POLICE 1

TECH & SAFE SCHOOLS:

HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY FOR ENHANCED SCHOOL SAFETY

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EDITOR'S NOTE

School safety is a top priority shared not only among school administrators, staff, parents and students, but also among first responders and the public at large. By seamlessly integrating technology from the district level to the classroom, we can create a safe learning environment and enable a swift, coordinated response in the face of threats or security breaches.

The first article in this eBook looks at how technology can enable law enforcement and school resource officers to adopt a proactive approach to school safety through pre-incident monitoring and enhanced situational awareness during incident responses. Following that is a case study of an Oklahoma school district that is using a mobile app to create faster, more informed connections between classrooms and law enforcement agencies. Finally, we discuss how police departments can take the lead in implementing enhanced security measures on K-12 school campuses, partnering with school officials and leveraging federal grants funding under the School Violence Prevention Program.

The goal of this eBook is to provide you with actionable ideas to enhance the safety of schools in your community. By using integrated technology to identify threats and security breaches before they escalate, our nation's students, faculty and staff can conduct the business of learning with greater peace of mind.

Nancy Perry, Editor-in-Chief, Police1

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> ***"With the push of a button, Rave Panic Button drastically improves school safety and saves lives. The children of Oklahoma are safer because of Rave Mobile Safety's school safety platform."***

RAY MCNAIR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OKLAHOMA SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

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USING TECHNOLOGY TO AID A QUICKER RESPONSE TO SCHOOL-BASED INCIDENTS

HAVING ACCESS TO MORE INFORMATION CAN HELP LIMIT THE EXTENT OF AN EMERGING EVENT

By Courtney Levin

One look at current news headlines proves that school violence is on the rise. Recent events in Nashville, Tennessee and Uvalde, Texas offer only a glimpse into the tragedies that have plagued our country's education system for decades. An in-depth analysis by CNN reports that since 2009, 177 U.S. schools experienced a shooting. During these events, 242 individuals were injured and 114 lost their lives.

But it isn't just the threat of gun violence that's on the minds of local law enforcement and school resource officers (SROs) – situations ranging from on-site medical emergencies to trespassing add to the urgency of creating a safe place for teachers and students. While these events will never be completely avoidable, there are steps agencies can take to promote a unified response that increases safety and mitigates harm to others.

THE THREE STAGES OF A SCHOOL-BASED INCIDENT

Emergency response to an active shooting incident or a student in need of medical attention extends well beyond the time during which the event takes place. Preventative measures to keep a school safe must happen at all times, which not only helps to eliminate some incidents but can aid in reducing response times once an incident takes place.

Here's how local law enforcement and SROs can use technology to keep schools safe.

PRE-INCIDENT MONITORING

While a school-based event can originate on school property, some incidents develop as a result of someone entering the grounds. It's important to monitor all areas of a school to look for suspicious activity, as that may be the first indication that something's wrong.

"From a school safety standpoint, we think about outside in," said James Wolfinbarger, director of intelligence-led policing software sales at Motorola Solutions. "We want to push the risk away from the school and be able to get indications prior to it coming into the front door of the school."

Partnership between SROs and local law enforcement is key, as shared technology can help identify potential threats that much faster. Tools like license plate recognition and connected video infrastructure can be used to locate pre-event indicators and notify officers nearby that there may be cause for concern.

Wolfinbarger emphasizes that internal and external video on school grounds are equally essential for detecting suspicious activity and getting eyes on a scene quickly. When used in conjunction with door detection technology, the duration of school-based events can be minimized.

"Oftentimes, schools are breached in areas outside of the main entrance," he said. "Having a comprehensive and unified access control that can ensure doors are locked, provide notifications for when they're left open and be able to quickly lock all the doors within a school is critically important in times of a threat."

If a threat is detected, using a comprehensive notification system is also critical to provide a unified response. Notifications delivered via radio, email and text to local law enforcement and SROs can aid in quick action to limit the extent or severity of an event.

