

# POST-INCIDENT REVIEW

# Arapahoe High School

# Active-Shooter Incident



A NON-PROFIT SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER

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## 1. Purpose of this Report

On December 13, 2013, an aggressor who was a current student at Arapahoe High School (AHS) entered the school via an unsecured entrance and fatally shot seventeen-year-old student Claire Esther Davis before killing himself (McCauley, n.d., p. 2). Like other school attacks, this incident caused immense emotional suffering for many people. As the victim's family stated in their letter to the public on October 10, 2014:

The result was a terrible tragedy for all of us – not only our family, but for all the kids and staff at Arapahoe High School, our entire community, the State of Colorado, the [aggressor's] family, and all the persons across the country and around the world that have sent us their condolences and have held us up in their thoughts and prayers. (Davis, 2014)

As this report will demonstrate, there were missed opportunities that might have prevented the death of Claire Davis. The report will also demonstrate that since the incident, the LPS has taken many steps in an effort to draw lessons from the AHS incident for the LPS community as well as the surrounding community. For example, the District conducted multiple internal post-incident evaluations, formed a Safety and Mental Health Advisory Committee (SMHAC), and sought nationally recognized experts in school safety and mental health to conduct thorough evaluations of the District's strategies, policies and procedures prior to, during, and after December 13, 2013.

Based on the site visit to AHS during a trip to present for the SMHAC in February 2015 and an initial review of the incident with LPS officials, Safe Havens International (SHI) Executive Director Michael Dorn offered to discuss the possibility of SHI conducting an evaluation with SHI's senior leadership team. During this discussion, the SHI leadership team approved SHI performing a review of this incident as a pro-bono effort with no costs for the LPS aside from actual travel expenses for any analysts who had to travel to the District for the review, report findings, etc. Our primary purpose of conducting this in-depth review of the case is to compile lessons that LPS and schools around the nation can study to further improve the safety of their schools. An important secondary rationale for SHI to perform this review is to help our analysts learn more about school safety and apply these lessons to improve our ability to make schools safer.

As a non-profit school safety center, a significant part of our mission is to help further the cause of school safety via pro-bono projects. SHI frequently performs pro-bono projects for a variety of educational, state, federal, and non-profit organizations as a way to provide our knowledge and expertise to help improve safety and security in the school environment. Eleven SHI analysts and one support staff member agreed to donate their time, talent, and energy to perform more than a thousand hours of work for this evaluation without any compensation. These analysts are from a variety of disciplines with extensive experience working in the K12 school environment.

Upon the SHI leadership team's approval, Mr. Dorn spoke via conference call with LPS Superintendent Brian Ewert, LPS Arbitration Attorney Stephen Overall, and other key LPS officials. On this call, Mr. Dorn advised the LPS that SHI would provide this independent evaluation on the condition that SHI analysts were free to evaluate any aspects of the incident that would be relevant to the case and provide critical analysis as found to be appropriate.

Mr. Dorn also advised the LPS that instead of only focusing on the threat assessment issues at LPS, in general, or AHS, in particular, a comprehensive multi-disciplinary evaluation of the incident should be conducted. As the U.S. Secret Service (USSS) and the United States Department of Education (ED) stated in the *Threat assessment in schools: A guide to managing threatening situations and to creating safe school climates*:

Threat assessment should be looked upon as one component in an overall strategy to reduce school violence. The threat assessment process by itself is unlikely to have a lasting effect on the problem of targeted school violence unless that process is implemented in the larger context of strategies to ensure that schools offer their students safe and secure learning environments. The principal objective of school violence-reduction strategies should be to create cultures and climates of safety, respect, and emotional support within educational institutions. (Fein, Vossekuil, Pollack, Borum, Modzeleski, & Reddy, 2004, p. 11)

Additionally, as Colorado schools have been the scene of a statistically unusual number of active shooter events, our analysts feel that a holistic appraisal of the measures LPS and the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) had in place prior to the event, how the LPS and its community partners responded to the incident, and the numerous changes that have been implemented since the incident occurred will provide valuable insights for LPS and other communities. For these reasons, the scope of the evaluation was broadened. This, in turn, revealed additional opportunities for improvement that might reflect negatively on the LPS that would have been missed with a more limited evaluation.

The Superintendent and his team agreed that this type of in-depth and comprehensive evaluation would best serve the interests of the LPS board, staff, students, and the community and accepted the offer for an independent review of the shooting with these conditions. The Superintendent also determined that the report of this evaluation would be conducted for the LPS rather than for the LPS legal counsel. This is an important distinction as reviews of school crisis events during a legal process are typically structured with the experts reporting to legal counsel on both sides of the legal process. The Superintendent also requested that the report be released without any opportunity for LPS personnel to review drafts of the report or to recommend changes to the report.

We urge that people who read this and other reports by the other teams of subject matter experts to do so with a focus on learning leading practices rather than on placing blame. As the victim's father clearly stated at the celebration of his daughter's life on New Year's Day just a few weeks after the incident, "Unchecked



anger and rage can lead to hatred, and unchecked hatred can lead to tragedy, blindness and...loss of humanity. The last thing that Desiree and I would want is to perpetuate this anger and rage and hatred in connection with Claire. Claire would also not want this” (TheDenverChannel.com Team, 2014).

## 2. Perspective

American public schools dare to educate those students who are cast aside in many other countries. Students with a variety of physical and emotional special needs are excluded from the educational process in many regions of the world. We, as a society, often ask a great deal of our schools, students, parents, law enforcement agencies, and communities. These demands are many times very difficult and sometimes seemingly impossible to fulfill with limited resources, legal restrictions, and other challenges.

We ask our schools to maintain a safe, orderly, and disciplined environment while often not providing them with adequate funding for safety measures and pressuring them to minimize the use of disciplinary actions and the court system. Yet when safety incidents occur, we criticize them for not having adequate safety measures or for not taking appropriate disciplinary action.

We ask our students to be tolerant of those who are different while urging them to report other students who may pose a danger because they act in an unusual manner. Yet students are often criticized for being intolerant or for their failure to report other students who communicate inappropriate messages or act differently.

We ask our parents to be responsible to meet all the needs of their children – physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and educational – while at the same time asking them to give their children freedom to grow and mature independently. Parents must walk a fine line between the labels of “Uninvolved Parent” and “Helicopter Parent.” However, when a violent incident involving students occurs, one of the first questions asked is “Where were the parents? How could they have not known?”

We ask our law enforcement agencies to protect our schools while telling them to minimize the use of the courts for many situations where victimization has occurred and criminal code sections have been violated. We ask them to guard our schools from the threat of active killer events as well as frightening acts of terrorism while placing them under intense scrutiny as to how they accomplish these tasks. As with our educational organizations, we often do not provide our law enforcement agencies with adequate resources to address these rare but catastrophic events along with the numerous other tasks they must perform to maintain safety and security in our schools.

We also demand that our elected officials pass laws that will make sure that major acts of violence cease to occur. In spite of a wide array of approaches including those that would be considered draconian and cruel in our society, mass casualty acts of violence occur in every region of the world. While many Americans believe that we are unique in this regard, careful study along with our work globally indicates that the threat of mass casualty violence is a significant issue in Canada, Mexico, South and Central America, Europe, Africa, Asia, the Pacific Rim and the Middle East.

While a number of planned attacks at K12 schools have been successfully averted in the United States and other countries, there are no absolute, let alone simple, solutions to this pressing, global societal challenge.



As readers will see, the prevention of, preparedness for, response to, and recovery from shooting incidents can be very complex and challenging. This report will contain a number of observations of how things could have been done better and how there were multiple potential opportunities for this tragedy to have been averted.

Consequently, we realize that there are no measures that have proven to offer absolute prevention of school violence. Our experience has been that in many, if not most, situations there are possibilities and probabilities that can significantly reduce the chances that a school shooting will occur. We ask the reader to understand that there are no guarantees that the practices we describe will be 100 percent effective. As the Director of Student Services of Englewood Schools stated in his closing comments when speaking on behalf of the Consortium of Special Education Directors before the SB214 Committee of the Colorado Legislature on October 27, 2015 (SB214 Committee), "What is critical to remember is that this is a complex issue, one where a checklist or menu of solutions, or prescribed approach cannot guarantee there will be no future acts of school violence."

While we understand the desire that people have to "put an end" to school violence, our professional experience has been that there is no technology schools can purchase, no training program they can implement, no strategy they can employ, and no law we can pass that can end all school shootings. Nevertheless, we remain optimistic that there are many opportunities to reduce the risk of serious injury and death from school violence.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Methods of Document Collection and Analysis

LPS's Arbitration Attorney Stephen Everall provided the SHI evaluation team with documents for the case via emails and two external drives. As the project lead and the primary writer of this report, SHI Executive Director Michael Dorn reviewed all documents provided by Mr. Everall. Three team members reviewed the overall case file while the other analysts on the team were asked to focus their expertise on specific aspects of the case file most relevant to their specific areas of expertise.

In addition to the documents provided by LPS's attorney Stephen Everall, the team also reviewed media reports on the AHS incident as well as government documents, published articles, papers, guides, and books in addition to independent research for the case review. Please refer to Appendix I for the list of documents cited in this report. Though the evaluation team reviewed more documents than those on this list, to keep the report succinct and readable, we only listed the documents cited in the report.

SHI Executive Director Michael Dorn conducted a site visit to AHS before the arbitration process was initiated. This visit occurred on February 28, 2015 when Mr. Dorn presented to the SMHAC. During the visit, LPS Security Director Guy Grace walked Mr. Dorn through the school with an emphasis on where key aspects of the attack took place. In addition, we found that it would be helpful to bring different types of advanced skill sets that related to physical facilities design features and school safety concepts such as crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). Analysts Tod Schneider and Chris Dorn conducted another site visit to the school on November 16, 2015. They also took photographs to provide the remaining analysts with a more comprehensive understanding of the school's design, layout, and security features at the time of the incident as well as improvements made after the incident.

Findings from document review and site visits are incorporated into this report. Because of the diversity, depth, and breadth of expertise of the eleven analysts who reviewed the incident and provided observations, it is unrealistic to expect total consensus of all the analysts on every finding in this case. While all eleven school safety experts were able to provide their thoughts freely and had an opportunity to evaluate and comment on the draft report, some experts were not involved in some of our observations. For example, school threat evaluation expert William Miller was not asked to review or opine on school security practices. Though the report represents the overall opinions of our expert team, it would be inaccurate to present the observations of this report as reflecting total consensus on every aspect we reviewed.

This report identifies numerous opportunities for improvement for the LPS and its public safety partners. It also highlights many of their positive safety, security, and emergency preparedness measures at LPS schools. The identification of opportunities for improvement along with positive actions of the LPS and responding public safety officials will not only benefit the LPS community but also other educational



organizations and public safety agencies around the nation and abroad who seek a better understanding of how events might unfold should they experience a comparable crisis.

### **3.2. Identity of the Aggressor**

We will not identify the active shooter in the AHS incident by using either his name or his parents' names in this report. We will, instead, refer to the shooter as "the aggressor." It appears that the aggressor wanted to generate media attention as a diary entry revealed "I want the conversation to be about elementary school teasing" ("ACSO AHS Investigation", n.d., p. 30). Our team was concerned that the use of the aggressor's name in this report could serve as a contributing motivating factor in future school attacks.

While there is currently not a consensus on the issue among experts, there are indications that media attention of mass killers may contribute to the decisions by others to try to emulate their violent actions (Schulman, 2013). In addition, our experience reviewing planned school attacks has been that the pre-attack writings, videos, and other means of communications by some perpetrators of planned school shootings demonstrate that they sought to use their attacks to generate attention via media coverage and other public forums. Members of our review team have also investigated cases as practitioners where students who were stopped from carrying out attacks on schools have referenced and even idolized aggressors in previous attacks. For example, the mother of a student who was arrested while planning to detonate an explosive device at a middle school in Macon, Georgia in 1999 told report co-author Michael Dorn and other investigating officers that the young man also sought to receive the same media attention as the aggressor who carried out the mass casualty school shooting at Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon in May, 1998. The officers also found newspaper clipping relating to the Thurston attack during a search of the student's bedroom. The student's mother also informed members of the threat assessment team that her son had watched a television special about the Thurston High attack and had told her that the attacker "was cool" and that he wanted to be famous "just like him."

While we cannot prevent others from using the aggressor's name in the public forum, our analysts do not wish to do anything to contribute to the deaths of other innocent victims in future attacks by giving power to the aggressor's name in this report.

## 4. Limitations of the Report

### 4.1. Scope of the Report

We would like to note a series of limitations for the extent and accuracy of any evaluation of this incident. The first limitation involves time constraints. Our team had less than six months from the day we received the first documents from LPS Arbitration Attorney Steve Everall to review approximately 10,000 pages of documents and just over than a month from the day the last deposition for the case was delivered to us to prepare our written report. The short timeline, in relation to other cases we have reviewed, was necessary because the reports developed pursuant to the arbitration between the LPS and the Davis family, including this report, were due to be released in January 2016. Due to this short timeline, there were a number of findings that we did not have time to properly prepare. We focused our available time and energy on performing a quality development of what we felt to be the most important findings rather than attempting to include every observation in a less thorough manner.

Additionally, in reviewing the case, there are a number of factors beyond the control of the authors that limit the ability of any evaluation team to accurately and completely assess specific aspects of this particular case. In this instance, all eleven subject matter experts are of the opinion that these limiting factors make it impossible for any evaluation team to properly, accurately, and fully opine on this incident to the extent that might otherwise be possible. The primary obstacles to a complete and proper evaluation of this incident include:

1. Most of the documents reviewed for the case are limited to those provided to us by LPS arbitration attorney Steve Everall's office. These documents are arbitration records as well as documents provided by LPS and ACSO that were deemed relevant to the case. We do not know if there is any information that might have been important to an outside evaluation but was not provided to us.

For example:

- a. We were not provided with any of the recorded video footage of the incident from the ASH security camera system. LPS arbitration attorney Steve Everall advised us that, quite understandably, the Davis family did not want people viewing the video depictions of their daughter being murdered. We also understand the importance of the LPS and ACSO taking proactive steps to prevent the mass distribution of the footage from this incident on the Internet as has happened in past incidents. We fully respect the efforts of the LPS and the ACSO to prevent this from occurring. We offered to travel to Littleton to view the footage in person but were advised that this would also not be permissible. While we understand the reasons for this restriction, all readers should understand that this significantly limits how complete and accurate any external review of specific aspects of the case by any team of experts will be. This affects our observations as to potential opportunities to prevent the event as well as response efforts. Our review is limited to the

description of some footage provided in the ACSO report released to the public in October 2014, as well as to verbal descriptions provided by LPS Security Director Guy Grace of what some video footage depicts. All observations are based on the accuracy of these two official sources without our team being able to verify their descriptions as we would typically do through careful review of the footage.

- b. We were not provided with the complete diary of the aggressor. Our review is limited to the very limited excerpts of diary that are included in the ACSO report released to the public in October 2014. The majority of the diary entries that could shed light on the aggressor's personality and thought processes were not available to us.

We, in no way, intend to convey that there has been anything done incorrectly by attorney Steve Overall, the ACSO, or the LPS in this regard, only to point out that in this respect, we could only review the case-related information to which we had access.

2. As with many cases of this type, our review team noted many inconsistencies and contested recollections in the statements of witnesses both in the criminal investigation of the incident and in the deposition process. The high degree of stress, confusion, and emotional trauma in these types of events often results in inaccurate memories. In fact, the transcripts of the depositions of a number of witnesses in this case indicate they were having difficulty recalling events both prior to, during, and after the attack. For example, ACSO Deputy James Englert used the words "can't remember" multiple times in his deposition (Englert Dep. 3, 13, 30, 39, 41, 47, & 123, 2015). Like any other highly trained and seasoned law enforcement officer, Deputy Englert is a human being who is not immune to the powerful effects of the immense levels of stress and trauma he had endured in this incident along with the limitations of memory that affects all people. Being the only person capable of reliably stopping an active shooter on the AHS campus during the first chaotic minutes of this incident placed a heavy burden on this officer. This should serve as a powerful caution for all who review this incident that the statements of witnesses in these types of incidents have limitations as to accuracy regardless of how hard witnesses try to accurately recall details. In addition, as noted in the book *Columbine*, many witness statements later turned out to be untrue and even some of those turned into urban myths, such as the alleged "Trench Coat Mafia" that never actually existed (Cullen, 2009, Chapter 28). Our review team members all understand this limitation of witness recollection for these types of cases, and we urge the reader to keep this limitation in mind as they read this and other reports regarding the incident.
3. The mental health records of the aggressor are not available for review. We were advised by LPS arbitration attorney Steve Overall that Colorado law would not allow access to these critical records without the permission of the aggressor's parents. While the aggressor's parents did release a very limited amount of information, they would not agree to release the records relating to any mental health evaluations or therapy. Without access to these records, significant limitations exist for any external review of the motivations and mental state of the aggressor. This also limits our

ability to determine if there were any additional potential missed opportunities to prevent the incident by mental health professionals who provided services to the aggressor. While we can certainly understand how parents who have experienced the loss of a child with mental health issues would not want these records revealed publicly, it is important for all who read this report to understand the significant limitations this creates.

4. Our assessment team would have found it to be helpful for the case review if former AHS campus supervisors Cameron Rust and Christina Kolk had been deposed. Both were among AHS personnel initially responding to the incident and have made public statements about the AHS incident, including criticism of both the ACSO and the LPS regarding the incident (“Another Arapahoe”, 2014; Joseph, 2014). In addition, in her report, ACSO investigator Kristin McCauley found a number of statements Mr. Rust made on Facebook to be inaccurate, conflicting with their initial interview with investigators, and in direct conflict with the statements of other witnesses such as Deputy Englert and AHS campus supervisor Rodney Mauler (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., pp. ACSO\_0001425-1427). The ACSO also noted concerns relating to the accuracy of some statements made by these witnesses in their investigation report released to the public in October 2014 (McCauley, n.d., p. 18). While Mr. Rust and Ms. Kolk were both interviewed two times by ACSO investigators a few days after the incident, they made those and other statements after the interview. Depositions of these witnesses under oath might have been helpful to outside evaluators as it could help clarify their statements as well as other information related to the incident.
5. We did not have opportunity to conduct our own formal interviews of other parties involved in the incident, such as ACSO officers, the aggressor’s parents, the victim’s family, and LPS and AHS staff and students. We were advised by LPS arbitration attorney that there were limitations on conducting additional interviews other than those performed by the ACSO for their investigation of the incident or the depositions conducted during the arbitration process due to the rules of the arbitration. The LPS arbitration attorney advised us that before any formal interviews could be conducted, the attorney for the Davis family would have to be notified in advance so he and other experts conducting their review could be present during the interviews to have equal access to the information we received. The extremely short timeline for this project, as aforementioned, combined with the extensive travel schedules of many of the analysts who worked on this project would make coordination of these types of arrangements impractical if not impossible.
6. The documents provided to us for review contained limited information on the mental health recovery process conducted after the incident. For example, we did not find documents regarding the process, the qualifications of the personnel conducting the process, the follow-up activities, and long-term consequences such as student/teacher absences, transfers, suicidal ideation, test scores, job performance, etc. This significantly limited the ability of our team to opine in this area. It is our understanding that Dr. Linda Kanan and her team, who may also provide another report for the District, will be conducting a more thorough evaluation of this area based on her direct

experience working on mental health recovery for the LPS after the attack. Dr. Kanan is a highly experienced practitioner in this area who is well regarded in the field. For these reasons, we will not be providing opinions relating to the recovery efforts for this incident.

