

# Dalton Public Schools and Dalton Police Department

[www.daltonpublicschools.com/about/gem  
a-safety-conference-presentation](http://www.daltonpublicschools.com/about/gem-a-safety-conference-presentation)



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School Safety Conference

Mr. Armes

GEMA

GaDOE

Democratic Party

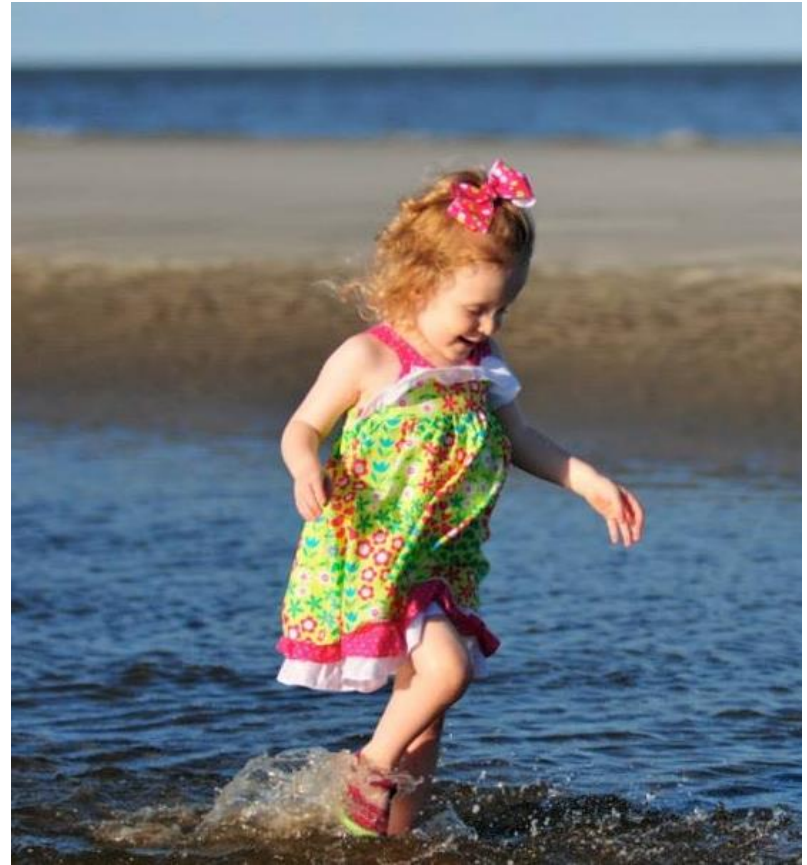
Republican Party

President Trump



# MY REASONS FOR WORKING ON SCHOOL SAFETY:

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# Dalton Police Department and Dalton Public Schools Working together for a safer future



# Dalton Public Schools

- Total Student enrollment as of 5/18/18 (7922)
- 2 High Schools
  - Dalton High (1892 students, 150 staff)
  - Morris High School (329)
- 1 Middle School (1822)
- 6 Elementary Schools (3813)
- 1 Alternative School



# Dalton Police Department

- Sworn Officers (89)  
Patrol, Criminal Investigations,  
Support Services
- Civilians (14)



# Pre-Feb 2018/Dalton Public Schools

- Formal EOPs mid 90's/today's version evolved in 2009. Reviewed and altered to reflect current trends annually.
- Began construction on secured entrances on all campuses in 2013. **All visitors entering through office areas** must be allowed access.
- EOP training annually with all staff members (returning and new) led by the SROs to ensure all staff have a clear understanding of what is expected.

# Pre-Feb 2018/Dalton Public Schools

- Regular drills conducted  
Lockdown/Fire/Weather.
- 3 SROs assigned to the district and in the schools available for staff and students who have questions.
- Discussion of purchasing rifle safes for the SROs to allow long rifle and tact gear to be more readily accessible.

# Pre-Feb 2018/Dalton Public Schools

- Allow SROs free access to all school campuses for training and PR.
- Student Led presentations (See Something, Say Something) produced by students directly following FL attack.
- Security cameras installed throughout the district can be viewed remotely (SROs have access).

# Pre-Feb 2018/Dalton Public Schools

- CPR/First Aid/Stop the Bleed Training given to staff.
- Safety meeting between the District and the Police Department to identify security issues.

# Pre-Feb 2018/Dalton Police Dept.

- Regular Active Shooter training (First began in 2000) following Columbine High School attack.
- Active Shooter training conducted in the schools throughout the district so officers are familiar with the schools layouts. (Fire Department are involved in this training)
- All floor plans in the school district are attached to a shared folder where every officer can access and review anytime.

# Pre-Feb 2018/Dalton Police Dept.

- Law enforcement training on school EOPs so that all officers know what to expect from students and school staff when they arrive on scene.
- State and National Certified SROs (NASRO members).
- SROs attend annual SRO conferences to ensure they are up-to-date on current trends.