MID-INCIDENT RESPONSE

Every second matters during a school-based incident, and the clock starts ticking from the moment a 911 call is received. In these moments, it's essential to ensure personnel who are en route to an event that's unfolding and those

who are already on school grounds have the most accurate information possible. Many local agencies and SROs achieve this increased situational awareness through CommandCentral Aware, a cloud-based platform by Motorola Solutions.

CommandCentral Aware brings all incident management components together into one tool, so there's no confusion about response resources. Accessible from any internet-connected device, CommandCentral Aware provides monitoring and communication capabilities to help officers make quicker and more informed decisions.

"The platform starts with an event initiation that would draw the attention of an analyst, either in a real-time crime center or out on the edge, through automatic notification," said Wolfinbarger. "They know the location of the alert, the location of the call would be identified, and all the video within an area selectable by the operator would be automatically spun up and presented to the analyst so they could begin making decisions based on incoming data and intelligence from the video file."

Preloaded floor plans of the school can be accessed by the operator as well, enabling them to quickly identify access into and out of the building as well as any video infrastructure that's present around and within the school. This element is particularly important, says Wolfinbarger, so SWAT or tactical teams responding to a school can understand where the threat exists and what their quickest path is to that threat.

CommandCentral Aware features data layer filtering so officers can view only the most relevant information they need at any given moment, including CAD incidents, device and personnel locations, camera locations and more.