7. Though we will make limited observations about the response of public safety officials to the shooting at AHS, these have been restricted primarily to those that have influence on the preparedness and response efforts of the LPS. We did not attempt to opine in detail on the overall law enforcement response. This was not requested by the LPS and would be beyond the scope of our review.

With these limitations noted, our analysts focused on those aspects of the case we could reasonably opine on. In addition, while we find opportunities for improvement in the LPS Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), we will not include specific observations on this matter in this report. As EOPs are typically considered to be sensitive homeland security information and as this report will be released to the public, we are concerned that if this type of sensitive information were included in this report, the information could be used by attacker to carry out an attack on LPS schools as well as on other schools in the region. We also did not attempt to conduct a comprehensive school safety, security, climate, culture, and emergency preparedness assessment of AHS or other facilities within LPS. However, as this report includes observations in some of those areas, our typical assessments entail a number of different processes that are beyond the scope of this review.

Finally, the scope of this report is limited to some aspects of the policies, practices, and procedures of LPS and ACSO before, during, and after the incident that took place at AHS in December 2013. The report does not include opinions on some aspects that are beyond the ability of the LPS, the ACSO, and other community partners to control. For example, it is beyond the scope of this report to opine on whether or not the aggressor's ability to purchase a shotgun after completing a national background check would have likely been able to prevent this incident. While we understand that many people have considerable interest in this topic, it is not relevant to our evaluation. There are also a number of other areas of this type, such as laws relating to mental health, that were not explored in this review because they were also beyond the ability of the LPS community to control.

#### **4.2. Right to Amend the Report if Additional Information Becomes Available**

The findings and opinions provided in this report are accurate to the best of our analysts' knowledge based on the information available for review at the time the report was prepared. As noted in Section 4.1, the case file for this incident is missing a considerable amount of information that would allow for a more accurate and thorough evaluation of this incident. We reserve the right to amend our findings if new information becomes available which provides additional facts making such changes appropriate for a more accurate report.

## 5. About Safe Havens International and the Evaluation Team

### 5.1. Safe Havens International, a Non-Profit Campus Safety Center

Formed in 2000, Safe Havens International (SHI) is the world's largest non-profit school safety center. The fifty-two full-time, part time, and adjunct analysts who make up SHI are dedicated to assisting schools and their community partners in creating a safer world for our children and those who dedicate their lives to educating them. SHI analysts have worked in almost every state in the nation as well as in Mexico, Jamaica, Bolivia, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, the Congo, Rwanda, Thailand, Switzerland, Vietnam, Honduras, Haiti, and a number of other countries. With more than 90 percent of the work performed by SHI involving K12 schools, SHI is highly focused on enhancing safety, security, climate, culture and emergency preparedness in the unique and specific K12 environment. SHI analysts have now assisted with safety, security, and emergency preparedness assessments for more than 6,000 public, private, charter, parochial and independent schools.

SHI analysts have assisted numerous organizations, including the U.S. Departments of Education, Justice and Homeland Security. They have provided assistance to the United States Attorney General's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, Transportation Security Administration, Office of Justice Programs, United States General Services Administration, Israel National Police, International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Association of School Resource Officers, National Association of School Safety and Law enforcement Officers, National Association of School Security and Law Enforcement, International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, National Education Association, National Safety Council, National Association of Pupil Transportation, and Boys and Girls Clubs of America. Our analysts have also provided assistance to a variety of state agencies including but not limited to the Colorado Department of Education, Texas Rangers, California Highway Patrol, and the New York State Police. SHI has also assisted state departments of education, homeland security and/or law enforcement including Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Washington State.

SHI analysts also have extensive experience researching and writing books and web courses relating to school safety and emergency preparedness. The analysts have served as school safety subject matter experts for a wide range of media organizations, including:

- Television: *20/20, ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN, FOX, Anderson Cooper, Sean Hannity, Al Jazeera America, PBS, Larry King Live, Sally Jesse Raphael, Univision, China Central Television, and the Law Enforcement Television Network.*

- Print: *USA Today*, *the Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Education Week*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *the New York Times*, *the London Times*, *the Associated Press*, *Time Magazine*, *Youth Newspaper (Bao Tuoi Tre)* in Vietnam, and *United Press International*.
- Radio: *The BBC*, *NPR*, *Canadian Public Radio*, *the John Tesh Show*, and *CBS Radio*
- Online: *The Huffington Post*, *CNBC Online*, and *NBC News Digital*.

## 5.2. Participating Analysts

[A]ssembling the right group of people, from diverse units of the organization, is essential to the success of an after-action review. People need to develop a systematic perspective about failures. Moreover, you need to come to a clear understanding of the facts before trying to ascertain cause-and-effect relationships. (Roberto, 2009, p. 169)

Eleven SHI analysts served on the review team. The review team members have worked as school safety practitioners in five different states: Georgia, Indiana, Nevada, North Carolina, and Oregon. The members of this team have a variety of backgrounds that make them uniquely qualified to perform an independent and comprehensive review of the AHS shooting case. For example, the team includes:

1. Team members who have conducted school safety, security, climate, culture and emergency preparedness assessments and/or have worked on school safety projects in almost every state. Members of the team have also worked in more than two-dozen countries.
2. Six analysts who have collectively provided post-incident assistance to school officials, insurance carriers, state and federal government agencies, and attorneys for twelve previous school-related active shooter incidents and targeted acts of violence with firearms in Connecticut, Georgia, Oregon, Minnesota, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Florida, Wisconsin, Texas, Connecticut, and Tabor – Canada. Five analysts on this team also provided post-incident assistance to a Christian School in Nairobi – Kenya after two parents were killed, two students were severely injured and a group of students and their teacher survived the deadly Westgate Mall attack carried out by members of the Al-Shabaab terrorist group. The team members have also provided post-incident assistance for more than 300 other types of school crisis events including a variety of single and multiple victim school shootings, edged weapons assaults, tornado strikes, fires, school bombing incidents, deaths from medical emergencies, fatal school bus crashes, school bus shootings and other school crisis events.
3. Three analysts who have first-hand experience working in a school system police agency that has successfully averted five attempted attacks by subjects with handguns at elementary schools, six planned gang-related shootings with handguns and a shotgun at high schools and an athletic event, one planned active-shooter incident at a high school, one planned school bombing, and one planned double suicide involving two high school students.

4. Two analysts who helped develop what is believed to be the nation's first organized K12 multi-disciplinary threat assessment team. These analysts began presenting conference keynotes on student threat evaluation and other school shooting prevention techniques at the national level in the mid 1990's after the concept was used to avert several of the imminent planned school shootings mentioned in the previous point in the early 1990's.
5. One analyst who provided direct oversight for a full-time student threat evaluation team that conducted threat evaluations for one of the nation's ten largest school systems – the Clark County School District in Las Vegas, Nevada. With his team, this analyst helped complete thousands of successful student threat evaluations for this district of approximately 300,000 students.
6. Two analysts who helped develop a school shooting prevention strategy that was the only K12 violence prevention program out of more than 60 programs externally evaluated by the Hamilton-Fish Institute to be designated as a promising gun violence reduction strategy by the United States Attorney General Janet Reno's Office.
7. Five analysts who have collectively authored, co-authored, and served as contributing authors for 29 books relating to safety and emergency management, including books released by major publishers including Barron's (*Staying Alive – How to Act Fast and Survive Deadly Encounters* – authors), Jane's (*Jane's Safe School Planning Guide for All Hazards*, *Jane's Teacher Safety Guide*, and *Jane's Citizen's Safety Guide* – co-authors), Prentice Hall (*Policing and Crime Prevention* – contributing author) and Palgrave MacMillan (*Reclaiming Schools in the Aftermath of Trauma* – contributing author).
8. Seven analysts who helped author the *IS 360: Preparing for Mass Casualty Incidents: A Guide for Schools, Higher Education, and Houses of Worship* web training program for the United States Department of Homeland Security. This program focused on active shooter/killer events in these campus settings and was part of the 2013 White House School Safety Initiative.
9. Four analysts who have co-authored seven web courses on preventing and preparing for active-shooter/killer incidents for both national and international distribution.
10. Analysts who have collectively assisted with school safety, security, climate, culture and emergency preparedness assessments for public, private, charter parochial, independent and faith-based schools for more than 6,000 K12 school facilities. The analysts on this team also assisted with statewide school safety, security, climate, culture and emergency preparedness assessments for state departments of education and homeland security in Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Maine, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.
11. Three public school district police chiefs, one school security and transportation director, one multi-district school safety specialist, one police crime prevention specialist, and one school district police sergeant.



12. Two analysts who have PhDs and five analysts with Master's Degrees in relevant fields.
13. Two analysts who are FBI National Academy graduates.
14. Two analysts who have completed university fellowships to travel to Israel for 14 days of advanced training with Israeli national police, military, and intelligence agencies. Two of the analysts have also provided briefings for ranking Israeli police officials during their visits to the United States.

Please refer to Appendix II for the abbreviated biographies of the analysts in this project.

## 6. Observations for the AHS Shooting Incident

As with the shooting at AHS, many of the school incidents we have been asked to assist with are complex incidents that involve many important factors. In every school shooting case we have provided post-incident assistance for, we noted opportunities for improvement. None of the school shootings we have evaluated had been handled with perfection. Importantly, the same is often true for many successfully averted school shootings we have worked as practitioners. Although it is common to hear calls to “end” school shootings, we respectfully submit that there are no absolute solutions to this complex and painful problem. Just as it has not been possible for governments to end mass casualty violent incidents, terrorism, and wars, putting an end to school violence is a noble and desirable but unrealistic goal. The fact that hundreds of students and school employees have been killed or seriously injured during numerous mass casualty shooting and stabbing incidents in the People’s Republic of China in recent years is but one of many examples of how difficult it can be to prevent these incidents even with the strictest laws in place and regular as well as public application of the death penalty.

While the co-authors of this report have helped to prevent a number of school shootings, suicides, bombings, and other deadly school crisis events, we urge caution in assuming that any one measure or even combination of measures can provide absolute safety. Likewise, the dramatic differences between school systems in Colorado and other states require that prevention and preparedness measures be tailored to fit local risks, resources, and realities. Attempting to use “boilerplate” approaches to school safety can be extremely dangerous.

The findings and opinions provided in this report are accurate to the best of our analysts’ knowledge based on the information available for review. We reserve the right to amend our findings if new information becomes available which provides additional facts making such changes appropriate for an accurate report.

To make the report easier to follow, the findings are grouped into four sections in accordance to the four phases of the school crisis planning model recommended by the U.S. Department of Education in its *Practical Information on Crisis Planning – A Guide for Schools and Communities* updated in 2007 (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). This is the planning model that was in use by the LPS at the time of the incident. The four phases of school crisis planning under this planning model are prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Please note that the findings are not necessarily listed in order of importance.

### 6.1. Prevention and Mitigation

Prevention measures involve those efforts designed to keep negative safety-related incidents from occurring. Distinct from prevention, mitigation efforts are designed to minimize the negative impact of school safety incidents that either cannot be prevented, such as a tornado, or those that occur despite prevention efforts.

The following are our key observations regarding the AHS shooting incident in the area of prevention and mitigation:

**6.1.1. The LPS and its public safety partners had many preventive security measures in place before the AHS incident and have increased their efforts since then.**

In reviewing the case file, we noted that the LPS and local public safety partners such as the ACSO and Littleton Police Department (LPD) had expended considerable time, energy, and funding to implement a wide array of school safety preventive measures for AHS and other schools in the District before the shooting incident in December 2013. The following are some examples of the preventive measures implemented by the LPS and its public safety partners listed in a document titled “LPS Security Timeline and History”:

- Since 1980, school resource officers (SROs) employed by the ACSO and LPD have been assigned to LPS schools and worked closely with the schools to create and maintain a safe school environment.
- LPS, the ACSO, and other community partners formed the LPS Emergency Planning and Safety Committee in 2000. Since its inception, this committee has met every month to discuss the District’s security and emergency planning practices and directions. This was in place at the time of the AHS incident.
- LPS, the City of Littleton, ACSO, Arapahoe/Douglas Mental Health District, and other local organizations and citizens started the Greater Littleton Youth Initiative (GLYI) in 1999 to enhance the positive development of Littleton youth and prevent youth violence.
- The ACSO and other public safety partners helped LPS plan and design the District’s integrated security system in 2002 to enhance security at LPS schools.
- With grant funding received from the Red Cross in 2011, schools in the District were equipped with 32 Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs).
- LPS elementary and middle schools were equipped with remote visitor access control systems that allow staff to buzz-in visitors in 2012 to enhance the schools’ safety and security.

Moreover, according to the LPS Security Director, the District also had the following preventive security measures in place prior to the incident:

- LPS campus supervisors were trained in CPR and first aid.
- Lightning sensors were in place at all schools.
- AHS was staffed by three full-time campus supervisors whose duties included physical security and supervision of students and one assistant principal whose primary function was in safety and security.

- The District adopted Safe2Tell, an anonymous hotline for people to report threats against themselves or others.

As a result, LPS and Security Director Guy Grace have been repeatedly recognized by *Security Magazine* as one of the top leaders in the security industry. The magazine listed Mr. Grace in the list of *Security's 25 Most Influential* in 2006, and Grace and the LPS in the education (K-12) group for *Security 500* in 2012, 2013 as well as in 2014 (“LPS Security Timeline and History”, 2014).

In the area of mental health, LPS also had in place many preventive measures at the time of the incident. For example, according to the report titled “Mental Health Position Paper” by the Safety and Mental Health Advisory Committee (SMHAC) created subsequent to the AHS incident, the LPS had in place at the time of the incident the following preventive measures in the area of mental health:

- Suicide prevention and intervention training for LPS employees as well as for community members and churches
- The Redirection Center as the LPS primary education setting for students who have been expelled or at risk of expulsion
- The Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) to address the issues of truancy
- The Apollo and Summit programs to provide support in mental health needs to middle and high school students with disabilities
- The Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) program
- The Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training program for all LPS schools
- The Pyramid Intervention programs for all students as well as for students identified as having significant needs as well as students who might need intensive, individualized support

Finally, in reviewing the case file, we found that the AHS (and the LPS) had in place at the time of the AHS shooting a structured and formalized threat assessment process. Threat assessment is defined by Mohandie and Hatcher as “the process of assessing risks to a particular target, individual, or group of individuals, and designing and implementing intervention and management strategies to reduce the risk or threat” (as cited in Mohandie, 2000, p. 29). According to the SMHAC’s mental health report (mentioned above), LPS threat assessment procedures were developed based on the models used by neighboring school districts such as Cherry Creek School District (CCSD) and Denver Public Schools (DPS). Along with others, these two school districts assisted the Colorado School Safety Resource Center (CSSRC) in developing the *Essentials of School Threat Assessment: Preventing Targeted School Violence* for Colorado schools. The LPS threat assessment form used at the time of the incident was originally created in 2004 based on the forms developed by neighboring school districts with the assistance of Dr. John Nicoletti, a nationally recognized threat assessment expert. In reviewing Exhibit 17 of the case file, we noted similarities in the threat assessment forms used by the LPS and its neighboring school districts. For

example, the sections such as “Make Sure all Students and Staff are Safe,” “Notifications,” “Review Findings,” and “Develop an Action Plan” in the LPS’ threat assessment form contained similar content as in the forms used by Adams 12 Five Star Schools, CCSD, and DPS.

We found that the threat assessment process used by AHS, in particular, and the LPS, in general, at the time of the incident, is more formalized and structured than the approaches at the majority of the public and non-public schools and school systems with whom we have worked despite significant opportunities for improvement as detailed later in this report. SHI analysts have worked with half of the nation’s top ten largest public school districts, many school districts of comparable and larger sizes than LPS, as well as many distinguished non-public schools. Unfortunately, we find that it is still commonplace for schools and school districts to lack any structured and formalized threat assessment process. In addition, we find that the majority of public and non-public schools we have assessed lack any form of standardized student threat evaluation training program for the staff that perform student threat assessments. Though there has been considerable research in this important area and much improvement over the past two decades, there is still considerable opportunity for improvement in many school organizations.

The LPS, with considerable support from its community partners, has also continued to invest their resources in violence prevention after the AHS incident that took place in December 2013. For example,

- The District formed the Safety and Mental Health Advisory Committee a year after the AHS incident to identify the strengths and opportunities for improvements in the District’s safety and security, mental health, and communication.
- With support from the cities of Littleton and Centennial, the LPS allocated \$200,000 for more SROs to its middle and high schools (Smith, 2015).
- The District budgeted \$810,000 to significantly increase the school-site mental health staffing for its schools and an in-house mental health clinic (Smith, 2015). It is not clear if the LPS will be able to sustain this approach over time due to budget constraints.
- A district-level multi-disciplinary threat assessment team is now in place to provide improved oversight and review all threat assessments in the District.
- The LPS has invested more than \$365,000 to upgrade the locking systems at its schools.

In summary, the preventive measures that were in place at AHS and other LPS schools before and after the shooting incident demonstrate that:

1. The AHS administrators and LPS leadership, together with their community partners, did and still do care about the safety of their students.
2. It would be inaccurate to conclude that because the AHS incident took place that the threat assessment processes used by the LPS at the time were completely flawed or that the District did not take reasonable steps to try prevent violence incidents from happening at LPS schools.

Similarly, it should not be interpreted that the Safe2Tell program does not have considerable value because none of the AHS students who had witnessed the aggressor's statements and/or behaviors of concern used the program to report their observations and/or concern.

3. Despite the many preventive measures that were in place to help prevent school violence, the shooting incident at AHS still occurred. This demonstrates that extreme violence does sometimes happen at schools and school systems that have many sound preventive measures in place. The shooting at AHS is far from the first instance of school violence we have seen in schools with numerous prevention measures in place.
4. There are significant opportunities for improvement in the preventive measures the LPS and its public safety partners put forth before the AHS incident. As this report will detail, the prevention strategy still failed to identify the danger posed by the aggressor, to prevent the death of Claire Davis, and to prevent the attempt by the aggressor to murder Mr. Tracy Murphy.

