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## Schools, law enforcement train for dealing with shooters

By DON NORFLEET  
The Fulton Sun

**More than 50 Mid-Missouri school administrators and law enforcement agencies underwent one day of intensive training Thursday at South Callaway High School on dealing with armed shooting attacks in schools.**



Paulette Eichman, a Fulton Kingdom Christian Academy teacher undergoing special state-sponsored training Thursday at South Callaway School, demonstrates how effective it would be to blind an armed school intruder by releasing a small fire extinguisher spray in his face when he does not expect it and then to hit him on the head with the metal extinguisher. (Don Norfleet/FULTON SUN photo)

The training was provided by the Missouri Office of Homeland Security and the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA).

Strategos International, based in Grandview, Mo., received a federal grant for the training and had instructors providing classroom and re-enactment training for both school and law enforcement officers.

School administrators, school safety officers, and some teachers participated in the training. Mid-Missouri schools involved in the training in addition to South Callaway included North Callaway, St. Peter's Catholic School of Fulton, Kingdom Christian Academy of Fulton, Jefferson City Public Schools, Blair Oaks Schools of Wardsville, Hermann Public Schools, Russellville R-1 Schools, and Eugene R-5 Schools.

Law enforcement agencies represented included the Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Callaway County Sheriff's Department, the Cole County Sheriff's Department and several small cities and towns in Central Missouri.

South Callaway was chosen for the training site mainly because of the efforts of Donnie DeBrodie, director of transportation at South Callaway Schools. DeBrodie also is in charge of the school's Safety Committee.

He worked closely with the Callaway County Sheriff's Department in setting up the training.

DeBrodie had a personal interest in making sure administrators receive the training. He was shot in the forearm last year by a student.

"The incident did not occur on school grounds. The student was missing. School officials were looking for him and we found him just outside the school grounds," DeBrodie said.

The defense and attack training began Thursday morning with classroom instruction. School officials and law enforcement officers received an overview and historical examination of active shooters. They also learned how to spot a potential shooter and how to assess threats.

They learned what to do when a school lockdown fails and the importance of a rapid deployment of law enforcement officers.

In the afternoon, school administrators and law enforcement agencies received simulated attack training on how to deal with various situations that have occurred. School personnel were encouraged to participate in order to practice the school lockdown protocols in conjunction with the law enforcement response.

School administrators were trained by instructor Mark Warren of Strategos International on how to find the best rooms to protect school occupants during a lockdown. They learned that a small fire extinguisher at each teacher's desk can be a valuable way to attack an intruder. The chemical spray directed directly at a face can blind the intruder. The intruder then can be hit in the head while blinded with the heavy metal fire extinguisher.

Teachers were trained to cut arm ligaments to disable an arm of an intruder if he sticks his arm through a glass door in order to unlock it from the inside.

School officials also learned how to assess entrances and exits of rooms and how well they can be defended.

They learned techniques on how to barricade a door and to provide additional ways to lock doors besides the conventional lock.

They were taught how to lock out the intruder, how to get out if the intruder is inside the building and how to take out the intruder as a last resort through a variety of fighting techniques by using available objects in the room.

There was a review at the end of the training sessions.

Classes ended last Friday at South Callaway School and there were no students involved in the security training procedures.

John Elliston, elementary principal at South Callaway, said the joint training exercise is the first time in Missouri that law enforcement agencies have been involved with the training along with school administrators.

“We have learned that these shooting incidents can happen anywhere. We need to be proactive and be prepared for incidents as they arise,” Elliston said.

The course is designed to assist school personnel in their ability to prevent, report and protect themselves and their students from an active shooter during the critical moments while waiting for a police presence to arrive and what to expect from the officers after they are on the scene.

The training also is designed to provide law enforcement officers with the necessary skill sets and mindset to respond properly to extremely difficult situations.

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