

HYBRID SECURITY: An all-discipline approach to school security

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The concept of integrating several disciplines into one congruent doctrine isn't new. Recently it's been popularized by the term 'hybrid warfare,' to describe Russian incursions into the Crimea and Ukraine. It is the concept of taking several different methods to achieving the same goal and blending them into an 'all-hazard' approach; attacking a problem from divergent pathways to achieve a more comprehensive end. Hybrid Security is the amalgamation of Community Involvement, Physical Security, SRO, Student Services, and a Robust Training Program. The metric of success is an educational environment that is as well prepared for emergent situations as possible.

In the physical security discipline, the concept of concentric layers of protection around your most valued assets is common practice. Hybrid Security pushes this idea beyond the physical security realm. Using the mental image of an onion, one can envision the theory of Hybrid Security in practice. The outer layer of the onion is Community Support. This is the student's life outside of school, when they're home, out with their friends, and on various social media outlets. We know Eric Harris, one of the Columbine shooters, created a website and blog where he made violent threats toward others, expressed anger and hatred towards society, even going so far as to describe pipe bombs he made¹. Seung-Hui Cho, the Virginia Tech shooter, reportedly made comments to the effect of wanting to 'repeat Columbine'². Often, projections of violent intent are made available for public observation. It is imperative for friends, family, spiritual leaders, social group leaders, as well as casual social media observers to report to the authorities all statements suggesting violence toward self or others. The outer layer of Hybrid Security is a cooperation of the community in defense and preservation of communal safety.

Physical security is the next layer in the proverbial onion. Physical security is defined as, "... the protection of personnel, hardware, software, networks and data from physical actions and events that could cause serious loss or damage to an enterprise, agency or institution. This includes protection from fire, flood, natural disasters, burglary, theft, vandalism and terrorism."³ It is the physical barriers that stand between would-be criminals and the assets we protect. Effective and cost-efficient physical security of school sites is a necessity. It serves as a proactive and reactive approach. A managed and implemented electronic access control system would allow school administrators to control who gets into what areas of the campus and at

¹ <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/columbine-were-there-warning-signs/>

² <http://www.medpagetoday.com/psychiatry/anxietystress/6546>

³ <http://searchsecurity.techtarget.com/definition/physical-security>

what times. An electronic access control measure also allows administrators to know if any unauthorized persons attempted to gain access to off-limits areas. Students and staff can be given specifically coded RFID cards as a means of entering certain areas during school hours. CCTV acts as a deterrent for students contemplating mischief as well as video-recorded evidence of a crime or administrative violation. Lighting is a daunting but necessary task. Conducting a lighting assessment for each site during nighttime hours is crucial to removing the comfy cover of darkness that criminals love. A simple HD-LED light can go a long way in saving energy as well as removing hiding places for criminals. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) can make for the most aesthetically pleasing preventative method of deterring would-be criminals. Simply put, CPTED is arranging the physical layout of a campus or area that maximizes safety and discourages criminals. Think about a bike rack that is on a campus but is hidden by a large bush or on the blind side of a portable classroom. Bikes are constantly being stolen from this bike rack. CPTED is simply moving the bike rack in front of the main office so it's under constant observation.

The School Resource Officer (SRO) is a formidable and invaluable force-multiplier. An effective SRO should be able to effectively balance the adult/student relationship. He/she should be able to communicate as effectively with adults as well as students. The SRO is the face of law enforcement to students; their interactions with him/her could leave lasting impressions on these young people. It is in no way implied that SROs should lay the enforcement of rules and law on the altar of 'coolness.' Conversely, students will respect a firm but fair authority figure rather than one they know they can manipulate. The SRO is one of the adults standing on the front lines of student safety. "A School Resource Officer's daily contacts are powerful — the SRO is not only a protector and provider of safety, but a role model for many kids who sometimes have no other positive role models in their lives."⁴ The SRO is a partner, a liaison, a confidant. SROs are the conduit through which information can flow. The information that SROs glean can turn into actionable intelligence that may prevent tragedy from striking.

Moving even further into the Hybrid Security theorem we find student services. We know beneath the layers, at the very center of protection, reside the assets we hold so dear, our children. The more overt and covert layers of protective insulation we can wrap them in, the better. While we want our students to be as safe and secure as possible, we also don't want them growing up within the inherent security of prison walls. So the challenge falls in the laps of security practitioners working in concert with proactive and engaged school administrators to protect, insulate, defend, and develop our children, while simultaneously making some

⁴ Dan Marcou, Dec 1, 2010. <https://www.policeone.com/school-violence/articles/2901153-SRO-An-important-job-you-can-love/>

efforts overt (CCTV, SRO, Access Control) and maintaining others as covert (counseling, social media reporting, tip lines, staff training programs). Student Services is a broad umbrella that encompasses all aspects of student physical health, mental health, social adaptation, identification of learning and mental disabilities, anti-bullying programs, anti-drug programs, anti-gang efforts, and career placement programs. Student services is one of the paths toward internal security that is divergent from physical security in that it deals with the intangible as opposed to the tangible nature of physical security. Student services for our purposes could be re-labeled Intangible Security: the prevention of violence through targeted mental, physical, social, and emotional counseling for school children. The end-state of this Intangible Security is the targeting of the cause of the disease as opposed to the symptom.