**6.1.2. While the student threat evaluation process used by AHS at the time of the incident was formalized and structured, the process had significant opportunities for improvement.**

Though there are numerous strengths in the student threat assessment process used by LPS and its public safety partners at the time of the AHS shooting incident, the fact that the LPS community failed to identify the aggressor's threat and prevent the shooting incident at AHS demonstrates that there were opportunities for improvement in the threat assessment process they used. For example:

1. In reviewing the case file, we did not see an "integrated systems approach" to guide the threat assessment process at AHS at the time of the incident between the LPS and its public safety partners, such as the ACSO as recommended in the *Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates* published by the USSS and the ED (Fein et al., 2004, p. 32). According to the guide:

Relationships with agencies and service systems within the school and the surrounding community are critical to identifying, assessing, and managing students who are on a path toward carrying out a school attack. An integrated systems approach recognizes the necessity of cooperation and partnerships between schools and systems outside of the school. (Fein et al., 2004, p. 32)

It appeared from the case file that the LPS and its public safety partners did not use a systematic approach to guide the student threat assessment process at schools in the District at the time of the incident. In his deposition, Kevin Kolasa, one of AHS threat assessors and administrators, stated that they conducted the threat assessment and decided the level of risks as well as action plans for the aggressor without the participation of ACSO Deputy Englert (Kolasa Dep. p. 125, 2015; Song Dep. 104, 2015). While Mr. Kolasa did not request Deputy Englert to participate in the threat assessment of the aggressor, he also said in his deposition that the Deputy did not ask to

participate in the assessment after being told of the incident as well as the school's decision to conduct the evaluation (Kolasa Dep. 125-126, 2015). In addition, while AHS staff and the ACSO officers did verbally share limited information regarding incidents involving, or behaviors of concern exhibited by, AHS students (Kolasa Dep. 125-127, 2015; Englert Dep.36-37, 2015), the ACSO was not provided access to disciplinary records of AHS students of concern (Englert Dep.134-135, 2015; Pramenko Dep. 36-37, 2015) and likewise, AHS was not able to gain access to reports and records regarding incidents involving students at AHS saved in the ACSO's system (Englert Dep.36-37, 2015). While there was a place on the last page of the LPS threat assessment form for an SRO to sign, the SROs were not provided with a copy of a completed threat assessment form. Deputy Englert stated in his deposition that he did not receive a copy of the completed threat assessment form regarding the aggressor (Englert Dep. 56, 2015). Finally, in his deposition, Deputy Englert acknowledged that there was no memorandum of understanding (MOU) or intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between LPS and the ACSO regarding sharing information related to behavioral, criminal, or disciplinary records of SLP students at the time of the incident (Englert Dep. 37, 2015). We also did not find in the case file any documents showing that the two organizations had such agreement or MOU before the incident. According to the USSS/ED's guide (Fein et al., 2004), "community systems concerned with education, safety, and child welfare would have well-established policies and procedures for cooperation and collaboration" (p. 39). In the experience of the three experts on our team who have served as school district police chiefs, this is an extremely important point. Properly developed MOUs help clarify important aspects of collaboration such as sharing of information and cooperation between the participating organizations.

2. As detailed in the threat assessment guide, "[t]he central question of a threat assessment is whether a student **poses** a threat, not whether the student **made** a threat" (Fein et al., 2004, p. 33). It appeared from the LPS's "Threat Assessment & Action Plan" form utilized by its school at the time of the incident that the LPS threat assessment process focused more on establishing evidence that the student of concern "made" a threat than on assessing if the student met the standard of "posing" a threat. Five of the eleven questions identified in the USSS/ED's guide as important in seeking the correct answer to the focused question of a threat assessment (Fein et al., 2004, pp. 55-57) were not included in the LPS threat assessment form:

- Does the student have the *capacity* to carry out an act of targeted violence?
- Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?
- Does the student see violence as an acceptable—or desirable—or the only—way to solve problems?
- Is the student's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions?

- What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?

The other six questions were partially included in the LPS threat assessment form.

3. We also found other opportunities for improvement in the LPS “Threat Assessment & Action Plan” form used at the time of the incident. For example, on the first page of the form, it is stated that “[t]he Building Team should initiate a Threat Assessment when .... An administrator should assemble the building Threat Assessment Team...” It appears that the “Building Team” decides whether to conduct a threat assessment on a student or not. We were not able to discern who is included in the “Building Team” and what their professional knowledge and training was to qualify them to make the decision on whether to conduct a threat evaluation of a student of concern or not. Another concern we found in the LPS’s threat assessment form falls under the “Police Response” section under Step 5. The options for “Police Response” are limited to “no action plan,” “ticketed/charged,” “apprehended/detained,” and “weapons check at school/home.” When asked if “no action plan” meant that no safety measures were taken by the police, Mr. Kolasa stated in his deposition that was not the meaning of the option. He explained that although the police took actions, he checked the checkbox for the option “no action plan” because the actions taken did not fall into any of the available options in the threat assessment form for the aggressor in September 2013. Finally, the form did not provide the threat assessment team a prompt for any follow-up checks for the “additional measures to ensure safety” (under Step 5) recommended by the team. In her deposition, Ms. Song acknowledged that she did not follow up with the aggressor’s parents to check if they took him to a psychologist office once a week as recommended in the “additional measures to ensure safety” (Song Dep. 175-177, 2015). One reason might be because there was no place in the form asking the assessment team to conduct follow-up checks for the “additional measures to ensure safety.” It should also be noted that there is undoubtedly a great degree of burden placed on a staff member who must decide whether a student is a threat or not since the form uses absolute language like “ensure” multiple times. We suggest that more realistic verbiage such as “enhance” be used instead. The use of the word “ensure” can also cause problems in the event of litigation if the plaintiff’s counsel uses this language to show that this standard created by a school or school district was not achieved.
4. The threat assessment process used at AHS at the time of the incident did not fully follow elements of a school threat assessment process described in the USSS/ED’s guide (Fein et al., 2004). For example:
  - Element one – “Authority to Conduct an Assessment” – states that “schools should have in place clear policies on collecting and reacting to information on potentially threatening situations and determining whether this information merits further attention through a threat assessment inquiry and investigation (Fein et al., 2004, p. 34). We found no documents from the case file indicating that AHS or the LPS had such policies at the time.



- Element two – “Capacity to Conduct Inquiries and Investigations” – specifies that a school should have a school-based or district-based multidisciplinary threat assessment team whose members have training in the threat assessment process (Fein et al., 2004, p. 37). We found no case documents indicating that there was a defined multidisciplinary threat assessment team at AHS at the time. In fact, in her deposition, Song acknowledged that AHS did not have a threat assessment team (Song Dep. 54, 2015). From the case file, it appeared that all three threat assessments at AHS from 2009 to the time of the incident in December 2013 were all conducted by Esther Song, the AHS school psychologist, and Kevin Kolosa, the AHS Assistant Principal. In addition, the “Threat Assessment Training Participants” produced by the LPS in this arbitration process showed that Ms. Song participated in only one of the annual “Danger Assessment” trainings (which covered threat assessment and other topics) provided by the LPS during that time period. The list did not conclusively document that Mr. Kolosa participated in any of those trainings though in his deposition. However, LPS Security Director Guy Grace stated that he was fairly certain that he recalled seeing Mr. Kolosa was in one of these training sessions (Grace Dep. 83-84, 2015). Aside from the training provided by the LPS which he stated that he attended in his deposition, Mr. Kolosa did not have any other training on how to conduct threat assessments from the time he became AHS assistant principal (2011-2012 school year) to the time of the incident (December 2013) (Kolasa Dep. 13-16, 2015). We find it essential that student threat assessment team members have specific expertise in their chosen field and appropriate training on how to perform this type of work.
5. In their guide, the USSS and the ED suggest that the threat assessment team assign a team member to “serve as the initial point of contact for information of possible concern” and “screen information and determine whether to initiate a threat assessment inquiry or to consult other members of the team” as part of a threat assessment process (Fein et al., 2004, p. 47). The review of the submitted documents indicates that AHS did not have this initial point of contact.
  6. The threat assessors at AHS did not follow some of the procedures listed in the LPS’ “Threat Assessment & Action Plan” form utilized at the time of the incident. For example, Step 4 in the form instructs that the threat assessment team “convene” and work “as a team” to “discuss all relevant information regarding the student” and “consider the risk factors identified and determine the level of concern regarding the threat.” The threat assessors at AHS did not follow this instruction. As another example, to review “threat assessment factors” in Step 3 of the form, assessors are instructed to answer the questions listed in the section and “provide notes explaining the evidence next to each statement checked.” In reviewing the assessment forms completed by AHS assessors before the incident, we did not see many notes next to each checked answer explaining why the answer was checked. In fact, in her deposition, Song admitted that writing notes next to checked

answers to explain was not her common practice in completing the form even though the form instructed assessors to do so (Song Dep. 113, 2015).

7. There was often no attached information, narrative, or notes next to some of the checked answers to explain the rationale for the decision and the weight attributed to each risk factor under section Step 3 in the completed threat assessment forms for AHS at the time of the incident. Therefore, it was not clear to our analysts what information the AHS threat assessors based their decision on for each selected risk factor. Additionally, as the decision to determine the level of concern in Step 4 of the form is also based on the selected risk factors in Step 3 in the form, we are puzzled as to how the AHS threat assessors could reach accurate decisions on the level of threat of the student of concern if they did not have a solid background for their answers in Step 3. In fact, one of the key challenges identified in the “Administrative Review of LPS Threat Assessment Protocols” is that staff found it “difficult to choose a level of risk” (Exhibit 17, p. LPS 04049) and felt uncomfortable in making this decision. It should not be surprising that staff find it to extremely challenging to determine the level of risk of the student of concern when they do not have a solid background to identify accurate risk factors of the student.
8. There appears that there was some disconnect between some of the expectations of district-level staff and school-level staff in relation to the threat assessment process. For example, one of the PowerPoint slides included in the threat assessment training provided to school staff during the period between 2009 and 2013 instructed schools to provide “annual training for all staff on how to recognize warning signs (threat, suicide, etc.) and what to do” and other tasks regarding warning signs training. In her deposition, Song acknowledged that none of the tasks were ever performed at AHS during her tenure there (Song Dep. 61-62, 2015). At the same time, we did not see in the case file any documents showing that the LPS district-level staff provided the schools with adequate resources to perform these tasks nor if they checked to verify if the schools were following these instructions. As another example, we did not see in the case file any documents showing if the LPS district-level staff who provided oversight to threat assessment processes were aware that AHS did not have a defined multidisciplinary threat assessment team. It was also unclear if the staff were aware that at least one of the staff members performing threat assessments at AHS was not included on the list of participants of any of the threat assessment training provided by district staff annually at the time of the incident.

These are just some examples of the opportunities for improvement in the threat assessment process in place at the time of the AHS shooting incident. It is clear that the LPS and its community partners recognized a number of these opportunities for improvement as they have been making many changes to the process after the incident. For example, Deputy Englert stated that the LPS and ACSO had in place an agreement to share information regarding safety concerns after the AHS incident (Englert Dep. 37, 2015). We commend the LPS and community partners for their eagerness and their efforts to identify and

recognize additional opportunities for improvement in their threat assessment process and make the necessary improvements. We urge the organizations to continue these significant efforts.

**6.1.3. It appeared that LPS staff lacked an appropriate understanding of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).**

FERPA “is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education” (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). It appears from the case file that LPS personnel, in general, and AHS staff and administrators, in particular, seemed to be confused about the FERPA. For example, AHS Principal Natalie Pramenko, in her deposition, admitted that she “[m]isinterpreted” FERPA by the time of the incident (Pramenko Dep. 27, 2015). Later in her deposition she also stated, “I don’t fully understand FERPA law” (p. 33). LPS Security Director Guy Grace also admitted that “the school goes off of FERPA” when they did not give him access to the contact logs for students even though the information was important to his job (Grace Dep. 68, 2015). As another example, one of AHS teachers, Ms. Victoria Lombardi, acknowledged in her deposition that FERPA is “a little bit vague” for her (Lombardi Dep. 33, 2015). It appears that confusion about the FERPA was common among AHS staff as the school “redefined a little bit of FERPA” after the incident (Lombardi Dep. 72, 2015).

In fact, LPS is not the only school system in the nation that has difficulties in understanding the FERPA. One indicator of this is the fact that seminars on this topic are popular at educational conferences and have been featured in many school safety conferences. In addition to confusion about FERPA, school officials across the nation also struggle with how much information they should share relating to disciplinary actions to properly inform and communicate while not causing an overload in information. The danger exists that staff may miss important information because they are presented with too much information about students. Due to the lack of information from the case documents on this area, we cannot confidently opine if the AHS shooting incident would have been prevented should AHS personnel have had better understanding of the FERPA at the time of the incident. However, the case file does indicate that the confusion regarding the law did have some effects on the evaluation of AHS staff and administrators, LPS personnel, and ACSO officials toward the aggressor.

It appears that the LPS recognized the issue as the District has made at least some changes to help its school staff understand the law better in the wake of the AHS incident. We encourage the District to continue this worthwhile effort. The District might also benefit from a careful review of its policies and practices relating to FERPA by an attorney who specializes in this area.

**6.1.4. We are concerned about the approach to student discipline at AHS at the time of the incident.**

We were concerned to see from the case file that AHS administrators did not impose any formal disciplinary consequences for the aggressor after he made a threat to kill the school’s head librarian Tracy

Murphy. This threat was made on school property in such a manner that it was of considerable concern to the staff member who was the focus of the threat (i.e., Mr. Tracy Murphy) as well as the staff member who heard the statement when it was made (i.e., Mr. Mark Loptien). We were particularly concerned when the aggressor had a history of disruption and displays of anger.

According to LPS Student Code of Conduct for the 2012-2013 school year:

The principal or District employee designated in writing by the principal may suspend or recommend expulsion of a student who engages in one or more of the following specific activities while in school buildings, on or off school property, in school vehicles, or during a school-sponsored activity, or when the conduct has a reasonable connection to school or any District curricular or non-curricular event. ... 7. Threatening behavior which is any expression, direct or indirect, made in writing, orally, or by gesture, of intent to inflict harm, injury, or damage to persons or property. ("Littleton Public Schools", n.d., p. LPS 00990)

It appeared that AHS administrators were either not aware of this information or chose not to follow the available course of action as outlined in the District's policies. While there is a pronounced trend in the field of K12 education to reduce out of school suspensions and expulsions and request that police reduce arrests for behaviors like those exhibited by the aggressor in this case prior to December 13, 2013, it is important to note that at least thus far, multiple courts and juries have rejected these approaches as defenses for incidents where students carry out an act of violence after not being arrested, suspended, and/or expelled for aggressive behaviors prior to the attack. The use of consequences imposed by the school was another opportunity to interrupt the pathway to violence. As with the comments relating to the law enforcement actions, there is no way to determine if indeed this would have prevented the shooting.

While it is important for school and law enforcement officials to work to appropriately and carefully reduce the use of out of school suspensions, alternative placement, expulsions, and arrests, the proper and balanced use of these tools to interrupt the pathway to violence is also important. The December 2013 attack is one example of the importance of maintaining a proper balance between these important but sometimes competing objectives.

Finally, as detailed in Section 6.1.1 of this report, the LPS had in place numerous measures to improve a student's mental health, we could not find indications in the case file if the aggressor had even been referred to any of those programs or not.

**6.1.5. There were opportunities for improvement in how the threat by the aggressor to kill AHS staff member Tracy Murphy by was investigated by the ACSO.**

As was true in some of the incidents covered in the Safe School Initiative's study, individuals in contact with the attacker each may have observed something of concern about that student's behavior, but not of sufficient concern for them to notify anyone in a position to respond.

Educators and other adults can learn how to pick up on these signals and make appropriate referrals. By inquiring about any information that may have prompted some concern, an investigator may be able to develop a more comprehensive picture of the student's past and current behavior, and identify any indications that the student is intent on or planning to attack. (Fein et al., 2004, p. 21-22)

Our analysts felt that the opportunity to prevent the shooting through a more thorough law enforcement investigation was less than it would have been through a more thorough student threat evaluation. However, all four of our school law enforcement experts found opportunities for improvement in the handling of the ACSO investigation of the threat by the aggressor. It is evident from his incident report written on September 5, 2013, and from his deposition that Deputy Englert was informed by AHS Assistant Principal Kevin Kolasa that a teacher had reported that the aggressor made a threat to kill Mr. Tracy Murphy – the school's head librarian and the head coach of Speech and Debate Team – to his mother in the school's parking lot. Deputy Englert did not interview the aggressor nor either of his parents once even though:

1. It was not common for Deputy Englert to have reports of a student making a threat to kill a teacher (Englert Dep. 61, 2015),
2. Deputy Englert acknowledged in his deposition that "it's such an unusual thing for a student to do" (p. 61),
3. Deputy Englert did not recall hearing any threat of this type during his eight years at AHS before September, 2013 (p. 61),
4. Deputy Englert admitted that he "considered it serious enough to write a police report about it" (p.61),
5. Teacher Mark Loptien confirmed to Deputy Englert that he heard the aggressor's threatening statement when he was across the parking lot as noted in the Deputy's incident report (Exhibit 18, p. 3),
6. Deputy Englert recalled from his conversation with Mr. Loptien that Mr. Loptien "was concerned – the level of concern was enough that he told Darrell" who was the AHS Assistant Principal in charge of safety and security of the school (Englert Dep. 95, 2015)
7. Deputy Englert wrote in his incident report that "Mr. Murphy said he was concerned because [the aggressor] does have a temper" when Deputy Englert asked him about the incident (Exhibit 18, p. 3)
8. Deputy Englert recalled in his deposition that Mr. Tracy Murphy "took it very serious that something could happen" so much that during the discussion, the Deputy suggested that he should use the emergency exit in the library if something happened (Englert Dep. 101, 2015)

It is possible that Deputy Englert might have focused primarily on documenting the incident rather than investigating it. In fact, in his deposition, he said that “I documented -- I told him, Okay, I'm documenting it. I don't recall if I gave him a case number or not. A lot of times I'll give somebody a case number like, Here's a case number just like if you need a copy of the report” (Englert Dep. 99, 2015). In addition, even though ACSO Sergeant Pacheco, who reviewed Deputy Englert's incident report (Exhibit 18, p. 3), discussed the report with the Deputy, and the two discussed and whether to charge the aggressor over the threat to kill (Englert Dep. 152-155, 2015), he did not interview the aggressor or his parents, nor is there any indication that he asked Deputy Englert to do so.

Although our four analysts with law enforcement backgrounds are not certified law enforcement officers in the State of Colorado, our interpretation of Colorado Statutes § 18-3-206 (Menacing) and available case law indicated that there might have been probable cause for Deputy Englert to charge the aggressor with menacing based on the information he had available. Specifically, Colorado Statutes § 18-3-206 states that a “person commits the crime of menacing if, by any threat or physical action, he or she knowingly places or attempts to place another person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury” (Colorado General Assembly, Chapter 171). We also found that “an essential element of the offense is a specific intent to cause fear,” see *People v. Stout*, Colo., 568 P.2d 52 (1977).