# Pre-Feb 2018/Dalton Police Dept.

- SROs are highly visible and approachable during the school day and extracurricular events. This allows Students/Staff/Family members to feel more comfortable with officers.
- Selection of SROs based on interview process (only qualified officer can apply). Final review of qualified officers by school system prior to appointment.
- Communication upgrade from UHF to 800MHZ digital.





# Feb 28, 2018

- Students did not know where to go from main commons.
- Substitute teachers did not have a way to secure their classrooms. (If subs are not provided keys, doors should be locked at all times so subs can secure classrooms.)
- Substitute teachers receive very little training on lockdown situations.
- Never conducted a lockdown drill during lunches.
- Officers and staff had trouble unlocking doors for building clearing (many different keys in the building).
- 911 center and many officers were not familiar with lockdown procedures.

# Feb 28, 2018

- Officers arriving on campus did not know orientation of school and school hallways. (Clear markings of main exterior/interior hallways so first responders know where to go) (Floor Plans placed in all fire extinguisher boxes so first responders can have a copy in hand as they enter building)
- Officers evacuating the threat area did not tell the students where to go. (Choose a large storage location for initial evacuation prior to moving students when feasible!!!)
- Everyone needs to know the process of lockdown/evacuation/relocation/reunification.

# Feb 28, 2018

- Incident command needs to be established as soon as possible.
- All in drills including all levels are required. Even if it is just a table top exercise.
- After initial response team enters and contains the threat, additional responding officers should report to incident command. (Everyone wants to help, notify incident command you are there to help and await dispatch)

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# Dalton Public Schools

February 28, 2018

# DHS – Feb. 28, 2018

## LESSONS LEARNED:

- **Let authorities take command**
  - Provide assistance
  - Be available
  - Make recommendations

# DHS – Feb. 28, 2018

## Successes:

- **NO INJURIES** (one sprained ankle)
- Classrooms locked down
- Evacuation of site
- Community support



# DHS – Feb. 28, 2018

## Concerns:

- Not adequate drills (lunch, where go, ...)
- Keys for different doors for authorities
- Traffic around DHS
- Evacuation of cafeteria
- Clearing classrooms
- Students knowing where to go from classrooms during lock down releases
- Communications reception (cell phones, radios)
- Teachers opening doors before directed
- Communications (DPD, staff onsite and off, parents, and community)
- All staff not wearing badges
- Substitutes training

# DHS to Reunification Site

## Lessons Learned:

- Relationship with Whitfield County Schools

## Successes:

- Buses availability
- Staff coordinating loading buses and transporting students

## Concerns:

- **TRAFFIC**

# Reunification Site

Lessons Learned:

Drill

DRILL

**DRILL**

# Reunification Site

## Successes:

- Students safely delivered to parents/guardians
- Working with personnel at reunification site
- Staff – Student relationships
- Communication with media (location?)
- Community support

# Reunification Site

## Concerns:

- Method for matching students with guardians
- Time getting information ready and set-up
- Traffic
- Communication with parents at site
- Number of helpers needed
- Translators
- Medical services
- Food & water
- Vests in order to recognize staff members

# Mar. 1 and 2, 2018

## Lessons Learned:

- Day for Staff

## Successes:

- Staff return day before students return
- Letting students come back to pick up cars, cell phones, ...
- Providing grief counseling
- Communication with media

## Concerns:

- **Media**

# WHAT NEXT

- Conversations:
  - Staff
  - Students
  - Parents
  - Community

# Board of Education Forum





# DHS Student Council Community Forum on School Safety



# Next Steps

- Substitute Teacher Training
- Parent Training
- Implement Ideas to Improve Safety
- Community Communications
- **DRILL, DRILL, DRILL**

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# Crisis Communications

# Collaboration and Cooperation

- Working together with the Law Enforcement PIO is critical
- Develop a working relationship before a crisis
- School PR professionals need SROs to keep them in the loop (i.e. police reports, etc) to eliminate being blindsided
- Improves media relations

# Communication Goals

## School Districts

- Assure safety of students and staff
- Furnish accurate information
- Maintain confidentiality as required by law
- Notify parents/guardians
- Cooperate and coordinate with law enforcement
- Be Proactive

# Communication Goals

## Law Enforcement

- Be Proactive
- Resolve a situation
- Keep people safe
- Prevent the public from panicking

# Communication Goals

## Media

- Report as much as quickly as possible
- Keep a constant flow of info about story
- Depend on school, LE, eyewitnesses, involved parties to confirm as much info as possible
- Provide background info on school, involved parties, etc.



# Collaboration and Cooperation

When school districts, law enforcement and media work together, everyone benefits including those affected by the crisis and the community.

# United Front

- Best practice is to release information together or at least to each other before anyone else.
- Use all the tools in your toolbox to reach target audiences
- News Conferences should be hosted by school districts AND law enforcement reps
- Stay in your lane and respond to appropriate questions

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# Questions?