

Effective training is answer to school safety

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The Lowell Sun

Updated: 09/14/2018 08:24:01 AM EDT

Recently, The Sun ran an article describing ALICE drills for an active shooter situation. ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate. While the premise for ALICE is admirable, its major failure is counter.

The article describes "counter" as "interfere and distract by noise, movement, throwing items and such." Though not present at a single mass shooting, I suspect all of them were accompanied by noise, movement and various other distractions. We all know the results.

The ALICE Institute makes a similar statement in The Sun's article "Counter is not fighting. ALICE training does not believe that actively confronting a violent intruder is the best method for ensuring the safety of all involved ..."

I agree that fighting an armed intruder is not the best option, but may be the only option.

So let's think this through: The gunman comes through the door and you yell, run around the room and, as my local school superintendent told me, "throw everything at them including the kitchen sink." With regard to yelling, guns are louder so more noise will likely have no effect. Movement is good, but in a confined area you can't go far. If you are far enough away to throw something, you are in front of the gun muzzle and directly in the danger zone.

So what is a person to do? The answer is train!

Those of us who know how firearms are used, know the only safe place in an active shooter situation is behind the muzzle of the gun.

Right next to the shooter. This is counter intuitive. When the shooter comes in, you want to run away. But if escape is not an option, then you must attack, and do so fast and properly. Training ensures that you do so with the highest likelihood of success. Once you are behind the muzzle, the shooter cannot shoot you, and trainers like me and many others here in Massachusetts, can teach you how to accomplish a disarm.

When the day comes that teachers, administrators, and the public at large are ready to accept this reality, I and the many others like me are here and ready to help you.

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Editor's note: Al Prescott is a founding member of Westford Pro 2A, a concerned citizens coalition dedicated to a peaceable community without sacrificing civil liberties.

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