

# RHODE ISLAND POLICE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE ON BASIC SCHOOL SAFETY PROTOCOLS



A PUBLICATION OF THE RHODE ISLAND  
POLICE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION  
JUNE 20, 2022



## INTRODUCTION

School shootings have an enormous impact on our communities and our children. These events and the impacts on our communities often leads to school administrators and law enforcement officials to “do something” quickly to protect our children in school. Hasty and reactive decision-making often results in implementation of new policies and adoption of new equipment and technology based on emotion without any guidance from law enforcement professionals. One thing is abundantly clear, we all do want to do something in repose to the mass killing of our children, however, as a collective body of law enforcement professionals and dedicated educators and administrators we want to assure we get it right.

Understanding this challenge, the Rhode Island Police Chiefs’ Association established the Basic School Safety Committee to offer a law enforcement perspective. The intent of the committee is to provide guidance for the most essential actions school districts and law enforcement agencies can take to reduce the risk of attacks in our schools. While the cost associated with some of these strategies may be significant, for others it is relatively modest.

The committee acknowledges that school safety is much broader than the actions outlined in this report, including mental health, counseling resources and parental involvement. This resource is focused on the actions related to the physical security of school buildings. The best practices delineated in this guidebook represent the collective sense of a body of professionals convened under the direction of the Rhode Island Police Chiefs’ Association who hear the call to do something. Our schools need not be a fortress but they must be safe.

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**The committee comprised the following representatives of partner organizations:**

### **RI POLICE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION**

Chief Sean Corrigan-Narragansett Police Department-President RIPCA  
Chief Edward A. Mello-Jamestown Police Department  
Colonel Michael Winqvist-Cranston Police Department-Secretary RIPCA  
Colonel Brad Connor-Warwick Police Department-Sergeant at Arms RIPCA  
Chief William Kewer-Middletown Police Department  
Sidney Wordell (Chief Ret.)-Executive Director RIPCA

### **RHODE ISLAND STATE POLICE**

Corporal Nicholas Rivello

### **RI FIRE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS**

Chief Scott Kettelle-North Kingstown Fire Department-President RIAFC  
Richard Susi (Chief Ret.)-Executive Director RIAFC

### **SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS**

Dr. Lawrence P. Filippelli-Lincoln School Department  
Dr. Peter Cummings-Narragansett School Department

### **US ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

Brian Pires-Counter Terrorism Specialist

### **RI LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS**

Shawn Lacey-Westerly Town Manager

### **OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

Deputy State Fire Marshal David Pastore

## PHYSICAL SECURITY

The actions described below represent measures that can be taken to improve school facilities' security. These actions are based upon best practices and it is recommended that they be considered when conducting an assessment of current facilities, improvements to facilities or construction of new facilities.

### I. EXTERIOR DOORS

- a. Equipped with functioning lock
- b. Equipped with self closing devices
- c. Equipped with open/ajar alarm or alert
- d. No attached doorstops
- e. Discourage and/or prohibit the use of door chocks
- f. Visitor entrance configured with double locking door vestibule
- g. Integrate doors with keyless locking system with camera systems
- h. Assess and evaluate the number of staff entrances based upon need versus convenience
- i. Provide/coordinate key fobs for local law enforcement. Consider use of single master key system and use of key access systems accessible to law enforcement.
- j. Label building sides, exterior doors and windows-see guidance from local enforcement

### II. EXTERIOR WINDOWS AND GLASS

- a. Install ballistic resistant film on glass which may allow physical access
- b. Install rescue windows with new construction or remodel

### III. CAMERAS AND VIDEO SURVIELANCE SYSTEMS

- a. Integrate video systems with door access control system and open/ajar alerting systems

- b. **Pre-coordinate and develop MOU with local law enforcement to allow remote access upon need i.e. view from command center**

#### **IV. INTERIOR DOORS**

- a. **Classroom with climate control-doors should remain closed in the locked position**
- b. **Classroom without climate control-doors should remain closed in the locked position or chocked open in locked position-no attached doors stops**
- c. **Doors with windows should have ability to cover glass**
- d. **All interior classroom doors should be on master key system**
- e. **Door with electronic door stop should be connected to active threat alerting system with automatic release**