It is by design that the Robust Training Program is the last line of defense before the threat reaches the student at the core of protection. If all else fails, and the worst case scenario is playing out before your eyes, it can be a trained school administrator, teacher, or staff member that could be the difference between life and death. Many career educators, with education and training in all fields of the educational discipline, tackle the huge task of implementing a safety strategy they don't fully understand. I have met several wonderful administrators who admitted to not fully understanding how to teach 'Run, Hide, Fight.' It just wasn't in their tool-bag. So they do the best they can implementing a security plan designed by large nebulous three letter agencies from Washington DC, and attempt to tailor it to their specific site in rural California. Schools, absent training from law enforcement or security consultants, will do their best to practice lockdown drills, which tend to be woefully outdated. Despite the Run, Hide, Fight doctrine being published as the best practice to increase survivability during an active threat event, schools are still exercising typical and outdated 'lockdown' drills in spite of published survival techniques. The modernization and adaptation of active threat drills is a must in today's evolving threat paradigm. Some environments have claimed that the Run, Hide, Fight verbiage is too aggressive. That the mere mention of 'fighting' is too frightening for audiences. Terms have come out in recent times in response to this 'aggressive' tone such as, Avoid, Deny, Defend or Escape, Evade, Engage. The difference lies in mere semantics, but the substance is the same: If you can get away from the threat, get away. If you can't get away from the threat, try to hide yourself. And lastly, if you come face-to-face with the threat, it's either you or him. There's no pleasant way to state that. Only violence of action and a primal survival instinct will give you a fighting chance to survive. That said, it's easier for professionals in the military and law enforcement to stomach this idea. Utilizing a Crawl, Walk, Run method in easing untrained populations into the mindset of the Sheep Dog is recommended.

A source of contention, and rightfully so, is age-appropriate training for teaching the Run, Hide, Fight response. Whether this concept should be taught to students in a K-12 setting

is a non-stop debate. Ultimately, the decision will fall to the school district, school administration, and parents in conjunction with law enforcement and security consultant's input on what curriculum should be taught to students. It is impossible to apply a 'cookie cutter' solution to all school sites. The nature of Hybrid Security is fluid; its content and concepts remain steadfast while its applications can be molded to the specific needs of each individual site.

An aspect of disaster that is often discussed, but rarely trained, is the immediate post-event response to a natural disaster, or active threat. Post-event response can be as chaotic as the event itself. Imagine if you will, the scores of parents understandably swarming a campus after a natural disaster has struck. Now imagine you're the administrator in charge of student release. If post-event response isn't practiced, rehearsed and refined, failure is on the horizon. What about injuries? Imagine an earthquake has left you trapped in a room full of students, some of them with serious injuries. A civilian adaptation of Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) can and should be offered to staff, teachers, and administrators. Using the MARCH algorithm (Massive Hemorrhage, Airway, Respiration, Circulation, Head & Hypothermia), and with Individual First Aid Kits (IFAK's) available, teachers should be trained to render lifesaving first aid. The human body has 4-5 liters of blood. A wound to a major artery can cause a person to bleed to death in a matter of minutes. Not to over-exaggerate, but knowing how to properly apply a tourniquet could literally save someone's life. Especially in rural areas where emergency services could take several minutes to respond. The application of basic trauma medical training isn't restricted to the school setting, because having a medically trained chaperone on field trips is a quantifiable plus. The paradigm of reactivity versus proactivity has already begun to shift toward the latter.

One unsung hero on any campus is the Campus Supervisor. This adult, who may have another title besides Campus Supervisor, is the adult who typically traverses the campus on foot or on a golf cart. His or her duties could range from, monitoring lunches, to securing gates after school starts, to breaking up fights and intercepting interloping adults on campus. They are campus security without the title. These adults are like the SRO in that they can serve as a conduit of information between students and administration. Often, students feel comfortable enough with the Campus Supervisor to give forewarning of potentially undesirable situations, such as fights after school, or weapons and drugs on campus. This job often comes with no formal training. Most new hires get on-the-job training and site-specific instructions for their post. A person designated for security should have additional training, like that of a licensed security guard.

It is no mistake that training is the last line of defense. A robust and proactive training program is the final protective line between threats and our students. It's our responsibility to

ensure the training is realistic, timely, and effective. We owe it to our kids to train and equip the adults charged with their care, providing them with every tool possible to ensure a safe and secure environment in which to learn and grow.

The idea of concurrently utilizing different methods to attain a specific goal isn't a novelty. In fact, many school administrators and those identified to run school security may already be exercising a version of this. There are myriad ideas, means, and methods in existence to improve school security. Hybrid Security is a dynamic and fluid concept that allows for a user to coalesce existing ideas and use them in concert to achieve a common goal: The lives and safety of our children.

