

January 23, 2013

State Senator Toni Boucher, Co-chair
State Representative Andrew Fleischmann, Co-Chair
Connecticut General Assembly – School Security Working Group
Connecticut State Capital,
210 Capitol Ave
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Members – School Security Working Group

I would like to introduce myself: I am Roy William Hill. My professional background is in law enforcement, emergency management, and school safety and security. After a 26 year career as a law enforcement officer and police administrator with the Weston, Connecticut, Police Department, and as Weston's Town Administrator, my wife and I relocated to the Palm Springs area of California. While in the Coachella Valley, I worked for the City of Desert Hot Springs for four years, the last two as their Director of Public Safety / Chief of Police. For next seven years (retiring December 2012), I was part of the Palm Springs Unified School District, Management Team (student population-23,000+) overseeing, managing, and updating their school security and emergency preparedness program. Currently I am co-authoring a book, scheduled to be published in April / May 2013, titled *School Emergency Management – A Practical Approach to Implementation*.

School security, safety, and emergency preparedness is not a “one-solution fits all” package; nor does one solution fit every school in the same district. There are basic steps to make a school a safer place, but each school needs to adjust those options to fit their learning environment.

Some of the areas I would make suggestions that the committee looks at are:

- Every school should be required to do a Security and Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) assessing such things as: perimeter and interior physical security; visitor access; Registered Sex Offenders living or working in the area; primary and secondary evacuation locations; just to mention a few. The SVA is not a one-time tool, it should be repeated every year or two, as the school student population or physical structures change.
- School security guards/officers should attend a state-mandated and approved school security course – 40- 80 hours in length depending on the final curriculum design. Some of the topics included in this course could be: laws and liabilities; school security; conflict resolution; working with students with special needs; emergency preparedness and crisis management. After passing this course there should be mandated refresher training every year.

- School administrators should have emergency preparedness and response training consistent with the U.S. Department of Education and Federal Emergency Management Agency guidelines.
- Every secondary school should have a trained threat assessment team which includes a member of the local law enforcement agency and school counselor or school psychologist.
- Schools should have mandatory school emergency drills – over and above, or in conjunction with the currently mandated fire drills. Some of these drills or exercises should be completed in conjunction with their local law enforcement and fire departments.

Unfortunately due to prior commitment I am not able to attend the public hearing on Friday, January 25, 2013. I would like to offer my knowledge, skills, and lessons learned in the field of school security and emergency preparedness to the School Security Working Group.

Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely



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