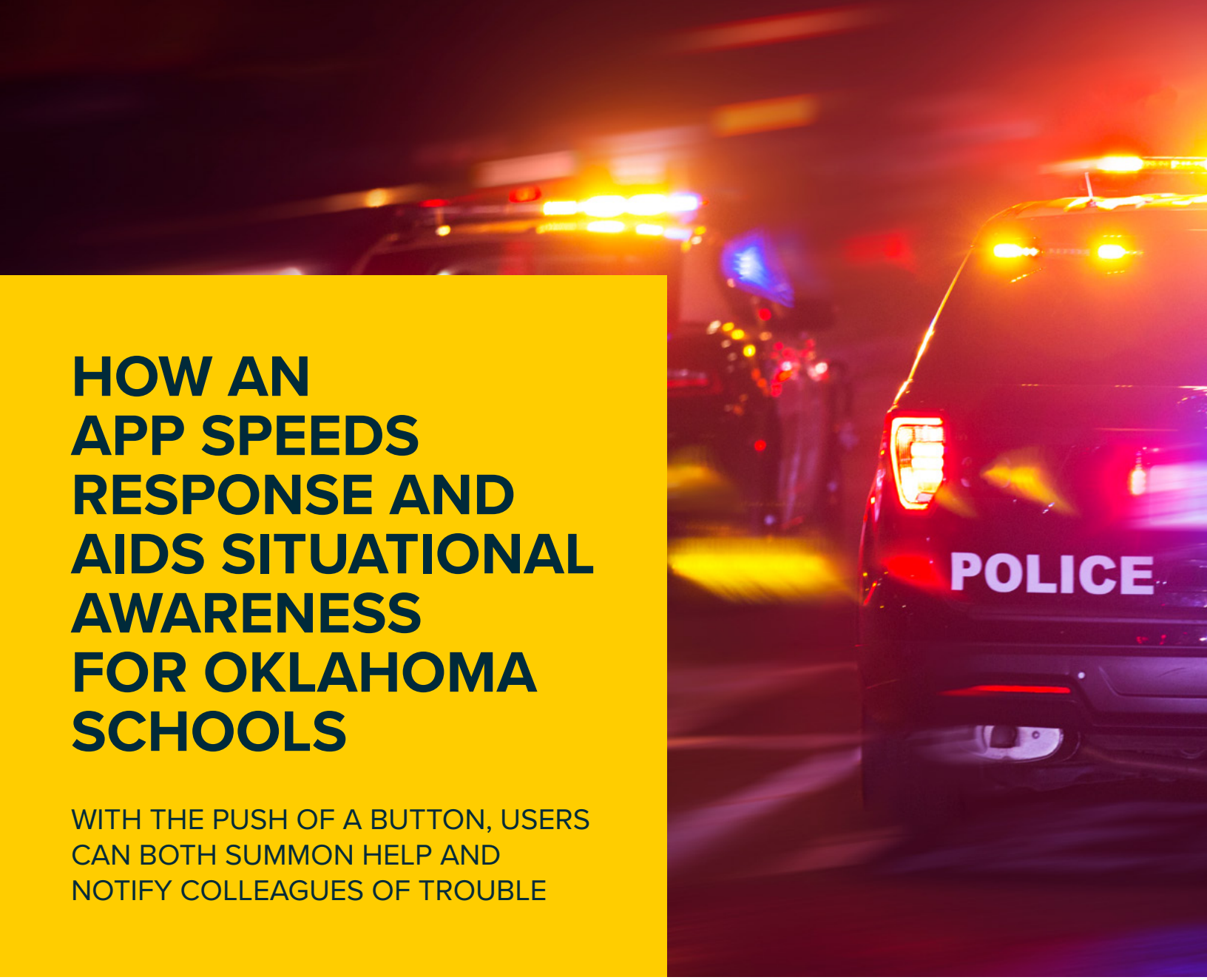
POST-INCIDENT ANALYSIS

No two school-based incidents will ever be the same, and part of creating a network of safety for students and teachers involves identifying areas of improvement for future events.

"Whether it's a fight, a medical event or an aggravated assailant inside of a school, it's critical to be able to put together a post-event analysis no matter how benign the event was that occurred," said Wolfinbarger.

Local law enforcement can partner with SROs to analyze school maps and floor plans and evaluate how their standard operating procedures worked in real time. Officers and tactical teams should consider their operational planning in terms of how well their technology worked during a recent event and what they can do to develop a better response next time.

"The heart and soul of our communities are in these school buildings, and they deserve the very best technology and the very best planning," said Wolfinbarger. "When you have planning, technology and commitment, you can work every day to mitigate serious events at our schools." P1



HOW AN APP SPEEDS RESPONSE AND AIDS SITUATIONAL AWARENESS FOR OKLAHOMA SCHOOLS

WITH THE PUSH OF A BUTTON, USERS CAN BOTH SUMMON HELP AND NOTIFY COLLEAGUES OF TROUBLE

By John Erich

While the issue of school shootings has been on the radar of political leaders for some time, the May 2022 massacre at Robb Elementary in Uvalde, Texas dramatically ratcheted up the pressure to act. In Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt responded with an executive order that, among other elements, brought Rave Mobile Safety's Panic Button technology to every school district in the state.

The technology is an app for the personal phones of teachers and school staffers that lets them call 911 and send schoolwide alerts with the simple push of a button in the event of an active shooter or other emergency. It had been available to Oklahoma schools and emergency call centers free of charge since 2019, and many were already using it. With Stitt's order the rest will join them.

"This is an effective safety enhancement that can be held in the palm of one hand," Joy Hofmeister, Oklahoma's superintendent of public instruction, said when the Rave technology was first offered. "We are pleased to offer it to our districts and are confident it will help us foster a culture of safety in every school and district where it is utilized."

Schools in Weatherford, some 70 miles west of Oklahoma City, were among those that opted into the plan in 2019, and it was a tool available to school resource officer Justin Bushong when he started in 2020. But it hadn't been fully implemented yet, and COVID-19 delayed things further. However, the district went fully operational with the app for the 2022-23 school year.

Drills held since have familiarized school personnel with the app and shown how it can work in an actual emergency. "We use it for all our drills," said Bushong, "whether it be a fire drill or an active intruder drill, even tornado drills."

FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED

On users' phones the Panic Button app presents a simple display of just five buttons. All call 911 directly when held for a second and a half. These communicate the type of emergency to dispatch – active assailant, another type of police need, fire, medical or other – and the active assailant and fire buttons also send alerts to all other teachers and campus personnel about the emergency in progress.

