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I'm certain each of you was shocked to hear and see the news on February 14 of another school shooting. The devastating impact on individuals, families, the school, and the community is incomprehensible. It is always striking to hear people say something to the effect of, "I never thought it could happen here." Unfortunately, we hear that phrase all too often.

Though the police will be investigating this incident for some time, what is clear is that the killer activated the fire alarm to get more people out in the open. This method has been employed before in school shootings and it leads me back to the idea that as we plan to take action during these horrific events, each of us must be ready to think quickly and act decisively in these life and death situations.

It is important to remember that there is no way to be 100% prepared for every possible scenario however, I would like you to be aware that the school district is transitioning to a new methodology to prepare for this type of unimaginable crisis. The program is called ALICE, and this method provides us with a very effective model designed to consider our own personal actions during a shooting.

Scott Wenzel, PJHS principal, and I have been working very closely with Peotone Fire and Police in developing a training program for our staff in the ALICE techniques. Mr. Wenzel, members of the Peotone Fire and Police Departments, and I have all attended training to become ALICE instructors. Though we will start with hands-on training with our staff, that training will provide recognition of gun fire in a building, barricading a room, exiting a building, and considering what to do once you have left a building.

ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate. In short, using this method, we will teach students that in the event of a shooting they should;

- Listen carefully for information to determine the location and type of event.
- Remain in a secure area until it is safe to evacuate.
- Enter a secure area and use skills to distract, confuse, run away from, or if necessary/possible gain control of the shooter, should one be in the area.
- Evacuate, as soon as it is safe.

Please note that the ALICE methodology does not ask teachers or students to make an attempt to subdue a shooter outside of their secure area. However, we will provide age-appropriate knowledge to students that if a shooting happens, there are things they can do to greatly improve their chance of survival. These things include;



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- Cause distractions to interfere with the ability to shoot accurately.
- Do not be a stationary target.
- Controlling an attacker if you are able to subdue.
- Interact with responding police.

I know having to prepare for these types of incidents can be unsettling, but whether it is at school as a student or staff member, or simply being a spectator at a public venue, we find ourselves in an environment in which we should not ignore reasonable preparations for such tragic events.

I would like you to know that the safety and security of our students and staff remains a top priority. Moving to this new methodology, for reacting to a school shooting incident, will provide us with a greater set of skills to react in a proactive way in the face of such a terrible circumstance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Stein', is positioned above the printed name.

Steve Stein