The standard for arrest in any violation of a criminal code is *probable cause*, not evidence beyond a reasonable doubt. For a case to be made, *probable cause* is all that is required of a peace officer to be demonstrated and articulated. Given the eight factors described above, if our reading of the Colorado statute is correct, we feel that the threat was elevated to the level of *probable cause* and believe that this code section had been violated. While no one can state unequivocally what another human is thinking at any given moment, they can gauge behaviors. In this instance, the behavior displayed makes for a strong case that the aggressor intended for Murphy to fear him, hence the threat being so boisterous so it would get back to Murphy. Even if the aggressor did not intend for the threat to get back to Mr. Murphy, the aggressor should have known that his actions, if discovered, would place Mr. Murphy in fear of imminent serious bodily injury.

If the ACSO officers felt the case was “weak” and the aggressor's threat transient and not substantive, they could have also interviewed the aggressor directly about this incident and followed up by gathering further information from the aggressor's parents. Another option might have been for the officers to consult with the prosecutor's office about the case as is common practice in most law enforcement jurisdictions. Given the sensitivity of potentially violent acts within the environments that surround schools in the region where active shooter events have taken place, the option to charge the aggressor should have been pursued if Colorado law would have indeed allowed this.

One key to an effective school resource officer program is a focus on proactive rather than reactive approaches to law enforcement (Dorn, 2002, pp. 3-4). If Deputy Englert was actually correct in concluding that the State of Colorado has no statute to address such a clear threat by a student to kill an educator

when made in this manner and found no other applicable code section that could have been used to file a charge, further investigation was still warranted. There is nothing that would have prohibited Deputy Englert from conducting a more thorough investigation in this situation. Our team of law enforcement experts found that it would be appropriate and typical for a law enforcement officer in this situation to conduct a more comprehensive investigation. In fact, all of our law enforcement experts have been personally involved with numerous situations where assaults on school property have been averted through these types of proactive efforts.

Our analysts with law enforcement experience found that the threat made by the aggressor to kill Mr. Murphy, the manner in which it was conveyed, and the concerns of the parties involved indicated that it was a more serious matter than the responses by both ACSO officers indicated. Our school law enforcement experts found this to be an opportunity for improvement in the ACSO's responses to student threats. An arrest and/or more thorough investigation by Deputy Englert was another opportunity to interrupt the aggressor's pathway to violence, though no one can determine whether a more thorough investigation by the ACSO would have prevented the attack.

**6.1.6. There may have been other opportunities to interrupt the aggressor's pathway to violence when he made a threatening phone call to a student at West Middle School (WMS).**

According to an investigation report conducted by ACSO Investigator Jeff Himes on January 24, 2014, the aggressor's mother stated during his interview with her that she received a call in late August from a man saying that "a man called from her home number and said he was going to kill his daughter" ("ACSO AHS Investigation", n.d., p. ACSO\_0001958). After verifying the call with her son – the aggressor – it turned out that the aggressor did make the call and threaten to kill the girl. The aggressor's mother stated that she also received a call from an SRO at WMS regarding her son threatening to kill a WMS female student ("ACSO AHS Investigation", n.d., p. ACSO\_0001959).

There is no information in the case file to indicate if the aggressor's mother reported this incident to AHS administrators, ASCO Deputy Englert, her son's therapist at Advanced Integrative Medicine, or the specialists at Behavioral Health where she took him for an evaluation after he also made a threatening statement to kill the head coach of his debate team on September 3, 2013. The lack of mental health records and the limited exploration of what preventive actions the aggressor's parents had taken prior to the shooting do not provide adequate information to determine whether the aggressor's parents took reasonable care to help prevent this type of outcome. While the case file indicates the aggressor was seen by at least two different mental health service providers, the lack of mental health records makes it unclear what information these providers were given by the aggressor's parents. There is also no information in the ASCO investigative file to indicate whether or not the SRO at WMS properly investigated this threatening phone call by the aggressor in August or notified AHS administrators or ACSO Deputy Englert to advise them of the incident.

We feel that any of the above actions by the aggressor's mother or the WMS SRO might have impacted how the AHS, the ACSO, or the aggressor's mental health service providers proceeded with their evaluation of the aggressor. While it is not guaranteed that one or all of the above actions would have prevented the shooting incident, it would be helpful for the parties involved in this case as well as those who are interested in lessons learned from the case to be aware of this important aspect.

**6.1.7. There are opportunities for improvement in the manner in which campus supervisors and SROs were supervised at the time of the AHS incident.**

It is clear from the case file that all five personnel responsible for safety and security at AHS (three campus supervisors, one SRO, and one Assistant Principal who is in charge of safety and security) were located together in two groups at the time the shooting incident took place on December 3, 2013. Specifically, around the time the shooting at AHS started, Deputy Englert, security supervisor Rodney Mauler, and Assistant Principal Darrell Meredith (who managed AHS safety and security at the time) were having lunch together (and with other two AHS Assistant Principals) in the staff dining area while the other two AHS campus supervisors Cameron Rust and Christina Kolk were also having lunch in the security office ("Investigative Report", 2004, pp. 14-18) at this time. When all personnel who were responsible for the safety and security of the school were having lunch at the same time, the school campus was left unsupervised by any of these personnel. Also, as noted elsewhere in this report, it is reasonably deduced from the case file that the aggressor entered AHS via an unsecured exterior door that was supposed to be secured at the time. While we could not tell from the case file how and why the door was left unsecured, it is obvious that the personnel who were responsible for the security of the school failed to keep the door secured.

From the perspective of security staff management, our analysts find that this staffing and duty assignment approach used by the LPS has opportunity for improvement. An appropriate security staff supervision approach would be to have security staff to rotate to patrol the school and to stagger their lunch times so that the school would have security coverage at all times during staff hours. Proper security supervision would not have campus supervisors gathering together in one place as it leaves the rest of the school without security coverage. It is not possible to assume that the attack would have been averted had these personnel staggered their lunch breaks, but this approach would have almost certainly enhanced the response efforts by school staff on the day of the incident.

We learned from our interview with Mr. Grace, LPS Security Director, that he did not have the authority to provide direct oversight for LPS campus supervisors and that school administrators had primary supervisory responsibility. In his deposition, Mr. Grace also acknowledged that campus supervisors reported directly to school administrators (Grace Dep. 19, 2015). In fact, in his deposition, AHS Campus Supervisor Rodney Mauler stated, "I don't think I've ever perceived him [Mr. Grace] of being in my chain of command," and added, "I work for security, but I've just always kind of seen it as the assistant principal, the



principal, and then maybe the assistant superintendent who was in charge of security. I don't know if Guy Grace is in my chain of command" (Mauler Dep. 32-33, 2015).

Based on the extensive experience of our experts who have served as school police chiefs, we have knowledge that school administrators, without expertise in and understanding of safety and security, often have difficulty providing appropriate supervision to security staff. This is understandable because their expertise is in school management. Proper supervision of security staff for a district the size of LPS should be provided by personnel who have appropriate expertise, practical knowledge, and experience in providing security services specifically for schools. Our experience has been that when school security personnel are supervised by a qualified district-level security director, safety director, or police chief, it can help to prevent these types of missed opportunities as were seen at AHS at the time of the incident. This can also address many other issues that can arise. While we have seen instances where school administrators were qualified to provide this type of security staff supervision, this is uncommon.

We suggest the District re-consider the practice of limiting the Security Director's authority to provide oversight for campus supervisors assigned to LPS schools and to have increased authority make decisions relating to physical security with meaningful input from building administrators. In addition, the LPS Security Director should also be involved in how SROs are deployed to LPS schools, if he is currently not serving as a liaison for this important function.

There are also a variety of supervisory techniques that the District should consider to improve the supervision of its security personnel. For example, we often suggest to clients that they require safety and security personnel to call in patrol routines on the radio and to report in when they are taking a lunch break. In school districts with modern security cameras with remote viewing capability, district-level supervisors can periodically spot check security camera coverage to contrast with radio traffic. When combined with clear policies, periodic live supervision visits and appropriate accountability for any violations of policies, these approaches can be highly effective in reducing some of the gaps that occurred on the day of the attack. We should note that these types of policies often include a statement that falsification of radio reporting is a breach of trust issue which is grounds for termination of an officer.

**6.1.8. The failure of AHS staff and students to maintain proper security of the exterior door at the rear of the school helped the aggressor's attack plan.**

In his deposition, Mr. Darrell Meredith, the AHS Assistant Principal who was in charge of safety and security for the school at the time, acknowledged that campus supervisors were instructed to secure the east north door which had to be manually locked around eight o'clock in the morning (Meredith Dep. 144-145, 2015). The door was not secured at the time of the incident. How this door was left unsecured is an important and contested point that was not addressed properly in the discovery process. As mentioned in the limitations section, it is puzzling to our review team that two of the three campus supervisors were not deposed in this case to help clarify this and other important points. While this is a sensitive area because it

may place blame on a specific individual, the main benefit of having this information would be to review and improve the processes surrounding access control at the school level.

Mr. Meredith also acknowledged that AHS staff and students “were asked not to prop open doors,” but the issue happened about “once a week” (Meredith Dep. 145-146, 2015). The fact that the aggressor chose to enter this door indicates that he seemed to be aware that the door was not always kept secured. Though the issue of failing to keep exterior doors secured by school staff and students is an extremely common problem in K12 schools, it should be addressed. This shooting incident is one of many examples that demonstrate how unsecured exterior doors have been a contributing factor in many violent incidents occurring on school campuses. This case demonstrates how important simple and basic school security measures can be.

In addition, though keeping the door the aggressor used to enter the school secured might not have prevented the incident, it might have helped change the course, and perhaps the outcome, of the aggressor’s plan. The aggressor could still have entered the school forcing his way in by breaking out the glass panel in as little as three seconds since the door was not treated with protective security film, forcing his way in would reduce the level of surprise and shock value. This, in turn, might have provided increased warning for Claire Davis and other students and staff had to take protective actions. While we will never know for certain, it is entirely possible that the combination of the delay, sound of the breaking glass, and a quick recognition by students could have afforded enough time for Claire Davis to move out of harm’s way.

We learned that since the attack, the LPS has made a significant investment in technology solutions to try to reduce the number of doors that are not properly locked in the District. The District should also consider enhanced student awareness and staff development approaches that will address this type of problem in a district-wide manner. Some of our clients have produced videos to help raise awareness of staff and students about the importance of not opening doors for strangers, propping doors open, etc. For example, the Indianapolis Public School System produced a video of this type several years ago.

#### **6.1.9. There were some opportunities for improvement in the utilization of the Safe2Tell program at AHS at the time of the incident.**

“Safe2Tell (1-877-542-SAFE) is a state-wide hotline for students, teachers, and others to report violent or troubling events” (Colorado Department of Law, n.d.). It appeared from the case file that no student or staff at AHS ever reported any concern about the aggressor before the incident. In fact, in his deposition, LPS Security Director Guy Grace stated, “If there was a Safe2Tell call about [the aggressor] -- there was never one made. But if there was, I would have heard about it and I would have responded immediately to it” (Grace Dep. 49, 2015).

The case file documented that some students at AHS told investigators they had significant concerns regarding the aggressor prior to the incident. For example, the ACSO’s investigative documents show that:

- A student was concerned about the aggressor because he “was the type of person who could bring a gun to school” (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., p. ACSO\_0000399);
- A student texted another student regarding the aggressor that “[h]e’s honestly scary. Like he’s going to hurt us. I’m a little nervous” (ACSO\_0000400); and
- A student stated that the aggressor at one point “told him that he was going to burn down his church because he was catholic” and that the aggressor made reference to killing Mr. Murphy (ACSO\_0001119).

At the same time, none of these students used Safe2Tell to report their concerns. This may be because they were not fully aware of the program at the time of the incident or for other reasons as student witnesses were not specifically asked about this. Because this was not a focus of the criminal investigation, there are limitations as to how confidently we can opine on how well aware of the program AHS staff and students were. This is not unusual as law enforcement investigators are focused on determining what happened in a school shooting rather than in evaluating specific school safety efforts.

The case file, however, does indicate that the LPS had made numerous efforts to promote the Safe2Tell program with its staff and students. For example, according to LPS Security Director Guy Grace in his deposition, as part of his job, he provided school staff information regarding the Safe2Tell program, alongside other safety and emergency preparedness topics such as lockdown drills and the Incident Command System (ICS) (Grace Dep. 45, 2015). He also presented the information on the program to students when school administrators invited him to do so (Grace Dep. 46, 2015). School staff and SROs also provided information on the program to their students using training videos and materials from the Safe2Tell website (Grace Dep. 46-47, 2015). In addition, LPS schools had flyers of the program posted around the school building as well as “a display screen in the cafeteria showing Safe2Tell, the numbers to call, and then in the counseling offices” (Grace Dep. 44, 2015). Based on our extensive experience in conducting thousands of school climate, culture, safety, security, and emergency preparedness assessments for K12 schools, it is uncommon for our analysts to see a much greater depth of promotion for a school safety reporting system than this.

Therefore, while it is possible that at least some of the students who had concerns about the aggressor’s behaviors and/or knew the aggressor possessed a firearm prior to the attack would have used Safe2Tell to report their concerns if the AHS had more aggressively promoted the program, we do not see conclusive evidence that this would have occurred. In fact, a student who knew the aggressor stated during an interview with ACSO investigators that he “would have reported the incident through the ‘Safe To Tell’ line” if the aggressor asked him to participate in the AHS attack (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., p. ACSO\_0002009). This student also said later in the interview that he knew that the aggressor purchased the shotgun and machete a few days before the incident but he “did not put two and two together” (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., pp. ACSO\_0002012-ACSO\_0002013). This example indicates the reason this

student did not report the aggressor to Safe2Tell was not because he was unaware of the hotline but because he did not realize the aggressor was dangerous.

In addition, while the District could have expended more effort in promoting the Safe2Tell program, our experience has been that it would be inaccurate to assume that all of these students would have notified Safe2Tell if they had been provided more information on the program. We base these observations on the first-hand experience of two of our analysts who have established a 24-hour a day, seven-day a week, 365-day a year live staffed communication center which allowed students, staff, and the general public to report a variety of behaviors of concern in 1989. This system is still in operation today. We also base this on the experience of two of our review team members who helped establish a state-wide online reporting system fifteen years ago to augment an anonymous telephone state-wide reporting system that was established in 1999.

Another reason why students who knew that the aggressor had purchased a shotgun may not have called Safe2Tell to report about the aggressor prior to the attack appears to be because many of the students who knew or had interaction with the aggressor did not sense a threat of danger. In fact, as shown in the ACSO's investigative documents of the incident, the witness interviews revealed that numerous students indicated that they either did not have any concern or expressed neutral opinions about the aggressor, and some even had positive comments about him. For example, the ACSO's investigative documents show that:

- A friend of the aggressor “did not think [the aggressor] was violent” (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., p. ACSO\_0000424);
- A student “thought [the aggressor] was ‘normal’” (ACSO\_0000473);
- A student “described [the aggressor] as relaxed with quirky sense of humor” (ACSO\_0000498);
- Another student described the aggressor as “‘nice’ and smart” (ACSO\_0000499);
- A student “described [the aggressor] as happy, funny, and sweet” (ACSO\_0000510);
- A student who “knew [the aggressor] was a ‘happy go lucky kid’ and could not believe that he would do something like this” (ACSO\_0000675); and
- A student who described himself as the aggressor’s best friend stated, “Nothing [I] knew had indicated a problem coming,” and “[I] was shocked that [the aggressor] had hurt people because he was always ‘such a good kid’” (ACSO\_0000860).

Another reason why AHS students did not call the Safe2Tell program to report anything about the aggressor before the incident appears to be because they did not see his behaviors as something they should report. In fact, the LPS Coordinator of Student Support Services at the time of the incident stated in his deposition that “those people knew about that [the aggressor had a gun], didn't feel concerned enough to make that call. And I don't necessarily think it's because they didn't know about Safe2Tell” (Thompson

Dep. 44, 2015). It appears from the case file that numerous students knew that the aggressor had been passing photos of a gun among students via text messages (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., p. ACSO\_0000405 & ACSO\_0000413) or liked guns (ACSO\_0000442), but were not very concerned about it. As one of the aggressor’s friends stated, she “did not think he actually owned a gun” (ACSO\_0000442). The case file also indicates that some students even knew that the aggressor had just purchased a gun (ACSO\_0000673 & ACSO\_00001119) but did not take his actions seriously because he “just turned 18” and “he could” do it legally (ACSO\_000995, ACSO\_00004035, & ACSO\_00001674). A number of students apparently had the same reaction to the photo of the shotgun purchased by the aggressor.

It may also be possible that some students might not be comfortable in utilizing the Safe2Tell program. This could be another reason why some of the students who had concerns about the aggressor’s behaviors did not report their concerns. In her deposition, the AHS Principal at the time of the attack stated, “While we tell kids it [Safe2Tell program] is a safe way to report, it’s – you know, you are kept very anonymous, they’re still afraid, I think, to put a friend’s name on there or put the name of a student who might be doing drugs. They’re afraid of somehow it’s going to come back to them” (Pramenko Dep. 44-45, 2015). Mr. Thompson, the LPS’s Coordinator of Student Support Services, also thought the same when he stated in his deposition, “There’s some kids who Safe2Tell is great. There are other kids who never call that hotline because they’re too worried that their name will be used, even if it says it’s anonymous, or they’re just afraid to do that” (Thompson Dep. 45, 2015). If this is the case, improved communications about the program might reassure some students while others could remain skeptical.

To conclude, we caution that it is inaccurate to make firm observation as to why none of the students who had pre-attack information of concern students called the Safe2Tell program to express concerns regarding the aggressor prior to the attack. In our opinion, the case file provides inadequate and often conflicting information relating to this issue. We would like to caution that, just as any other programs, Safe2Tell has limitations and opportunities for improvement. For example, in his deposition, Deputy Englert stated, “I would say 90 percent of those are false things or they’re just trying to tell on somebody else” (Englert Dep. 141, 2015).

In addition, an emergency situation that requires immediate responses from law enforcement officers, a call to Safe2Tell should not replace a call to 911. As AHS Principal Pramenko pointed out in her deposition, because calls to Safe2Tell lines “come in through e-mail,” LPS district-level personnel “might not see [them] in a super timely fashion ... if it’s imminent and really – they’re worried about someone harming someone else or themselves, 911 is a better way to go” (Pramenko Dep. 43, 2015).

Finally, we would also like to caution readers of this report that the program does not provide an absolute solution to prevent incidents on school property as no solution is absolute or perfect. We caution those who are interested in making changes to improve safety of their schools to carefully consider this and other programs thoughtfully before relying too much on any one program. Our experience has been that almost

any individual strategy can fail. We have found that properly individualized and comprehensive approaches are much more reliable but still cannot assure safety.