#### **V. COMMUNICATIONS**

- a. **Install in-building alerting systems through use of audible devices, strobe lighting and/or the use of mobile device applications**
- b. **Create direct notification process to law enforcement**
- c. **Verify law enforcement and fire officials have in-building radio coverage. Enhance as needed with the installation of in-building radio repeaters**
- d. **Conduct annual tabletop exercises with law enforcement and first responders**
- e. **Employ student, staff and parent notification system. Pre-plan/pre-record important message(s) to be used during an incident. Plan with law enforcement to determine responsibility of delivery and content of messaging**
- f. **Provide local law enforcement with current building floor plans. Digital format if possible**

## **SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION ACTION ITEMS**

The action items listed below are recommended to be taken by the administration of each school district.

### **I. GO-KITS**

- a. Create go kits for each classroom to include rosters, first aid supplies and essential comfort items
- b. Create building go kits to be made available to responding law enforcement to include master keys(s), key fob(s) rosters and building plans

### **II. THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM**

- a. Establish and use a Threat Assessment Team as specified in RIGL 16-21-23.2.
- b. Identify through policy the roles and responsibilities of Threat Assessment Team members.

### **III. SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS**

- a. Districts are encouraged to use school resource officers
- b. Districts employing school resource officers should require a clear memorandum of understanding between district and local enforcement
- c. Officers should be required to receive specialized training under a curriculum as approved by the Rhode Island Police Officers Commission on Standards and Training

### **IV. SOCIAL MEDIA**

- a. Provide students and staff with annual social media training related to expected conduct
- b. Employ filtering/monitoring across district networks to alert staff of conduct concerns and/or threats

#### **V. RESPONSE TO ACTIVE THREAT TRAINING**

- a. Conduct school and police leadership meeting(s) on periodic basis
- b. Provide age appropriate active threat training to students
- c. Provide FEMA based Incident Command System Training to ALL staff
- d. Collaborate with law enforcement to provide ALL staff and students with age appropriate active threat response training. Recruit school staff to become instructors
- e. Provide in-service training to all staff relative to response to emergency and/or crisis
- f. Provide one sheet guidance for substitute teachers. Include basic “must know” for incidents within the facility
- g. Provide one sheet guidance for bus drivers. Include basic “must know” for incidents

#### **VI. FACILITIES ASSESSMENT**

- a. Create facilities “check-list” for each site. Task staff member with conducting weekly inspection of security points i.e. door locks, cameras, communications. Create a reporting mechanism to repair/resolve deficiencies

## **ACTION ITEMS BY THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

The action items listed below are recommended to be taken by the Rhode Island Department of Education in order to provide necessary support and resources for the school districts.

### **I. PARENT RESPONSE TRAINING VIDEO**

- a. Create and publish video tool for parents which covers scenario based direction on active threat in a school building. Include expected communications, police response, reunification process, what to do, what not to do and where to go.

### **II. STAFF TRAINING**

- a. Provide guidance and/or curriculum for in-service training to all staff relative to response to emergency and/or crisis
- b. Create one sheet template for district to use as a guide in order to develop guidance for substitute teachers. Include basic “must know” for incidents within the facility
- c. Create one sheet template for district to use as guide in order to develop guidance for bus drivers. Include basic “must know” for incidents.
- d. Require teacher certification curriculum to include FEMA based Incident Command System Training.
- e. Coordinate with Rhode Island School Superintendent Association to develop a “new” superintendent training program

### **III. FUTURE BUILDING PROJECTS**

- a. Require districts receiving school funding through RIDE to review proposed building plans with local law enforcement prior to approval



#### **IV. POLICE AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

- a. Encourage and/or require school and police leadership meeting on periodic basis**
- b. Create pathway for retired officers to be employed as school resource officers by eliminating conflict with current pension restrictions**