



Palm Beach County Association of Chiefs of Police Public Private Partnership Workgroup Presents:

WHITE PAPER ON PREVENTING ACTIVE SHOOTERS IN SCHOOLS

by the Sub-Committee on Active Shooters

The Palm Beach County Association of Police Chiefs Public Private Partnership was established in 1961 to address important issues in security, crime prevention, and public safety. The mission of the Partnership is to ***"To build lasting relationships between responsible professionals within the private security industry, public safety advocates, and law enforcement. By leveraging these partnerships, we can work together to reduce crime, protect our children and better serve our communities with greater outreach, communication and education."***

After the tragic shootings at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida on February 14, 2018, the PBC Public Private Partnership assembled a group of dedicated individuals from both the public law enforcement and private security experts all who were committed to reducing or preventing Active Shooters in our schools.

Over the next eight months, a variety of different solutions were discussed, and analyzed, including updating policies and procedures, adding different security and safety controls for schools, including training for staff and students; use of metal scanners to prevent weapons from being brought into the schools, and access controls to protect the schools from people entering the schools without permission.

A major difficulty in preventing school shootings is the different factors at work in each situation, so there is not a single solution that will work for every individual school. Each school is different, each city, state, and community also differ in their crime rates, their policies, their carry laws, and each different element factors into how likely a school is to experience a shooting incident.

To understand the different elements, let's use the Parkland shootings as a case study.

The factors that were identified after the Parkland shootings included:

- Mental illness identified in the shooter before the incident.
- Lack of basic security controls in the school facility, especially lack of access controls.
- Warnings were called in to the local police, and to the FBI, but they did not investigate or follow up on the warnings.
- Mentally disturbed former student was able to buy a variety of firearms without supervision.
- A School Resource Officer and other officers were armed and present during the shooting but did not react decisively.
- Threat declarations made on social media were ignored

These different elements illustrate the complexity in trying to reduce the frequency, or prevent school shootings, where so many different factors may be present. In looking at potential solutions, we discussed having a basic set of solutions that would prevent the majority of school shootings, including having regular security risk assessments, incorporating single entrance and access controls into schools. Encouraging use of technology such digital cameras, camera monitoring, improved communication solutions, passive metal detection, solutions to quickly lockdown a school, visitor management, door and window alarms are also a critical part of reducing or preventing these shooting incidents in the future.

During the months following the Parkland shootings, there were major school shooting incidents across the US, including:

March 20, 2018 Great Mills High School in Lexington Park, Maryland where an armed student shot two others before a school resources officer fired a round at the shooter. The shooter was killed.

May 18, 2018 Santa Fe High School Shooting in Santa Fe, Texas, where 10 people were shot and killed.

May 25, 2018 : Noblesville West Middle Schools in Noblesville, Indiana. Two people were injured when a gunman opened fire at Noblesville West Middle School in Noblesville, Indiana.

There have been a total of 23 school shootings by June of 2018.

After months of looking at different preventive solutions, the PBCPC group decided to create nationwide resource site, available to all U.S. schools, where school administrators, police, and school resource officers could find a list of solutions that would make a difference in preventing active shooter incidents.

The resources available on the PBCPC web site have been reviewed and found to be helpful in promoting the safety and security of our public schools, although private schools, college and universities will also find these resources useful.

The resource list has been divided into different categories including the following:

- Recommended Policies and Procedures for Schools Security & Safety
- Recommended Basic Controls that Schools Can use to Significantly Reduce, or Prevent Shootings at our schools.
- White Papers, and Informational Material on preventing School Shootings
- Videos on how to Survive School Shootings
- Training material for Teachers, Staff and Students

Each resource on the web site has been viewed and evaluated by a variety of dedicated safety and security professionals, including police and school personnel.

The Palm Beach County Police Chiefs Association are making this reference site available throughout the U.S., with new material being added as it becomes available.