**6.1.10. We do not have adequate information to opine on whether or not the mental health services providers who delivered services to the aggressor missed any opportunities to prevent this attack.**

We know from the case file that the aggressor had seen multiple mental health service providers (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., p. ACSO\_0001958; McCauley, n.d., p. 30). We also know from the case file that the mental health professional who evaluated the aggressor after he threatened to kill his head coach of Speech and Debate Team on September 3, 2013, advised his mother after the evaluation that “he was not a threat to himself or others” (ACSO\_0001958). Excerpts from the aggressor’s diary that were included in the ACSO’s report of the shooting incident show: “Monday, October 15, 2013, I had an interesting idea today. In first hour, I thought about shooting up the asylum or whatever the fuck it was that my mother took me for that psych evaluation. Let the records show I lied through my teeth through the test” (McCauley, n.d., p. 30). We assume that this excerpt was written by the aggressor and that this is an acknowledgment of successfully lying during the mental health evaluation.

However, as we were not provided with the aggressor’s mental health records, we are unable to opine on whether or not the mental health service providers had a reasonable opportunity to detect whether the aggressor posed a danger to himself or others or not. At the same time, we do not know what information these service providers were given by the aggressor and his parents. For example, we do not know if they were told that the aggressor had made a telephone threat to kill a girl, had exhibited explosive behavior in a class, and had yelled loudly in the AHS parking lot that he was going to kill a specific AHS staff member, etc. The case file also does not provide any documents to show if the service providers were told that the aggressor had experience with pistols, rifles, shotguns, etc. as demonstrated with nine certificates related to familiarity with firearms (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., pp. ACSO\_0002583-ACSO\_0002592). It should be noted that the case file also does not provide any information on whether the aggressor’s mother was aware that her son had received these certificates or not. The case file indicates that the aggressor’s parents apparently made no mention of this information to the AHS threat assessors when the topic of firearms was discussed during the evaluation (Kolosa Dep. 131, 2015; Song Dep. 135-137, 2015).

Because we are not allowed access to these records, as mentioned in the Limitations Section of this report, we cannot opine on this aspect of the case. While we, by no mean, indicate that the mental health service providers who evaluated the aggressor had failed to prevent the shooting incident at AHS, we think that it is helpful to all the parties involved in the case as well as those who are interested in drawing lessons from this case to understand the critical role community mental health service providers can play in the prevention of school violence. We also caution that our experience has been that community mental health service providers often encounter the same challenges as school mental health service providers. For

example, just as many school mental health professionals lack adequate formal training in threat evaluation, many community mental health service providers have also not had proper training in this area.

**6.1.11. We do not see any indications that the LPS has had an external evaluation of school safety, security, and emergency management in recent years.**

Building structure, facility safety plans, lighting, space, and architecture, among other physical attributes of educational institutions, all can contribute to whether a school environment feels, or is in fact, safe or unsafe. In large schools, school administrators may wish to explore changes in the physical characteristics of the school that would permit the assignment of teachers and students to smaller, mutually intersecting and supportive groupings within the broader educational community. (Fein et al., 2004, p. 71)

We did not see any indications that the LPS has had a security assessment conducted by an outside team. While we encourage public school districts to develop the internal capacity to perform their own school safety, security, climate, culture and emergency preparedness assessments on an annual or bi-annual basis, it can be productive and cost-effective to have an assessment conducted by qualified external personnel every three to five years. Qualified external evaluators can spot opportunities for improvement as well as notable strengths in the areas of safety, security, and emergency preparedness that the internal team may miss due to their familiarity with the organization's buildings over time. We feel that the issues relating to unsecured exterior doors, approach to security staff supervision, student threat assessment, etc. as discussed above might have been spotted by an outside auditor.

**6.1.12. Our analysts are concerned that the many LPS policies, guidelines and procedures regarding school safety and security may have overwhelmed administrators in relation to other important responsibilities they have and the number of staff development sessions they are able to attend.**

We noted from the case file that the District had developed several hundred pages of documents, guidelines, and policies relating to safety, security, emergency preparedness, student threat evaluation, etc. for its administrators at the time of the incident. While our analysts found much of this information to be viable and of good to excellent quality, our concern is how realistic it was for district- and school-level administrators, teachers, and support staff to review and retain this amount of information. Put simply, the District's desires might have exceeded staff's actual time available and ability to carry out these many ideal functions properly. For example, at the time of the attack, the District had developed a 138 page *Littleton Public Schools Incident Command System Handbook* to help the District comply with Colorado Senate Bill 181. While this document contains a considerable amount of information for the size and page count of the document, it is important to understand that this is but one of many important safety-related documents LPS administrators are expected to review. An especially important point in this regard is the difference between reading a document of this size and actually being able to retain and use the information in an emergency.

The District should consider having the current documents relating to safety, security, and emergency preparedness (such as policies, guidelines, and procedures) revised and formatted in way that is easier for staff to review and digest. This becomes an even more pressing concern considering that the District is about to receive three reports with suggestions for improvement to consider as a result of the arbitration process. At the same time, we also caution that oversimplifying school safety with unrealistically abbreviated emergency protocols is also a dangerous approach. The challenge is to seek a balance between these two extremes.

Additionally, we are concerned that public pressure to act could cause the District to make strategic errors in enhancing safety measures. The District leadership team should be cautioned to balance quality of improvements over speed of implementation. In our experience, rushing to correct safety problems often results in poor quality approaches over the long term. While we in no way suggest the District procrastinate in making improvements, quality improvements take adequate timelines.

**6.1.13. There were opportunities for improvement in the AHS surveillance camera system that was in use at the time of the incident.**

It appears from the deposition of Mr. Darrell Meredith, AHS Assistant Principal in charge of safety and security for the school at the time of the incident, that the camera system was outdated at the time of the shooting. He said that “the camera in the cafeteria at the time is not a very good camera” and that the cameras had dirty camera lens” (Meredith Dep. 167 & 171, 2015). Also, based on investigator notes in the ACSO case file, there were issues with time stamps on the school security cameras at AHS. This was because the school had three different digital video recorders (DVRs) at the time of the incident, and each DVR “had a different time stamp; not one of them was accurate” (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., p. ACSO\_0001545). LPS School Security Director Guy Grace also confirmed this to SHI analysts Tod Schneider and Chris Dorn during their visit to AHS for this report. This is a very common situation to find in schools across the United States.

While we cannot say that a better camera system would have helped to prevent the shooting incident at AHS, a quality camera system might have helped AHS staff clarify whether or not the aggressor was looking at guns and school shooting incident media stories as campus supervisors Cameron Rust and Christina Kolk reported to AHS Assistant Principal Meredith Darrell (Meredith Dep. 167-171, 2015).

In addition, a camera system with incorrect time stamps can make resolving incidents more difficult and time consuming. If the Davis family had decided to litigate this case instead of agreeing to handle this situation through arbitration, plaintiff’s counsel would have been provided an additional mode to attack the credibility of the LPS. Differences in time stamps between cameras can also raise issues of credibility and competence for school systems with the general public. Unfortunately, this is a common issue that our analysts find frequently in school security assessments around the country. Many school camera systems have been installed in stages, resulting in various camera time settings discrepancies that are exacerbated by maintenance issues over time.



Since the shooting, the LPS has been in the process of upgrading and modernizing its security camera system. According to Mr. Grace in his deposition, the LPS had approximately 480 cameras before the shooting, and now the District has about 580 (Grace Dep.12-13, 2015). The LPS has also been upgrading the overall security technology systems to allow for the integration of surveillance camera systems with various other access control technologies in place at its schools. The District also addressed the timing issues noted during the shooting through this upgrade process. We find the District's efforts to upgrade its security camera systems to be a positive indication of the numerous steps taken by LPS to continue to enhance security at its schools.

**6.1.14. It seems from the case file that AHS administrators may sometimes search students for drugs and knives without an armed security or law enforcement officer present.**

While the issue was not thoroughly covered in the line of questioning, it appeared from the deposition of Deputy Englert that AHS administrators may sometimes search students for drugs and knives without him being present (Englert Dep. 23-30, 2015). We are very concerned if this practice did occur at AHS and other LPS schools. There have been a number of incidents where school employees have been shot, stabbed and taken hostage while attempting to search students without an armed officer present to protect them from attack. For example, SHI analyst Tod Schneider provided assistance to a Tennessee school district after three school administrators were shot while attempting to search a 15-year-old student for a gun. In this tragic case, one of the staff members was killed (Copeland, 2005). In another instance at an elementary school in Michigan, a six-year-old boy shot and killed a six-year-old girl with a semi-automatic handgun a teacher failed to detect when recovering a knife from the boy earlier in the day (Rosenblatt, 2000). These are only two of numerous examples of educators and students being attacked with weapons when school staff have attempted to conduct student searches without properly trained and equipped law enforcement officers present.

Though it is not covered in the case file, based on our experience, one of the reasons for school staff not requesting an armed official to be present during a search for drugs or weapons is that school personnel, and sometimes law enforcement officials, are not aware that a police officer can usually be present during a search of student conducted by a school staff. The Supreme Court in the New Jersey v. T.L.O. (1985) ruled that a law enforcement officer can be present when school officials conduct a student search based upon the lower standard of reasonable suspicion. While there are other cases regarding when officers can actually conduct the search, this ruling allows police to be present when most lawful searches by school officials are conducted. Though it is beyond the scope of this report to opine in detail about case law on student searches, we note that there have been a series of appellate court cases where courts have found that police officers acting under the direction of school officials can be present during searches. In many situations, officers can conduct searches of students for drugs and weapons based upon reasonable suspicion or the even lower standard of articulable suspicion for situations involving a firearm.

Though the issue of searching students for weapons without the presence of an SRO had no effect on the outcome of the AHS shooting incident, we are concerned that another tragedy could occur if this issue is not carefully researched and addressed. If searches of students for weapons are indeed conducted without an armed officer present, we suggest that LPS, the ACSO, and the LPD revisit this issue and take steps to communicate with their staff when officers should be present during searches of students. If searches of this type are being conducted and there are concerns about the legality of this practice, we suggest that the district and area law enforcement agencies contact one or more nationally recognized legal experts in this specific field for guidance. Two attorneys who are particularly well-versed in this area are Dr. Bernie James from the National School Safety Center at Pepperdine University and Dr. Gary Avery of Law Advisory Group.

#### **6.1.15. We urge caution in labeling the aggressor as a “sociopath.”**

We note multiple references to the aggressor as a sociopath in the case file. For example, during the deposition of Esther Song, Mr. Roche – the Davis family’s attorney – stated “I have read that lack of remorse and lack of empathy are two of the hallmarks of a sociopath” (Song Dep. 156, 2015). As another example, in his deposition, Mr. Scott Murphy – the LPS Superintendent at the time – stated that “I still don’t know what we do and it haunts me with a sociopath, a psychopath, a breakdown that we may not have seen” (Murphy Dep. 180, 2015). While it is common for people to reach these types of conclusions after a traumatic incident where the aggressor is deceased, we caution that the proper categorization of an individual as a “sociopath” requires a clinical diagnosis that cannot reliably be made based on the available information in this case file. Typically, this type of diagnosis is made through a combination of test instruments and interviews by a clinical psychologist. While we often see these references to aggressors in these types of incidents, such statements are speculative rather than a proper determination by a qualified mental health professional.

#### **6.1.16. Survey results show that LPS teachers considered their schools to be safe environments and LPS community residents strongly support this view.**

According to the results of the TELL (Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning) Colorado surveys of school-based educators conducted every other year, 97 and 96.2 percent of 648 LPS educators who responded to the surveys in 2011 and 2013, respectively, agreed to the statement: “The faculty work in a school environment that is safe” (TELL Colorado, n.d.). These two surveys were conducted before the AHS shooting incident in December 2013. The survey conducted in 2015, which is after the AHS shooting incident, also shows that almost all – 94.1 percent – of the respondents agreed to the statement. Compared to the survey result in 2015 for the state of Colorado, the average agreement rate in LPS is higher, as shown in the following chart:

Select School or District						
District: Littleton 6						
1. Cells that exhibit no data are items that are not available for the school/district, explanations for missing data include: a. Response thresholds were not met (>=5 respondents & 50% participation for the school or >=20 respondents & 50% participation for the district). b. Survey items varied across survey iterations.						
District: Littleton 6 - Number of Respondents (n): 648						
Construct	Question	F	2011	2013	2015	State - 2015
Managing Student Conduct	The faculty work in a school environment that is safe.		97.0%	96.2%	94.1%	91.7%

Source: Adopted from [www.tellcolorado.org](http://www.tellcolorado.org).

Similarly, almost all teachers at AHS also agreed to the statement in the surveys conducted before the shooting incident – 98.6 percent and 98.3 percent in 2011 and 2013, respectively. The rate of agreement in the 2015 survey dropped down to 85.3 percent, but it is still a rather high percentage of agreement, as shown in the chart below:

Select School or District							
School: Arapahoe High School (Littleton 6)							
1. Cells that exhibit no data are items that are not available for the school/district, explanations for missing data include: a. Response thresholds were not met (>=5 respondents & 50% participation for the school or >=20 respondents & 50% participation for the district). b. Survey items varied across survey iterations.							
School: Arapahoe High School (Littleton 6) - Number of Respondents (n): 71							
Construct	Question	F	2011	2013	2015	State - 2015	District - 2015
Managing Student Conduct	The faculty work in a school environment that is safe.		98.6%	98.3%	85.3%	91.7%	94.1%

Source: Adopted from [www.tellcolorado.org](http://www.tellcolorado.org).

These survey results indicate that LPS, and AHS, teachers have positive viewpoint about their school environment in the area of safety. According to the survey results conducted by Public Opinion Strategies (POS) with 400 LPS community residents in 2015, the public also have the same positive view towards LPS. For example, the survey results show that 72 percent of the LPS community residents agreed that the District does excellent or well on “maintaining a safe environment where students can learn without worrying about being harmed” (Weigel, 2015, Slide 18). The survey results also show that an average of two-thirds of the community residents agreed that LPS schools are better than other public schools in Colorado (Weigel, 2015, Slide 7), and that 88 percent of the respondents responded positive to the question on whether they would recommend LPS to a parent seeking a school for their child, as shown in the chart below:

Nearly nine in ten residents would recommend LPS to a parent seeking a school for their child.



Would you recommend Littleton Public Schools to a parent seeking a school for their child?  
Littleton Public Schools Survey – June 2015  
PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES SLIDE 11

Source: Adopted from Littleton Public Schools – Key Findings from a Survey of 400 Community Residents, Lori Weigel, 2015, Slide 7.

The survey also shows that 86 percent of the respondents considered maintaining a safe school environment as the top funding priority as shown in the chart below:

**While many issues are deemed important, safety is in a distinct category unto itself.**

<i>Top Funding Priorities Ranked By Extremely Important</i>	Extremely Important	Extremely/Very Important
Maintaining a safe environment where students can learn without worrying about being harmed	47%	86%
Provide every student with an education that includes hands on opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, also called STEM programs	33%	79%
Continuing the district’s commitment to academic excellence and accountability	33%	83%
Attracting and retaining the best teachers by improving teachers’ salaries and benefits	33%	78%
Providing the education that today’s students will need for tomorrow’s jobs and careers	32%	85%
Teaching students to master technology and apply the skills necessary to compete for the jobs of the future	32%	79%

Littleton Public Schools Survey – June 2015  
PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES SLIDE 14

Source: Adopted from Littleton Public Schools – Key Findings from a Survey of 400 Community Residents, Lori Weigel, 2015, Slide 14.

The results of the surveys of LPS community residents indicate that the level of confidence in the LPS is very high in contrast to what we see working with a wide array of public school systems across the nation. However, we were unable to find any indication in the case file or via internet research that AHS or LPS consistently conducts annual or bi-annual school climate surveys of students which include questions relating to bullying, drugs, gang activity, weapons on campus, and overall school safety. We were unable to determine the actual status of the use of these types of survey questions at AHS and LPS from the case file. These types of questions in student survey instruments are an important means to continually and more accurately evaluate the actual level of safety in schools. As with most school systems, we also do not see any indication in the case file that the District uses GIS mapping surveys of middle and high school students to more accurately identify opportunities for improvement in school safety. Developed by the Clark County School District in Nevada, this approach has been used to achieve reductions of expulsions, suspensions and reported violations by more than 50 percent. When combined with traditional school safety, climate and culture assessment questions, GIS surveys of students can provide an even more accurate gauge of opportunities for improvement in these areas. In our experience, if LPS indeed does not utilize these types of approaches to survey students relating to school safety, climate and culture, the District has additional opportunities for improvement.

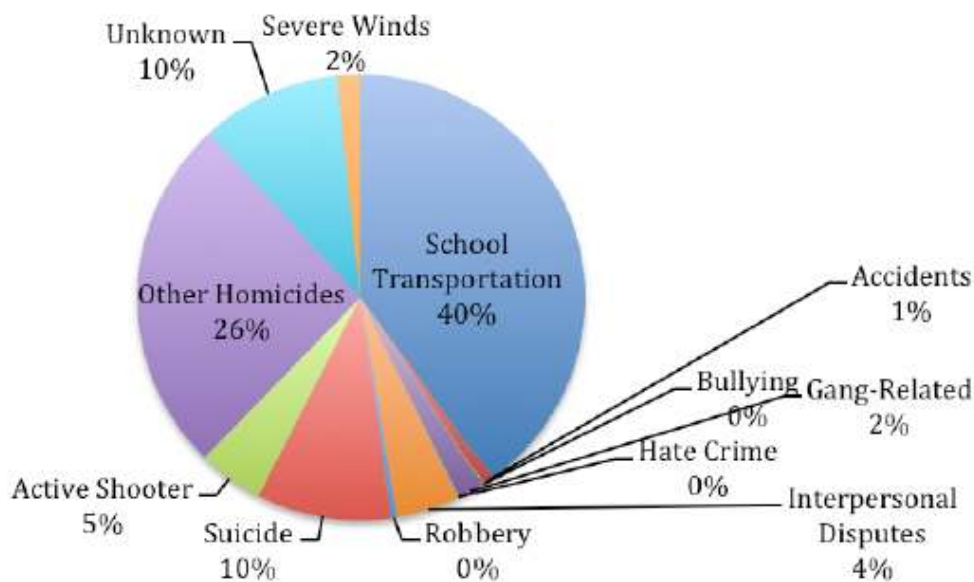
**6.1.17. The shooting incident at AHS should not cause any and all parties involved as well as those who are interested in making schools safer to focus only, or even primarily, on student threat assessment improvement. Student threat assessment should instead be viewed as one of a number of key school safety strategies.**

Threat assessment should be looked upon as one component in an overall strategy to reduce school violence. The threat assessment process by itself is unlikely to have a lasting effect on the problem of targeted school violence unless that process is implemented in the larger context of strategies to ensure that schools offer their students safe and secure learning environments. (Fein et al., 2004, p. 11)

So far, we have discussed our observations on the safety and security preventive measures at AHS, in particular, and LPS, in general. While it is clear that the area of student threat assessment at the school has been the main focus of media attention, questions asked during the depositions of LPS employees as well as the public discussion of this tragedy, we urge caution that this should not mistakenly indicate that it is the single most important school violence prevention measure. Likewise, while our report discusses student threat assessment processes at AHS, and in the District as a whole, it should not mean to divert the attention of those who are interested in making real changes to improve school safety and security from other, no less important areas, in school safety. It is important to note that student threat evaluation is just one of the numerous preventive measures for school violence and that active-shooter events are not the number one cause of violence-related deaths in K12 school environment. Members of our review team have helped to thwart a number of school shootings, suicides and a school bombing through a variety of different techniques.