At participating call centers, dispatchers receive automatic device location data, and schools can preload key documents like floor plans, with identified buildings, that call-takers can forward on to responding crews. This helps them get to scenes faster. "They won't have to stop at the office and be directed," noted R.B. Hauf, a retired sheriff who's now a strategic account manager for Rave Mobile Safety. "They can see the map, view the streets, all of that, so they instantly know how to get to where they need to go."

Within the school users can be warned away from problem locations – for instance, a fire in the cafeteria or an intruder in one section of a building – and guide students elsewhere or keep them safely in place.

That situational awareness is a key advantage: Previously, students or teachers hearing a traditional fire alarm may have exited classrooms right into the path of a fire or shooter. If they hear such an alarm now, school staff are trained to check their phones immediately for more information.

The app also permits messaging among 911 personnel, school administrators and staff. Dispatch can provide instructions for those on scene, and officials like Bushong can quell false alarms and disseminate other critical information. And when there's more traditional trouble that doesn't rise to the level of requiring 911 – a minor injury or simple disturbance, for instance – its Staff Assist feature lets school personnel summon colleagues and send custom messages without activating police or firefighters.

REDUCE STRAIN ON 911

Preparing the app for use is a simple matter of loading building and staff information. Bushong handles it all for Weatherford, which has three elementary schools, one middle and one high school. He's extended the Rave system's alerts to the fire department and key government officials, who don't have the app but receive messages by text. Rural schools in particular are encouraged to add local resources when official responses may be distant and delayed.

Schools in Norman were among Oklahoma's earliest adopters and have been thrilled with the results. "It's a game-changer to have everything we need in one solution, from communication and shareable maps to crisis plans and drill management," said Justin Milner, the system's assistant superintendent and COO. "The Rave platform embodies everything we need to stay vigilant on school safety and have a unified solution that can share real-time data and updates with stakeholders and first responders as situations unfold."

While the solution drew broad-based local support in Weatherford, a lone note of skepticism came from an unlikely source: its fire department, which oversaw the school system's fire drills and felt the existing 911 system was sufficient for their response. Their doubts were resolved by a simple demonstration: Bushong activated the Panic Button at the same time a firefighter pulled a traditional school fire alarm. "We actually got the alert before the alarm company called our dispatch to send the fire department," said Bushong. "They saw there was a good minute-and-a-half to two-minute difference." That's an eternity in a mass shooting or medical emergency.

Then the same thing happened with a large drill in February: Participating state troopers received their text alerts before call information could route from 911 dispatchers. "I think it really opened everybody's eyes," added Bushong. "It's going to be something pretty special to use."

Additional benefits anticipated in Weatherford include reduced strain on 911 call-takers – school staff who know an alert's been triggered won't need to make duplicate calls for help – and increased comfort for parents who know help is that much closer for their children.

"That will put them a bit more at ease," noted Hauf. "And that will lead to fewer problems for first responders trying to get to that scene. When parents are trying to get there, because they don't know what's going on, they can block roadways."

Rave Mobile Safety's Rave Alert mass-notification system gives schools a platform to communicate with parents and community members in such situations. Other complementary solutions from the company include Rave Collaborate, which aids tactical crisis management; the Rave 911 suite for more efficient dispatch; and Rave Aware for internal notification and response management.

The Rave Panic Button app has been implemented in all 50 states and serves schools in locations like Chicago and Washington, D.C. In Oklahoma it will protect more than 85,000 teachers and staff and more than 700,000 students. It has been endorsed by the Oklahoma Sheriffs' Association. P1

TIPS FOR SUCCESS FOR APPLYING FOR GRANTS UNDER THE SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

POLICE DEPARTMENTS CAN THE LEAD IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENHANCED SECURITY ON K-12 SCHOOL CAMPUSES, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOOL OFFICIALS

The Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing School Violence Act of 2018 (STOP School Violence Act of 2018) gave the COPS Office authority to provide awards directly to States, units of local government, or Indian tribes to improve security at schools and on school grounds in the jurisdiction of the grantee through evidence-based school safety programs and technology.

