

Alachua County Public Schools informing parents about safety training

All Alachua County Public School students will be receiving training in dealing with an active threat at school, including an armed assailant, during the first week of school.

The training is mandated by a new Florida law passed by the Legislature following the February shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in South Florida. The law, commonly known as SB 7026, requires that training be provided during the first week of school, which begins August 13. Training must be conducted again during the first week of the second semester, which will fall in mid-January of 2019.



The district has been working closely with local law enforcement to prepare age-appropriate materials based on the ALICE protocol (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate). This is a nationally-recognized program used in schools and other settings throughout the nation. The training will include a video and discussions between students and teachers.

Parents have been notified through automated phone and email messages about the training. They've also been provided with a link to the district's new Safety and Security website, which will include the ALICE training videos and other information. That link is:
<https://www.sbac.edu/Page/28986>

Teachers and other school staff are undergoing ALICE training this week as part of pre-planning. Alachua County Public Schools actually started implementing the ALICE protocol about two years ago, with teams from every school undergoing training last summer and during the 2017-18 school year.

Alachua County parents were also given the opportunity to undergo ALICE training during a webinar conducted in early March and during live workshops conducted by trainers from the national ALICE Training Institute in the spring.

Alachua County Council of PTAs is offering another opportunity for parents and other local citizens to receive ALICE training by sworn law enforcement officers. It will be offered on Saturday, August 25 from 11 a.m. to noon. Anyone interested in attending will need to register online at:
<https://goo.gl/forms/8EPCQXGi477PtCuB2>

The new state law also requires sworn law enforcement officers at every school. Since 2012, Alachua County Public Schools has had school resource officers/deputies from the Alachua County Sheriff's Office, the Gainesville Police Department, Alachua Police Department and High Springs Police Department Assigned to every school.

The district recently hired a new District Safety and Security Chief to oversee all safety efforts. Casey Hamilton has more than twenty years of experience in law enforcement, including several as a school resource deputy with the Alachua County Sheriff's Office.

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