In addition, it is critical that school officials not fail to properly address other potential threats because they are focused primarily on the threat of an active shooter. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 1,351 people were killed in school transportation-related crashes<sup>1</sup> from 2003 to 2012 (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2013). At the same time, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), there were a total of 444 school-associated deaths<sup>2</sup> during school years 2002-2003 to 2011-2012 (Roberts, Zhang, Morgan, & Musu-Gillette, 2015). In addition, active shooter incidents accounted for approximately five percent of the total school-related fatalities from 1998-2012 as shown in the chart below:

### School-Related Fatalities from 1998-2012 (B)



Source: Adopted from *Report of Relative Risks of Death in U.S. K-12 Schools* (Satterly, 2014, p. 19).

It appears that the relative risks of death in Colorado schools are likely similar to those for the rest of the nation. According to an email from Mr. Kirk Bol – the Interim Vital Records Registrar for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) – in response to our analyst’s inquiry regarding student fatalities in Colorado schools, there were a total of 16 fatal injuries due to violence occurring in Colorado schools, colleges, and universities during 2004-2015. Of those, 12 fatalities resulted from suicide, and 3 were victims of homicide - the remainder being of undetermined cause. It should be noted that these

<sup>1</sup> “A school-transportation-related crash is a crash that involves, either directly or indirectly, a school bus body vehicle, or a non-school bus functioning as a school bus, transporting children to or from school or school-related activities.” (U.S. DOT, 2013, p. 1)

<sup>2</sup> A “school-associated violent death” is defined as “a homicide, suicide, or legal intervention (involving a law enforcement officer), in which the fatal injury occurred on the campus of a functioning elementary or secondary school in the United States, while the victim was on the way to or from regular sessions at school or while the victim was attending or traveling to or from an official school-sponsored event.” Victims of school-associated violent deaths include students, staff members, and others who are not students or staff members. (Roberts et al., 2015, p. iii)

numbers are not available via search engines such as Google. In fact, after failed efforts to try to find the data regarding school-related fatalities in Colorado via Internet research, co-author Steve Satterly emailed Ms. Christine R. Harms, the current Director of the Colorado School Safety Resource Center, to inquire about the data. Ms. Harms responded that she did not collect or have access to such data and referred the analyst to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Mr. Satterly then contacted Ms. Kathleen Patrick of the CDE via email and was advised that the CDE did not track such data and referred him to the CDPHE, from which we received the data above. The data we were able to locate took numerous e-mails and telephone inquiries. This means that school administrators in Colorado would also likely find it challenging to accurately assess the risks of death on school property. We note that this challenge is not unique to Colorado. The United States Government currently cannot provide accurate data for deaths relating to medical emergencies such as sudden cardiac arrest, choking and allergic reactions on school property. The Federal government finally began attempting to track this data for the first time in 2015.

In general, we ask that those who read this report to keep the area of student threat assessment as well as active-shooter incidents in perspective when developing or updating school policies, procedures and training programs in school safety. Student threat assessment is only one of many important areas of concern relating to school safety. For example, more than 100 important topical areas for K12 schools relating to safety, security and emergency preparedness are addressed by separate web courses offered by a single school safety web course provider. Here is a sampling of other important school safety topical areas that have significant implications for schools:

- Bullying prevention
- Suicide prevention
- The utilization of cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automatic external defibrillators (AEDs)
- Blood borne pathogens
- Student supervision, including playground supervision
- Traffic safety
- Fire safety
- Mandatory reporting requirements for child abuse
- Child custody issues
- Severe weather procedures
- Safety of science classrooms
- Hazardous materials incident
- Schools and terrorism
- Sexual misconduct
- Child Abuse & Mandatory Reporting
- Visual Weapons Screening
- Crime prevention through environmental design
- Active Shooter response
- Incident Command System/National Incident Management System
- Using Social Media in a crisis

This is just a small sampling of the many training programs available for school staff. One increasingly popular approach to addressing the challenges that schools face in delivering policies and training programs is the use of digital media such as web courses and webinars combined with traditional live training and the use of training videos. Web delivered approaches also allow administrators to choose which policies and training programs are appropriate for specific personnel and easily keep track of their completion. We know of at least two service providers who provide school clients with web courses for the above topics as well as allow the clients to develop their own custom training courses based on state laws and local policies and use their learning platforms to deliver them to staff. They also allow clients to sort by job category lists of courses that must be taken within a given amount of time. This allows school leaders to select a cadre of courses for teachers, a different course series for school administrators, a unique series of courses for athletics personnel etc.

## 6.2. Preparedness

### 6.2.1. It appears that the District had expended considerable time and effort in emergency preparedness at the time of the incident.

For example, we note that the LPS had at the time of the incident a comprehensive four-phase, all-hazards emergency management plans as recommended by the ED in its *Practical Information on Crisis Planning – A Guide for Schools and Communities* updated in 2007 (ED, 2007). Though we find opportunities for improvement in these plans, as discussed in Section 6.2.2 below, we also note many examples of good quality content in the plans. This indicates that the District had expended tremendous time and effort to develop these documents. Typically, this level of planning complexity requires thousands of hours of staff time.

We also found that LPS had developed detailed guidebooks on the National Incident Management System (the NIMS). The ED and USDHS both recommend that K12 schools use the NIMS in their emergency preparedness efforts. Colorado's SB181 also set forth the nation's most comprehensive NIMS requirements for K12 schools. We also noted that the District has conducted training sessions, drills and exercises to afford LPS staff the opportunity to practice utilizing the NIMS.

During his visit to AHS after a presentation for the SMHAC in February 2015, report co-author Michael Dorn learned that at the time of the incident, the District equipped AHS and its other schools with magnets for classroom doors in an effort to help teachers speed the lockdown of their classrooms in the extreme stress of an emergency. After the incident, the District decided to replace the magnets with updated door locks so that teachers can lock their classroom doors from the inside without a key. Both approaches help address, to some extent, the concerns relating to the loss of fine motor skills that is often experienced by people during dire emergency situations. Testing has revealed that the loss of fine motor skills occurs in many people when their heart rate exceeds 115 beats per minute, which can make it difficult for someone to insert a key in a lock or to dial a phone when under the extreme stress of a life-threatening event (Grossman, 2004, pp. 30-35).



In general, we applaud the District for its tremendous efforts to enhance the level of emergency preparedness for its staff, and we encourage the District to continue to work with community public safety partner agencies on these commendable efforts.

**6.2.2. While we found the LPS emergency plans to be comprehensive, the plans can be improved.**

First, the plans were not developed in a manner that is fully reflective of the different roles of key staff categories. The Superintendent, the school Principal, a custodian, a teacher, a school bus driver, and a food service employee all have different responsibilities and action steps for the same crisis situation. Each person's actions can be crucial, and their efforts must be integrated while achieving the role specific capacity to act to save human life and restore stability under fast-paced conditions. Attempting to guide each of these highly diverse job functions with one document has proven to be highly ineffective in school crisis situations. Second, we are concerned that the sheer number of documents and format of the plans may be overwhelming to school administrators and other key staff. Lastly, we find opportunities for improvement in the content as well as protocols in the plans. As discussed in Section 4.1 of this report, we will not include specific opportunities for improvement in the LPS emergency plans in this report due to the sensitivity of this type of information.

The LPS should consider reviewing and upgrading its current emergency plans. An important planning concept to remember is that the first employee to encounter a life or death crisis situation must be trained, prepared and empowered to immediately and independently implement appropriate critical action steps. Deaths have occurred at schools around the nation when school staff members did not know how to react to various crisis situations without asking for help from an administrator. According to LPS Security Director Guy Grace's statements during the site visit by SHI analysts Tod Schneider and Chris Dorn in November 2015, the District has been incorporating these concepts into their staff training for several years.

**6.2.3. The District's lockdown planning approach at the time of the incident was reliant upon a flawed approach that resulted in confusion in areas of the school where staff could not hear gunfire during the incident.**

The LPS used the "lockout/lockdown" approach to lockdowns at the time of the shooting. This concept has been in use for more than fifteen years and has become popular in educational organizations in recent years. The approach involves using a "lockout" for situations outside the school such as a police chase in the neighborhood. During a lockout, exterior doors are secured and students and staff are required to remain inside the school. The lockout protocol typically does not require locking of any interior doors or clearing students from hallways and main areas. Meanwhile, the "lockdown" in this approach typically involves stopping all classroom activities, moving all students and staff into lockable spaces, locking classroom and office doors, and turning off the lights.

During co-author Michael Dorn's visit to AHS in February 2015, LPS Security Director Guy Grace told Dorn that there was some confusion among some staff in areas of the school where the gunfire could not be

heard as to whether they should implement a “lockout” or a “lockdown.” Mr. Grace also added that this resulted in a number of classroom doors not being locked. In fact, in the debrief for the incident conducted at the Elementary Principals meeting on January 7, 2014, one of the areas for improvement included “mak[ing] sure everyone is using same language – lockdown vs. lockout” (“Elementary Principal meeting”, 2014, p. LPS 04012). Had the aggressor decided to move to other areas of the school instead of proceeding to the library to attack Mr. Murphy, this event could have easily turned into a mass casualty incident.

We have seen numerous problems with the lockout/lockdown approach during our controlled crisis simulations in a number of public school districts and non-public schools. In our simulations, employees in the schools that use this lockout/lockdown approach had a high “fail rate” of more than 90% for implementing a lockdown when the scenario used clearly called for one. While this confusion did not affect the outcome of this particular incident, the use of this unreliable approach could result in problems in future situations.

**6.2.4. Though we note a number of positive findings in this area, there are some opportunities for improvement in the manner in which emergency drills were conducted in LPS at the time of the incident.**

We found that the LPS’s drill approach at the time of the incident was superior to what we have typically seen at school districts in Colorado and other states with which we have worked. We learned from our review of the case file combined with the briefing Mr. Dorn received from LPS Security Director Guy Grace and Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Diane Doney prior to Mr. Dorn’s visit to the LPS in February 2015 that Mr. Grace made it a practice to regularly observe and provide feedback for school drills. We also learned that he had helped conduct what are known as staff initiated drills at AHS. This type of drill involves an administrator and/or district-level personnel providing a staff member with a scenario that requires them to determine which actions should be taken to initiate the appropriate type of drill. While this drill approach enhances the empowerment and individual decision-making ability of school staff, we have only encountered one other school district that was using this drill approach prior to our assessment. This was a rural school district in North Carolina. Thus, we found that the LPS met or exceeded the normal standard of care for school-level emergency drills at the time of the incident. It is likely that this approach may have contributed to the superb reactions of a number of LPS staff during the event. In fact, we noted a high level of empowerment to make life-saving decisions of AHS staff from reviewing the case file. For example, the ACSO’s investigative report of the incident indicates that the AHS custodian ordered a lockdown on his own initiative when he saw the aggressor with a shotgun (McCauley, n.d., p. 17).

At the same time, we also found opportunities for the LPS to further enhance its drill practice. During his February 2015 visit, report co-author Michael Dorn presented training on ways to expand the drill process described above to other critical protective actions such as reverse evacuation, room clear, fire evacuation and severe weather sheltering. If the District uses this expanded drill system, there is another

enhancement to the drill process that could further enhance emergency preparedness. This would involve a thoughtful increase in the use of these same types of drills that are periodically prompted and evaluated by district-level personnel. When combined with drills that require individual staff to make the decision to initiate a lockdown, severe weather sheltering, reverse evacuation, room clear, or other emergency protective action, this approach can drive significant improvements in the emergency preparedness culture in schools. The Clark County School District in Nevada began using this approach about ten years ago. In this instance, district-level crisis team members show up at their schools to conduct unannounced drills that involve directing a staff member to implement a life-saving protocol such as lockdown or fire drill. The team checks testing schedules and has written protocols for conducting these types of drills as well as a detailed drill evaluation rubric that is completed by multiple team members for each drill. The team always reports to the lead building administrator before conducting the drill.

By periodically shifting the drill evaluation tasks to district-level personnel, drills are more effective as they are evaluated by external personnel who have experience in what to look for during safety drills. This approach also makes the drill practices more consistent among different schools in the district as they are facilitated and administered by the same personnel. In addition, this approach also helps to reduce some of the burden on school administrators as they typically have little training and experience in proper drill evaluation. SHI provides free audio crisis scenarios that can be downloaded onto cell phones and other mobile devices. These scenarios can be used by district staff to prompt individual employees to initiate drills. We note that this approach is highly consistent with the research on preparing people for improved high-stakes decision-making (Dorn et al., 2014, pp. 116-119).

### 6.3. Response

**6.3.1. Though it was clear from the case file that the aggressor had planned this attack for a considerable amount of time, the quick reactions of AHS custodian Fabian Vldrio Llerenas, head librarian Tracy Murphy, other AHS staff and students, as well as ACSO Deputy Englert thwarted most of the aggressor's overall attack plan.**

The murder of Clair Davis is absolutely a tragedy. Like the LPS community, which has been deeply traumatized by this tragic event, our analysts wish the aggressor had been stopped before he was able to harm this innocent victim. However, our analysts feel that it is extremely important that positive lessons from this tragedy not be overlooked as the efforts to explore reasons this incident was not prevented. It is important to note that the fast response of the AHS population and Deputy Englert helped prevent the aggressor's violent attack from turning into a deadlier and more catastrophic event. It is important to note that the aggressor failed to achieve most of his attack plan objectives due to the quick reactions of the AHS staff, students, and ACSO Deputy James Englert.

It is clear from the case file that the aggressor had carefully planned his attack for a long time – perhaps in some form for years – as the aggressor referred the attack as “a 10-year subconscious project” (McCauley, n.d., p. 29). It is also clear from his diary that his goals were to “shoot up [his] school,” to “[shoot] everyone

in [his] way,” to “kill [Mr. Murphy],” to “do something [he] wanted to do for a while-mass murder,” to “burn,” to cause “so much destruction,” and to end his attack with his “suicide” (McCauley, n.d., pp. 29-30). However, he failed to accomplish most of these stated goals.

Though part of the reasons for the aggressor’s failure was because his plan had flaws (for example, the Molotov cocktail he built did not burn the school as planned because it was likely that he made them incorrectly), the main reason for the failure of the aggressor’s plan was the quick reactions of the AHS staff, students and ACSO Deputy James Englert. It was Mr. Tracy Murphy’s extremely fast and appropriate reaction that thwarted the aggressor’s goal to kill him (McCauley, n.d., p. 19). It was the quick action of AHS custodian Fabian Vidrio Llerenas to provide warning by ordering a lockdown that prompted Deputy Englert and staff members to rush to the area of the attack. In addition, the unusually fast reactions of numerous AHS staff and students (McCauley, n.d., pp. 14-23) helped to deny the aggressor his desire to cause a mass casualty attack. And it was the prompt response of ACSO Deputy Englert, Deputy Mason, Deputy Bratsch and AHS staff that helped gain rapid control of the situation (McCauley, n.d., p. 33).

In general, there are several points our analysts feel especially important to mention here:

1. Mr. Murphy’s fast and appropriate actions during the incident should serve as a lesson to others that school staff and students who think proactively about emergency actions they might need to take before a crisis occurs can make the difference between life and death. In fact, there is substantial amount of research to show that thinking in advance of what a person would do in a crisis can improve survivability (Grossman & Christensen, 2004, p. 73; Ripley, 2008, p. 79). Mr. Murphy stated that he had thought about what he would do if a gunman entered the library and had discussed the potential need to escape with other school staff (Murphy Dep. 205-206, 2015). This is one example of how powerful a survival mechanism, a practice known as mental simulation, can be in life and death situations (Dorn et al., 2014, pp. 128-135).
2. The AHS custodian Fabian Vidrio Llerenas’ quick order of a lockdown via his radio should serve as a lesson that a school staff that feeling empowered to quickly take actions in an emergency can help save lives. Though some staff reported having trouble hearing the radio call and the aggressor was able to make it inside of the school before the lockdown was issued, the lockdown communication was very fast in this incident. According to LPS Security Director, the security camera footage showed that this communication occurred about 45 seconds after the aggressor exited his vehicle.
3. The prompt action of three AHS students to conceal themselves and exit the library on their own as well as of other AHS students to implement a lockdown by themselves should serve as a lesson that students can sometimes act on their own to save lives when confronted with an extreme situation as an active shooter incident.

We have never reviewed a K12 active shooter incident where the actions of school employees, students, and school resource officers were as fast and effective as they were in the AHS shooting. It is our opinion that while some particulars may be unclear, it is very clear that the AHS incident would have likely been a mass casualty event were it not for the actions of the AHS staff, AHS students and ACSO Deputy Englert. Collectively and individually, their actions made a significant difference that should not be lost or overshadowed as we explore what could have been done to prevent this tragedy.

**6.3.2. The District reported significant challenges in the off-site family reunification effort and sought specific suggestions on how the LPS could better prepare for this critical and extremely challenging function.**

LPS Security Director Guy Grace told SHI analysts Chris Dorn and Tod Schneider when the analysts visited the District in November 2015 for this project that the District had identified some of the major issues that hindered their family reunification efforts. These included a rapidly expanding perimeter that engulfed the designated reunification site as well as general logistical issues that arise during these types of incidents.

One challenge the District faced was that the massive number of responding public safety officials apparently made it necessary to move the initial family reunification site because the perimeter that was initially established by law enforcement had to expand to accommodate the number of parked public safety vehicles that were partially blocking access to the initial family reunification site. We normally advise schools to select family reunification sites that are several miles distant from the affected school for this and other reasons. Another complicating factor common to school shooting incidents is the need for law enforcement officials to quickly identify and separate staff and students who are witnesses from people who did not witness key events. The separation of witnesses was accomplished by law enforcement officers as mentioned in a report by LPD Sergeant Joe Ward (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., p. ACSO\_0001121). This process appears to have been completed relatively quickly with Sergeant Ward noting in his report that this process was completed by approximately 5:30 (ACSO\_0001121).

While he was on site in February 2015, report co-author Michael Dorn was advised that LPS had conducted tabletop exercises relating to off-site family reunification. His understanding is that individual schools also sometimes practiced evacuating to staging areas in concert with fire evacuation drills. However, we also did not see any indication that LPS and its public safety partners had ever conducted a full-scale off-site family reunification exercise. While many mid-sized and large school districts have conducted full-scale active shooter exercises, very few have physically simulated the movement of a school population to an off-site family reunification site. In addition, we have seen numerous instances where schools have attempted to use other school sites as family reunification locations. This is usually problematic because parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and other relatives often rush to the family reunification site. When a school is used as the reunification site for another school, this effect is often

significantly multiplied because relatives from both the affected school and the school used as the reunification site rush to the reunification site.