SVPP funding will provide up to 75% funding for the following school safety measures in and around K-12 (primary and secondary) schools and school grounds:

- Coordination with law enforcement.
- Training for local law enforcement officers to prevent student violence against others and self.
- Metal detectors, locks, lighting, and other deterrent measures.
- Technology for expedited notification of local law enforcement during an emergency.
- Any other measure that the COPS Office determines may provide a significant improvement in security.

Award Ceiling: $500,000 (25% cash match)

Each award has a three years (36 months) project period

The following entities are ineligible to apply as primary applicants:

- Individual schools
- Nonprofit schools and nonprofit organizations that operate schools
- Private schools, including private charter schools

The goal of the School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP) is to improve security at schools and on school grounds through the implementation of evidence-based school safety programs and technology. SVPP awards will contribute to this goal by funding projects which include funding of civilian personnel to serve as coordinators with local law enforcement, training for local law enforcement officers, purchase and installation of certain allowable equipment and technology, and other measures to significantly improve school security.

There are 5 key application elements in the COPS SVPP grant:

1. School Safety Planning Efforts
2. Funding Request and Integration
3. Management and Implementation Plan
4. Sustainability Plan
5. Budget Summary

Successful applicants have taken the following things into consideration when completing the narrative portion of the grant application:

- Does the school have an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) or School Safety Plan?
- When was it completed?
- Who was involved in drafting the plan? (List by qualification or title, not necessarily by name.)
- Does the plan detail response policies and procedures to a broad variety of emergency incidents?

Note – if a threat assessment was conducted by an outside agency prior to submission of the grant proposal, please add this information to the narratives.

As a condition of funding, if awarded, recipients must conduct comprehensive school safety assessments during the grant award period for all schools involved in the project. These assessments must inform the measures necessary to improve school safety and ensure a safe and positive learning environment for students. Advance completion may open additional funding streams for implementation of defined safety measures.

Communities should approach completion of the required comprehensive school safety assessment by first determining who should help formulate school safety goals, outcomes, activities, and outputs. A core group of stakeholders may include (but is not limited to): school administrators; school district safety directors, local law enforcement officers; mental health professionals; teachers; and parent organization representatives. The work of these individuals should serve as the blueprint for a successful SVPP application.

Whether you are relying on in-house resources or using a grant professional, the application reviewer will need to know what type of incidents have taken place in the school, and the surrounding community, over the past 3 years. The reviewer will look for a description of the measures currently in place to address these issues, and seek to easily determine what type of enhancements are needed to address existing issues and potential threats.

The funding request must align with the identified problem(s) listed in the safety plan or threat assessment. There may be both a narrative component and a **budget summary** form in the application. Departments are encouraged to obtain cost estimates for proposed solutions to serve as the basis for the funding request.

While the application identifies the list of eligible applicants, it does not dictate which entity should be the lead applicant. Instead, that decision is to be determined at the local level. The COPS SVPP grant is a great opportunity for police departments to take the lead in the implementation of enhanced security on K-12 school campuses, in partnership with school officials.

Memorandums of understanding (MOUs) should be created that clearly outline the roles of each entity, as well as address ownership of physical security enhancements, such as surveillance cameras, lighting, locks, etc. This process may be a bit easier for districts governed by the same entity as the police department (city or town government), but could benefit separate entities where the police department would act as the "pass-through" agency for the funds. In this scenario, payment would be reimbursed to the district from the applicant agency for expenditures pre-approved in the grant application. Reporting requirements for all parties should be addressed in written agreements prior to the acceptance of the grant award. A sample MOU can be found here: https://www.doj.state.or.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/mou_sample_guidelines.pdf.

MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Management and Implementation Plan section often requires applicants to identify who will be responsible for addressing the day-to-day efforts of the proposed solution. This could include the assigned project manager, a fiscal manager, and a safety and security professional. Their roles must be defined in the application. Some applications will allow attachments to be uploaded. In this scenario, resumes or an individual's curriculum vitae (CV) will satisfy this requirement.

The implementation component should identify the steps that will be taken throughout the program period and identify the responsible party.

