deadly force, being prepared can potentially save lives."

Dr. Sarena Shivers, Assistant Superintendent of Student Achievement and Services for WISD, has played a key role to ensure that this training is implemented. She stressed that schools are not taking a "fight back" stance but rather looking for strategies to neutralize harm to students and staff.

"Educating students will always be our primary focus. However, the horrendous attacks that have taken place on school grounds have caused us to elevate our safety measures and do whatever we can to maintain a safe and secure educational environment," Shivers said. "We appreciate the time and effort the Sheriff's Office and the many local law enforcement officials have invested to make sure that we have a sound safety plan for all our county districts."

The A.L.I.C.E. training will take place over the course of the school year, with the project launching in August. Parent and community members will be invited to community forums hosted by Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office. One forum will be held in the fall and the other forum will be scheduled for the winter. When dates have been confirmed, information will be posted on the WISD and local district web sites.