As we have seen in other instances, moving the reunification site creates delays, which in turn result in increased frustration and anxiety for parents and other loved ones, in addition to the students who were evacuated. While the time needed to conduct orderly off-site family reunification often results in numerous frustrated parents and loved ones, changes in family reunification sites typically exacerbates this. As we have mentioned in other contexts, we find that most school districts are significantly overconfident in their level of preparedness to carry out this extremely challenging task. The level of fear relating to school shootings is very high in America and our population has been pre-conditioned to fear the worst when they learn that a school shooting has occurred. In addition, family reunification concepts that worked well a decade ago have become outdated due to the massive influence of social media. Our clients are consistently telling us that they have great difficulty evaluating crisis situations, crafting messages and pushing them out to the community before a wide array of messages go out via social media. This was clearly a challenge in this case.

**6.3.3. Our review of the case file indicates that while there were a number of challenges faced by responding law enforcement officers, the efforts by officers to clear individual rooms in such a large school as AHS were rapid, well-coordinated, and overall effective.**

For example, officers had to contend with a medical emergency involving a student in the middle of their clearing operation (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., p. ACSO\_0000667). In another example, some officers involved in the clearing operation had to be decontaminated for potential exposure to asbestos (ACSO\_0000740). Officers had to try to make sure no aggressors posed a threat in the school while also taking actions to protect the crime scene (ACSO\_0001068).

As with LPS personnel, responding officers had to contend with a variety of rumors, inaccurate reports, and other information challenges. For example, Douglas County Sheriff’s Deputies had to contend with a report of a “box truck that had explosive materials on board” (ACSO\_0000773). Officers with explosives’ detection canines also had check hundreds of student backpacks and areas for explosives (ACSO\_0001055). We noted at least two instances where officers who participated in building clearing operations had to borrow patrol rifles and tactical shotguns (ACSO\_0000833). All of these types of challenges had to be addressed while numerous officers from multiple agencies were assisting with maintaining a large perimeter, assisting in off-site family reunification (ACSO\_0000651), and initiating the criminal investigation (ACSO\_0000652).

In addition, most people do not realize that the officers engaged in clearing each room multiple times had to remain constantly vigilant for an armed aggressor while not over-reacting if students or staff made sudden physical movements when officers entered an area. In effect, this scale of operation involves dozens, if not hundreds, of individual use-of-force decisions by a large number of officers from a variety of agencies as they encounter frightened students and staff when clearing rooms. Officers involved in this tremendous

undertaking had to take actions to protect themselves, each other, and the many students and staff sheltered in an array of different settings. Officers had to be methodical and organized while also attempting to clear the building rapidly in case students and staff were in immediate jeopardy.

At the same time, there were a number of incidents where responding officers forced open doors because the keys they had access to would not open particular doors. In fact, there are indications that these efforts resulted in the level of fear reported by AHS students and staff that were startled by forced entries to individual rooms by tactical team members. Staff and students who are in lockdown in an actual active shooter situation can understandably become frightened when responding officers force entry into individual classrooms (“AHS MH Responders”, n.d., p. LPS 03960 & LPS 03962). There is also some risk that the occupants of the room might attack officers as they enter the room in this fashion if they are hiding from an active shooter.

As is typically the case for school shooting case files, the documents in the file did not provide answers to many of the questions our analysts had about specific preparedness aspects. For example, many of our clients now pre-stage multiple lockable boxes specifically for responding law enforcement officers to have access to master keys. Some of our clients now have three to six sets of keys in each lockbox with two to three lockboxes per school. This affords law enforcement adequate numbers of keys for multiple clearing teams at one time (“ACSO AHS Investigation”, n.d., p. ACSO\_0000969). One major challenge schools face is the concern of providing grand master keys for use by police tactical teams. These keys typically open almost if not every door in a school. We note that one major challenge here is that if an officer loses a grand master during a confusing response, the cost to rekey an entire school or school district can be substantial. The case file did not provide adequate information on this aspect of the District’s preparedness measures to form reliable conclusions. A similar challenge that faced the clearing teams was the lack of adequate numbers of copies of maps and floor plans of the school for an event of this scale. Officers improvised by using fire evacuation diagrams posted in classrooms and, in at least one instance, by quickly making photocopies of diagrams provided by LPS maintenance personnel and distributing them to teams of officers assigned to clear the school (ACSO\_0000827). We often advise our clients to keep numerous copies of school floor plans in their emergency evacuation kits with an understanding that numerous officers may need access to them.

One of the internal after action reviews indicates that the District facilities personnel did an outstanding job in repairing damage to doors resulting from the forced breaching by officers and the door markings officers used to more reliably track which rooms had been cleared three separate times (“Revised notes”, 2014, p. LPS 04026). This effort by the facilities personnel helped to mitigate the trauma resulting from these types of clearing operations. While we have limited opinions on what measures, if any, could have reduced the emotional impact of building clearing efforts by police, our review team finds that it is important that the reader understand how difficult and challenging these efforts can be. The LPS and area law enforcement agencies have likely already discussed these challenges. There is an array of options that can help to

prepare school and law enforcement officials for these challenges. All of the best options involve close collaboration, mutual respect between disciplines, and open communication.

## 6.4. Recovery

As stated in the limitations section of the report, there was only limited information relating to the recovery effort in the case file. The Mental Health Recovery Plan must include options for long-term support and follow-up for students, faculty, and staff. Intense critical incidents that take place on school grounds and result in the death or serious bodily harm of school employees or students are not resolved quickly. This is particularly critical since risk factors such as suicidal thoughts, drug use and other concerning behaviors increase after an incident like this one. In fact, during the site visit by Tod Schneider and Chris Dorn in November 2015, LPS personnel Nate Thompson and Guy Grace reported increases in the levels of reported suicide risks among the students in LPS.

While some information related to the recovery process was included in the case file, many important aspects of recovery were not mentioned. A few examples of the types of the areas we would typically explore include:

1. We did not find documents regarding the process, the qualifications of the personnel conducting the process, the follow-up activities and long-term consequences such as student /teacher absences, transfers, suicidal ideation, test scores, job performance, etc.
2. We could not ascertain from the case file whether or not the District's recovery team conducted regular tabletop and functional exercises focused on evaluating the District's ability to handle large crisis events.
3. We found no indication in the case file about the activities that the counselors undertook to dispel rumors mentioned in the counseling center debrief notes ("AHS MH Responders", n.d., p. LPS03956). Typically, there is a public information liaison on the mental health crisis team that will work with the district public information officer to ensure that crisis communications include rumor control.
4. The documents in the case file indicate that there was a counseling center and the debrief notes from the center are provided (LPS03957); however, it is unclear from the case whether or not there were debriefings scheduled regularly throughout the day to provide support to teachers, students, staff, responders, etc. It is also unclear if there were scheduled debriefings (and the times posted), so everyone involved would have an opportunity to attend throughout the day.
5. We could not conclude if the District's mental health recovery plan included leading practices such as eye movement desensitization reprocessing (EMDR) or other evidenced-based therapeutic responses to crisis for people that may need a higher level of assistance.



While there were limited mentions of aspects relating to mental health recovery in the depositions and in some of the documents provided by the LPS during the discovery process, we did not see adequate information to properly evaluate and opine on the recovery processes in this case.

As Dr. Linda Kanan and her team may be conducting a more thorough evaluation of this area based on her direct experience working on mental health recovery for the LPS after the attack, we determined that we should not conduct a partial evaluation when she would be able to perform a more complete assessment of this important area. Dr. Kanan is a highly experienced practitioner in this area who is familiar with efforts relating to LPS recovery capabilities and how they were implemented.

## 7. Conclusion

The active-shooter incident at AHS in 2013 is absolutely a tragedy. It resulted in the violent and tragic death of an innocent student. Loved ones of the aggressor have also suffered immeasurable pain. AHS students, staff, and many in the community have likewise been devastated by this terrible incident. While LPS and the ACSO implemented prevention measures that are generally superior to those we have typically seen during our assessments of than 1,000 K12 schools in 38 states in the past three years, the aggressor was still able to kill AHS student Claire Davis and attempt to kill AHS head librarian Tracy Murphy with a shotgun.

The aggressor was apparently able to deceive mental health professionals at AHS and possibly two different mental health organizations external to the LPS. There were also two possible opportunities for law enforcement officers to interrupt the planned attack where the aggressor threatened to kill a student at WMS and later threatened to kill AHS head librarian Tracy Murphy. A number of students, school staff, the aggressor's parents, and apparently the SRO at WMS were aware of information that would have been beneficial to both mental health and law enforcement officials prior to the attack. While no one can guarantee that different actions conducted by AHS school staff, students, local law enforcement officials, and possibly the aggressor's parents as well as community mental health service providers would have absolutely prevented the aggressor from carrying out some form of attack, there were multiple opportunities in this instance where those actions performed collectively would more likely than not have prevented the death of Miss Davis.

At the same time, while the opportunities to prevent the attack existed, it is critical that we pay close attention to the fact that what was intended to be a mass casualty school shooting was disrupted by AHS custodian Fabian Vldrio Llerenas, AHS head librarian Tracy Murphy, other AHS staff and students, as well as ACSO Deputy James Englert. We find it to be important to emphasize that Mr. Llerenas, Mr. Murphy, and a number of other staff and students at AHS, as well as ACSO Deputy James Englert will never know the names of those who would have died on December 13, 2013, were it not for their life-saving efforts. We should remain eternally grateful for the many things that these individuals did to prevent additional deaths while acting under extreme stress, with limited information, and with only seconds to act.

The reader should also understand that there are often gaps between what school and public safety officials believe they have in place and the realities of what they actually have in place. We have seen these types of gaps in almost every school safety assessment project we have performed. At the same time, AHS and LPS as well as the ACSO had extensive measures in place that were designed to prevent this type of event. We have rarely conducted a school security assessment where we did not identify opportunities for improvement that are at least as consequential as those described in this report. Many of the measures that were in place were similar to and in some instances superior to those of other school

systems not only in Colorado, but around the nation we have assessed. In fact, the majority of public school districts and non-public schools we have assessed did not have a formal written threat evaluation process, assessment tool or training program for staff in how to conduct student threat assessments.

We also caution the reader to remain cognizant that school and public safety officials should balance their available time, fiscal resources and energy to address not only catastrophic active shooter/killer events, but to also address those other types of tragedies that claim far more lives as well. We note an increasing tendency to focus available resources intensively on highly publicized active shooter/killer incidents while approaches that can help prevent suicide, deaths from medical emergencies, school-traffic fatalities and other more common causes of death often receive less emphasis. This is especially important in Colorado where so many painful active shooter/killer events have taken place. While it is natural that efforts to address this very real threat to any K12 school are a focus, the fact that we were unable to locate comprehensive data for other forms of death on school property in Colorado speaks volumes about the need for additional evaluation of risk. If hours of research by subject matter experts over more than a month were unable to produce this type of data, it is likely that the average educator or public safety official might be unaware of which types of incidents pose the greatest risks for death on Colorado school campuses.

Finally, the reader should understand that the focus of this report has been on aspects of this case as they pertain to LPS. The needs, resources and realities of other public school districts, charter schools, faith-based schools, and independent schools will often be different than those of the LPS. Though the desire to develop a one-size-fits-all approach to school safety is pervasive, our experience has been that this approach is not only impractical, but fraught with danger as well.

Developing a strategy to prevent and respond to potential incidents of targeted school violence is a challenging and complex task. There is no single, universal prescription that will be effective in dealing with every situation or crisis that will confront school administrators, law enforcement officials, parents, and other individuals and organizations in the community (Fein et al., 2004, p. 77).

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## Appendix II – Biographies of the SHI Team

The following are the biographies of the analysts and staff members who contributed to this report.



**Michael Dorn, SHI Executive Director – Project Lead, subject matter expert, co-author the report, and present findings**

Executive Director Michael Dorn is one of the most respected, widely recognized, highly credentialed and trusted school safety experts in the world. During his campus safety career of more than thirty four years, Michael’s work has taken him to numerous regions including Mexico, Honduras, Canada, Vietnam the U.K., Kenya, South Africa, Israel and Mozambique. Mr. Dorn has provided post-incident assistance to law firms, school systems, state agencies and insurance carriers for nine mass casualty and targeted school shooting incidents in K12 schools in the United States and Canada. Mr. Dorn also served as the project lead for a security assessment for an independent Christian school in Nairobi, Kenya after the school was ranked as the number one soft target in Kenya by the U.S. State Department after the deadly terrorist attack at the West Gate Mall in Nairobi.

Published by four major publishing houses, Mr. Dorn has authored and co-authored 27 books on school safety including *Innocent Targets – When Terrorism Comes to School*, the peer reviewed 450 page *Jane’s Safe Schools Planning Guide for All Hazards* and the peer reviewed *Staying Alive – How to Act Fast and Survive Deadly Encounters* which was released by Barron’s in May of 2014. Michael has also authored hundreds of articles and columns for national publications including *School Planning and Management*, *Campus Safety*, *Today’s School*, *School Transportation News* and *College Planning and Management* magazines.

A graduate of the prestigious three-month FBI National Academy and bachelor’s and master’s degree programs at Mercer University, Mr. Dorn has completed more than 3,000 classroom hours of formal law enforcement, fire service, and emergency management training. Mr. Dorn received fourteen days of intensive training and orientation from the Israel National Police, Israel Defense Forces and Israeli intelligence agencies through a fellowship from Georgia State University. Mr. Dorn has also provided training to two groups of police commanders from Israel. Mr. Dorn also holds a certificate in Management Development from the American Management Association – Harvard School of Business delivered through the Mercer University School of Business.

During his 25-year public safety career, Mr. Dorn served as:

- Police Officer, Corporal, Sergeant and Lieutenant, Mercer University Police

- Chief of Police for the Bibb County Georgia Public School System
- School Safety Specialist for the Office of the Governor – Georgia Emergency Management Agency (top expert for the nation’s largest state government school safety center).
- State Antiterrorism Planner for the Georgia Office of Homeland Security Terrorism Division – Georgia Emergency Management Agency.
- Lead Program Manager for the Georgia Office of Homeland Security Terrorism Division – Georgia Emergency Management Agency.
- Senior Analyst for Public Safety and Emergency Management – Jane’s (top expert for the renowned 105-year-old British defense, intelligence and school safety publisher with offices in nine countries).

Mr. Dorn’s expertise has been used by many organizations including the FBI, U.S. Department of Education, National Emergency Management Association, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, U.S. Attorney General’s Office, U.S. Department of Homeland Security and dozens of state police, emergency management agencies and departments of education.

A leading school safety malpractice expert witness consultant, Mr. Dorn served as an expert witness consultant for superior and federal court cases in eleven states and the District of Columbia. Michael was an expert witness consultant in the school safety malpractice litigation following the Red Lake Reservation School Shooting, the nation’s third most deadly K12 school shooting. Mr. Dorn has served as an expert witness in five school shooting cases.

Mr. Dorn has keynoted hundreds of state, national and international professional conferences across the United States, Canada and in Vietnam. Mr. Dorn has keynoted for audiences of up to 3,500 people and has lectured at the FBI Academy, several dozen major universities in the United States and at Vietnam National University in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Mr. Dorn served on the authoring team for the *IS 360: Preparing for Mass Casualty Incidents: A Guide for Schools, Higher Education, and Houses of Worship* training program focused on active shooter incident prevention and preparedness for the United States Department of Homeland Security as part of the 2013 White House School Safety Initiative. Mr. Dorn has also co-authored more than two dozen nationally distributed school safety web courses with seven of those courses being specific to active shooter events. He is




currently co-authoring six courses on terrorism and has appeared in dozens of school safety training videos.


During his ten-years of service as the Chief of Police for the Bibb County Public School System in Macon, Georgia, his officers developed what is believed to be the nation's first multi-disciplinary threat assessment team for a K12 school system. This approach and other innovative measures helped the district prevent a number of planned school shootings, one planned school bombing and a planned double suicide. Mr. Dorn helped the Georgia Department of Education develop the nation's first 24 hour a day, seven day per week, year round hotline. The state hotline was launched in August of 1998 and was based on a similar live monitored hotline developed in 1990 in his school system police department. Mr. Dorn also assisted in launching the e-mail based reporting feature for this hotline while he was serving at the state level. The Bibb County Public School Police Department was widely utilized as a model program by dozens of organizations including the United States Departments of Education and Justice, the FBI, International Association of Chief's of Police and National Association of School Resource Officers. Mr. Dorn has presented nationally and internationally on student threat evaluation for more than twenty years and has personally helped avert a number of planned school shootings and one school bombing incident.


During his tenure as the School Safety Specialist for what was at the time the nation's largest government school safety center, he assisted the National Resource Center for Safe Schools in the development of the companion training program for *Early Warning – Timely Response* which addressed how K12 employees should be taught about early and imminent warning signs. Mr. Dorn also helped the United States Department of Education develop the first All-hazards planning model for K12 schools and has assisted in the development of several dozen state government planning guides, training videos, school security assessment programs and other major projects.

Mr. Dorn authored the first book on school resource officer programs *School/Law Enforcement Partnerships: A Guide to Police Work in Schools* in 2002 and has helped to establish and/or evaluated hundreds of school resource officer programs in more than two dozen states, Canada and Kenya.