As you are crafting your proposal, please don't overlook the importance of a Sustainability Plan. Basically, this plan discusses how you will ensure the continuity of the safety enhancements after the grant ends. Sustainability should be discussed with the key stakeholders before a decision is made to apply for grant funding. Each partner

agency should address sustainability for their section of the grant. This information will be requested by most governing agencies, such as city councils and school boards so that they understand their responsibilities under the grant application.

There are several key administrative steps that need to be addressed to be able to apply for the COPS SVPP grant. We recommend that departments get started early. See instructions below:

HOW TO APPLY FOR COPS SVPP

STEP 1. Register with the SAM (System of Award Management) database or confirm or renew your existing SAM registration.

STEP 2. Confirm that the contact information (name and email address) of your entity's electronic business point of contact (E-Biz POC) in SAM is accurate.

STEP 3. Register with Grants.gov or confirm your existing registration.

STEP 4. Submit the first part of your application in www.Grants.gov.

STEP 5. Onboard your agency to the JustGrants Justice Grants system.

STEP 6. Complete and submit the second part of your application in JustGrants (https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov).

Further instructions and explanations of the application process can be found on the COPS Office website at https://cops.usdoj.gov.

TIP: While the application platform will be different, many states are following the COPS SVPP format to distribute additional school safety funds.

RESOURCES

SCHOOL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIPS

This self-paced training is designed to help schools and law enforcement agencies discuss what form they want their partnerships to take, and to consider important issues related to these partnerships.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify the types of school and law enforcement partnerships that exist.
- Determine roles and responsibilities in schools and law enforcement partnerships.
- Describe ethical information sharing between school and law enforcement agencies.

School Safety Planning Guide P1

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Motorola Solutions provides mission-critical communications products and services to public safety, local government and commercial customers around the world. Our innovations, products and services play essential roles in people's lives. We help firefighters see around buildings, police officers see around street corners and school personnel communicate without boundaries. We provide the situational awareness first responders need when a moment brings catastrophe. We do this by connecting them to seamless communication networks, applications and services, by providing them with real-time information and by arming them with intuitive, nearly indestructible handheld devices. Visit Motorola Solutions for more information on education communications solutions.

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RESOURCES

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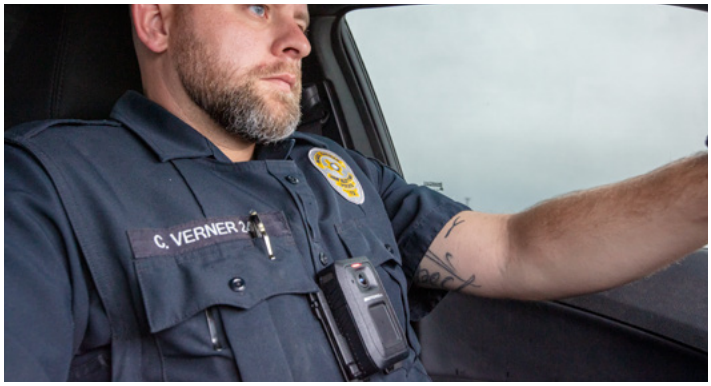

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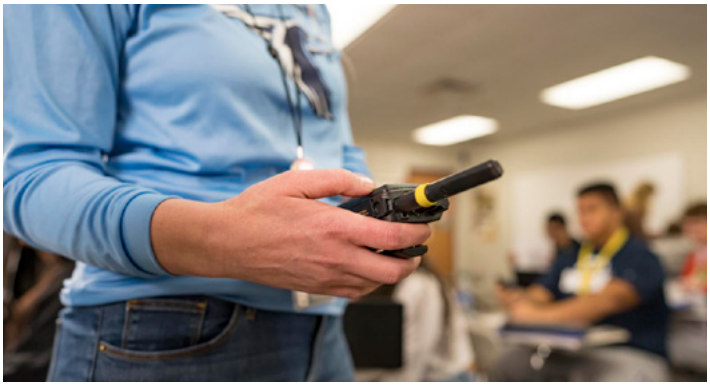

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