Regularly interviewed as a school safety expert by the media, Mr. Dorn has provided balanced and informed commentary for *Education Week*, *NPR*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Time*, *CNN Headline News*, *Hannity*, *Fox News*, *20/20*, *ABC*, *NBC*, *MSNBC*, *Al Jazeera America* the *New York Times* the *Washington Post*, the *LA*

	<p><i>Times, Time Magazine, Univision, the BBC, London Times, Tokyo Broadcasting and hundreds of other media organizations from around the globe.</i></p>
	<p><b>Dr. Sonayia Shepherd, SHI Senior Analyst – Subject matter expert and report co-author</b></p> <p>Dr. Sonayia Shepherd has authored and co-authored 16 books on school safety and emergency management including the peer reviewed book <i>Staying Alive – How to Act Fast and Survive Deadly Encounters</i> published by Barron’s, and four peer review books for Jane’s, the highly regarded British defense, intelligence and school safety publisher. While serving as an Incident Support Specialist for the Centers for Disease Control, she was deployed to a dozen countries including Switzerland, Thailand, Haiti, Rwanda, South Africa, and India. She was also deployed on numerous occasions for disasters in the United States, including a number of deployments in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Dr. Shepherd was assigned to staff the multi-agency command center for the G-8 Summit in Georgia and was detailed to the World Health Organization for the 2004 Tsunami. Dr. Shepherd also helped develop the Smallpox response plan for the Atlanta International Airport and has served as a controller for two FEMA Topoff multi-state and multi-national terrorism exercises.</p> <p>Dr. Shepherd holds two Master of Science degrees, one in Clinical Psychology, and the other in Human Ecology. She also has a PhD in Public Administration – Emergency Response Policy. Dr. Shepherd has extensive experience in conducting school safety assessment projects and instructing school safety assessment train the trainer programs. Dr. Shepherd has interviewed with numerous national and international media outlets including: <i>ABC, FOX, Voice of America, 20/20, CNN and Good Morning America.</i></p> <p>Now serving full-time as the Chief Operating Officer for Safe Havens, Dr. Shepherd has an extensive professional background, which includes full-time work experience as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area School Safety Coordinator for the School Safety Project in the Georgia Emergency Management Agency – Office of the Governor.</li> <li>• Pandemic Influenza Planner for the Centers for Disease Control.</li> <li>• State Bioterrorism Exercise Coordinator for the Georgia Division of Public Health.</li> <li>• State Antiterrorism Planner for the Terrorism Division of the Georgia Office of Homeland Security.</li> <li>• Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center Director.</li> </ul> <p>Dr. Shepherd served as project lead for the development of <i>IS 360: Preparing for Mass Casualty Incidents: A Guide for Schools, Higher Education, and Houses of Worship</i> training</p>

	<p>program focused on active shooter incident prevention and preparedness for the United States Department of Homeland Security as part of the 2013 White House School Safety Initiative.</p>
	<p><b>Dr. Tina S. Brookes, SHI Adjunct Analyst – Subject matter expert and report co-author</b></p> <p>Dr. Tina S. Brookes is a licensed clinical social worker with 25 years of experience as a professional educator. She was instrumental in the development of a model program for alternatives to out of school suspension where community non-profit agencies mentor students as they volunteer. Dr. Brookes holds a Masters of Social Work degree from Indiana University, Indianapolis and an Educational Doctoral degree in Leadership from Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.</p> <p>Dr. Brookes is an Approved Instructor with the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) and she is an Affiliate Faculty member of Resilience Science Institute (RSI). Dr. Brookes co-founded The Academy: National Institute for Crisis Response Training where she actively serves as the Clinical Director and Chief Training Officer. She is the sole proprietor and owner of The Network-Dynamic Crisis Response, and she has a private practice for crisis intervention.</p> <p>Dr. Brookes was instrumental in the development of the ASSIST (Assisting Students and Staff in Stressful Times) crisis response protocol for schools. She is a volunteer with the Billy Graham Rapid Response Team and served after 9-11, Hurricane Katrina, Aurora CO shooting, and Newtown, CT shooting.</p> <p>Dr. Brookes has extensive experience providing crisis response training and intervention to students, faculty, staff and school administrators. Dr. Brookes also has extensive experience collaborating with emergency management, law enforcement, fire, and EMS in relationship to school crises. Dr. Brookes is currently working full-time in the field of crisis response and safety. She teaches CISM classes across the United States and regularly has international students attending her classes. She consults for the TroysgateEagle Judgmental use of deadly force simulation system on the human stress response by law enforcement and military personnel who participate in these highly realistic and stressful simulations. She developed a highly specialized program, “Reflections of Respect”, for chaplains and mental health personnel who support military personnel and law enforcement officers who have experienced traumatic events.</p> <p>Dr. Brookes is a safe school/crisis response specialist. She served as the staff development coordinator for a federal Emergency Response/Crisis Management (ERCM) grant and was the director for a federal Readiness Emergency Management for School (REMS) grant where she studied the lessons learned after the Columbine and Bailey High School</p>

	<p>shootings as well as threat assessment processes used in the Clark County Nevada School Districts during on-site visits with each organization. Dr. Brookes also served as the Safe Schools Community Liaison where she facilitated monthly safe school meetings and continues to consult on the local homeland security task force and public health EPI teams.</p> <p>Dr. Brookes was a featured guest on two American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC) international webinars: <i>The Calm Before the Storm: Preparing Schools for Crisis and Disasters</i> and <i>Playing with Violence: How Virtual Violence Impacts Bullying and Aggressive Behavior</i>. She is a board member of the AACC Specialty Division, Grief, Crisis and Disaster Network.</p> <p>Dr. Brookes has an extensive professional background in the following subject matter areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe Schools Community Liaison</li> <li>• ASSIST Team Development (Assisting Students and Staff in Stressful Times)</li> <li>• Development of School Safety Plans and Safe School Assessments</li> <li>• Human Stress Response</li> </ul> <p>Dr. Brookes is currently collaborating with Lt. Col Dave Grossman to develop a training program to promote resiliency in youth and explore healthy alternatives to violent video games and violent visual imagery. Dr. Brookes attributes her inspiration to do this work to her faith, family, and friends.</p>
	<p><b>Russell Bentley, SHI Senior Analyst – Subject matter expert and report co-author</b></p> <p>Russell Bentley is a 20-year police veteran with 15 years of experience in executive positions with campus police agencies. Mr. Bentley has provided conference keynote sessions, breakout sessions and has assisted with school security assessment projects in more than two dozen states. Mr. Bentley is a 2001 graduate of the FBI National Academy and has received extensive formal training in law enforcement and emergency management. He holds a Master of Science Degree in Administration and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Child Development and Family Life Education, both from Georgia College and State University. During his career, he has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Served as police chief for eight years at both the K-12 and post-secondary levels.</li> <li>• Served for five years with the Macon Police Department working undercover narcotics, patrol division, crime prevention bureau, communications division, housing authority unit and was promoted to police sergeant.</li> </ul>

- Served for eight years as the Deputy Chief of Police and for eight years as the Chief of Police for a Georgia Board of Education Campus Police Department. The department has been widely featured as a model school law enforcement partnership by many agencies including the U.S. Department of Education, the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the U.S. Department of Justice.
- Served as Chief of Police for the Fort Valley State University Police Department for two years.
- Has completed more than 1,600 hours of advanced level law enforcement and emergency management training at the state and federal level.
- Served in the development and final review of the Jane's Safe Schools Planning Guide for All Hazards, the Jane's School Safety Handbook and the Jane's Teacher's Safety Guide.
- Serves as an adjunct faculty member teaching police and security technology at Central Georgia Technical College.

Mr. Bentley has extensive experience in conducting school safety assessments and school safety assessment train-the-trainer programs. He has presented at state, national and international professional conferences across the nation. Mr. Bentley helped co-author the *IS 360: Preparing for Mass Casualty Incidents: A Guide for Schools, Higher Education, and Houses of Worship* training program focused on active shooter incident prevention and preparedness for the United States Department of Homeland Security as part of the 2013 White House School Safety Initiative.

During his fifteen years of service as the Deputy Chief and later Chief of Police for the Bibb County Public School System in Macon, Georgia, Mr. Bentley was pivotal in developing what is believed to be the nation's first multidisciplinary threat assessment team for a K12 school system. This approach and other innovative measures helped the district prevent a number of planned school shootings, one planned school bombing and a planned double suicide. The Department was widely used as a model program by dozens of organizations including the United States Departments of Education and Justice, the FBI, International Association of Chief's of Police and National Association of School Resource Officers.

Mr. Bentley began presenting nationally on the prevention of and response to school shooting incidents for the International Association of Chief's of Police in the mid 1990's. During this two day program, Mr. Bentley taught participants how to develop and operate multi-disciplinary threat assessment teams using case studies of actual imminent shootings that were successfully averted by his district's threat assessment team.




**Rod Ellis, SHI Adjunct Analyst – Subject matter expert and report co-author**


Rod Ellis is a sworn law enforcement officer for 28 years, with 8 of those years being devoted to school related public safety and 5 of those as a school district police chief for a Georgia school system police department with 18 police officers. Prior to his work in school-based law enforcement, Mr. Ellis served 18 years with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Law Enforcement Division where he played a key role and received commendations in the rescue response operations for the 1994 floods in Albany, Georgia. He was a key official for operational planning and logistics for the 1996 Olympic Games held in Georgia as well as the 2004 G-8 Summit held on Sea Island. He was the agency Investigator of the Year twice in his tenure with DNR as well as a recipient of the James R. Darnell outstanding ranger award for the department. Mr. Ellis has completed more than 3,000 hours of formal law enforcement training in his career and has also trained with the Israeli Police, security forces and intelligence agencies in the State of Israel for fourteen days through a fellowship from Georgia State University.


Mr. Ellis also has advanced training in school threat assessment and emergency planning from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA), United State Department of Education, and Safe Havens International. Mr. Ellis has been actively involved in student threat assessment and utilized early intervention techniques as a practitioner. He:

- Was sought out as a subject matter expert by the State of Virginia Department of Education to provide their initial basic level start-up training in K12 threat assessment
- Served as a panel member representing the K12 school sector on the 2012, 2013, and 2014 National Summit on Preventing Multiple Casualty Violence, a joint initiative of DHS, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), John Hopkins University's School of Education, and Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)
- Serves as a subject matter expert by GEMA to provide training in K12 threat assessment and assist with school assessments regionally
- Was sought out as a subject matter expert by Georgia State agencies such as the Department of Family and Children's Services and the Jekyll Island Authority to train their staff on key signs of who is "at risk" to perpetrate an act of violence, how to try and prevent them, as well as how to be best prepared mentally to respond to such acts should the occur



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a DHS Certified Active Shooter Threat Response Instructor who trains officers on how to respond to an active threat</li> <li>• Is an instructor for Crisis Intervention for Mental Health for law enforcement professionals</li> <li>• Keynotes professional conferences nationally and delivered a keynote session on student threat evaluation for the Virginia Department of Education</li> <li>• Is sought out as a subject matter expert by the Georgia School Board Association to train Georgia School Superintendents in school safety matters</li> </ul> <p>Mr. Ellis is also a Georgia Peace Officer's Standards and Training Council Certified Instructors who teaches school staff and police on school public safety. He has articles published in Campus Safety Magazine regarding school safety issues and is a sought after speaker on school safety issues throughout the region. He is currently pursuing a Master's Degree from Columbia Southern University.</p> <p>Mr. Ellis was among SHI team to perform school safety, security, and emergency preparedness assessments for all 199 schools in the Orange County Public Schools (Florida), one of the tenth largest school districts in the United States. Mr. Ellis also assisted SHI with school security assessments for the Richmond Public School System in Virginia.</p>
	<p><b>William Miller, SHI Adjunct Analyst – Subject matter expert and report co-author</b></p> <p>William Miller is a recently retired Director of Threat Evaluation and Crisis Response with the Clark County School District, Nevada, the fifth largest school district in the United States. Mr. Miller has worked in crisis related activities for the last 13 years. Prior to that, Mr. Miller served as the Director of Psychological Services for Clark County Schools where he was responsible for the day-to-day activities for more than 100 school psychologists for 23 years.</p> <p>Mr. Miller is considered an expert in the area of threat evaluation. He and his team of psychologists were the first threat team nationally to be personally trained in threat evaluation by the FBI team of experts after the Columbine incident. This team led by Mr. Miller also received a national award for Best Practice in Threat Evaluation, one of only five recipients for such an honor. Working as a team member for Safe Havens school safety assessment projects, Mr. Miller has conducted review of threat assessment approaches for a number of school systems including the District of Columbia Public Schools, Orange County Public Schools in Florida (one of the ten largest districts in America), and Leander Public Schools in Texas.</p>

	<p>In addition to his work experience in crisis management, Mr. Miller also serves as a psychologist consultant for the State Bar of Nevada on issues of disabilities. He has served in that capacity for 30 years.</p>
	<p><b>Chris Dorn, SHI Analyst – Subject matter expert, report co-author and technical editor</b></p> <p>Well-known and respected in the field, Chris Dorn has presented at conferences in more than twenty-five states and at Vietnam National University in Saigon. Chris has served as a trainer for the U.S. Office of Homeland Security, FEMA, Israel National Police, International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Association of Pupil Transportation, Bureau of Justice Assistance, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and numerous state departments of education, law enforcement and emergency management. Mr. Dorn has presented and keynoted for hundreds of state, national and international professional conferences.</p> <p>Mr. Dorn has authored and co-authored six books on school safety including <i>Innocent Targets – When Terrorism Comes to School</i> and <i>Staying Alive – How to Act Fast and Survive Deadly Encounters</i>. Mr. Dorn has also published a peer review paper on schools and terrorism in the <i>Journal of Emergency Management</i>, the most widely circulated peer-reviewed journal in the field of emergency management. Mr. Dorn co-authored the <i>IS 360: Preparing for Mass Casualty Incidents: A Guide for Schools, Higher Education, and Houses of Worship</i> training program focused on active shooter incident prevention and preparedness for the United States Department of Homeland Security as part of the 2013 White House School Safety Initiative. Mr. Dorn also co-authored seven web courses on active shooter situation and is co-authoring six new courses on terrorism for Scenario Learning Incorporated. Mr. Dorn has also worked with clients in the wake of five K12 active shooter cases.</p> <p>He has appeared in several dozen training videos that have been utilized for training in more than thirty countries and his amazing concealed weapons demonstration has been viewed by millions of people. Short versions of his weapons concealment demonstrations have aired on <i>Larry King Live</i>, <i>Good Morning America</i>, <i>CNN</i>, <i>ABC World News Tonight</i> and <i>the Law Enforcement Television Network</i>.</p> <p>Widely considered one of the world’s top experts at contraband concealment and detection, Mr. Dorn also has the unique distinction of serving as an analyst for Jane’s – the renowned defense, intelligence and security publisher while only 21 years old. His research on drug use and trafficking has taken him to England, The Netherlands, Mexico, Canada, Vietnam, France and Bolivia. His third book <i>Innocent Targets – When Terrorism Comes to School</i> is in use by emergency management and homeland security officials in all 50 states and by</p>


	<p>the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as well as public safety agencies around the world.</p> <p>Mr. Dorn is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology where he majored in International Affairs and French, with a certificate in Marketing. He is certified as a guest instructor at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center and he holds numerous additional certifications in emergency management topics from FEMA.</p> <p>Mr. Dorn has more than ten years of experience assisting with and performing site assessments and emergency preparedness evaluations for several hundred K12 schools in 17 states and Washington D.C.. He was one of the team leaders in our assessment project for all 199 schools for Orange County Public Schools (Florida). As Executive Producer for Safe Havens Video, he has created more than one hundred school safety training videos on a variety of topics for districts across the country.</p>
	<p><b>Tod Schneider, SHI Adjunct Analyst – Subject matter expert, report co-author and editor</b></p> <p>A multi-talented school safety expert with a broad perspective, Tod Schneider has authored, co-authored or contributed to countless books and articles on school safety, including Safe School Design (ERIC 2000), one of the first and few books dedicated to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) for schools, and Safe and Healthy School Environments (Oxford Press 2006). But Mr. Schneider’s interests go far beyond fundamental CPTED, integrating Advanced CPTED, Connectivity, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) concepts, along with environmental health awareness, into Safe, Healthy and Positive Environmental Design (SHAPED) for schools. Mr. Schneider currently is consulting on a health sciences campus design project in Haiti.</p> <p>Mr. Schneider served for 29 years as a crime prevention specialist for the Eugene, Oregon Police Department, capped by a one-year successful assignment coordinating the city’s efforts to house 365 homeless veterans by the end of 2015, in response to a national challenge to do so issued by the White House. Throughout his career he also served, and continues to serve, as a school safety consultant nationwide, writing, speaking and consulting on related topics. Mr. Schneider was the primary author for the comprehensive school safety checklist developed by the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, and has visited hundreds of schools to offer his services, including Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon, after the mass casualty shooting. Mr. Schneider also provided assistance after three administrators were shot while attempting to search a student without police assistance in a Tennessee high school.</p>


Mr. Schneider has special enthusiasm for advanced CPTED—building connectivity between students, staff, families, and communities to enhance all aspects of the school experience, from academics and safety to self-actualization. To that end, he has served from 2004 to 2014 as the Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum instructor at the Family School, a public school-within-a-school in the 4j school district in Oregon. Using the curriculum as a foundation, he integrated participatory story-telling and poetry into his classes. In addition, he has recently completed his middle-grade adventure novel, *The Lost Wink*.


Mr. Schneider has consulted to such groups as the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, the U.S. Dept. of Education, Hamilton Fish Institute, the Northwest Regional Education Labs, SAIF, the National Association of Housing Officials, the California Department of Education, the Department of Justice, the Arizona Juvenile Justice Association, Jackson State University, Safe Havens International, the Peter Li Group (School Planning and Management and College Planning and Management publications), the U.S. Forest Service, the Hamilton Fish Institute (Georgetown University) and numerous school districts ranging from Oregon to Tennessee. He recently reviewed schools for Linn-Benton Lincoln ESD and Bethel Schools, both in Oregon, as well as a handful of schools in Haiti, in partnership with the Foundation for Peace.


Mr. Schneider is a certified instructor for CPTED as well as for the Second Step violence prevention curriculum. He was one of the founding members of the International CPTED Association (ICA) as well as SafeCascadia, a CPTED consulting consortium. He has presented his extremely popular seminar on confrontation management to a diversity of organizations such as Trillium Health Care, the American Society of Safety Engineers, Balzhiser Engineering, Northwest Youth Corps, Montessori School, Serenity Lane, Public Health, Eugene Water and Electric Board, ISTE, Legal Aid, the U.S. Forest Service and countless others.

Mr. Schneider holds a bachelor's degree in Community Service and Public Affairs and a master's degree in Journalism, both from the University of Oregon. In his work at Eugene Police, he has played a number of roles, including designing the School Whatever It Takes (SWIT) training for school prevention officers, CPTED and crime prevention training for officers as well as citizens, and customized seminars for schools, businesses, social services and government programs on violence, hope building, confrontation management, community revitalization, women's safety, senior safety, robbery, burglary, fraud and related topics. He served as the department liaison, at various times, to the Latino, Disabled and Women's communities. Under an HUD grant, Mr. Schneider ran a Saturday Great Kids club in a housing project. He was the first coordinator for the Whiteaker Public Safety Station, and founding editor of *Community Safety Quarterly*. He also served as an adjunct professor at the University of Oregon, teaching a

	<p>course entitled Roots of Violence Seeds of Hope. He has served on the board of directors of Womenspace and Halfway House, Inc.</p>
	<p><b>Steve Satterly, SHI Adjunct Analyst – Subject matter expert, report co-author and editor</b></p> <p>A nascent writer on school safety issues, Steve Satterly has delivered numerous presentations on school safety topics at regional, state, and national professional conferences. Mr. Satterly has also helped conduct security assessments for hundreds of K12 schools in Connecticut, Indiana, Illinois, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, Oregon, and Texas. Mr. Satterly also assisted SHI with off-site evaluation work for a security assessment for an independent Christian school in Nairobi, Kenya after the school was ranked as the number one soft targets for terrorism in Kenya by the U.S. State Department.</p> <p>A district safety officer since 2004 and the Director of School safety since 2011 for an Indiana public school system, Mr. Satterly has served as an active shooter conference presenter for the United States Department of Homeland Security. A co-author for the peer review book <i>Staying Alive – How to Act Fast and Survive Deadly Encounters</i>, Mr. Satterly also co-authored <i>IS 360: Preparing for Mass Casualty Incidents: A Guide for Schools, Higher Education, and Houses of Worship</i> training program focused on active shooter incident prevention and preparedness for the United States Department of Homeland Security as part of the 2013 White House School Safety Initiative.</p> <p>Mr. Satterly has authored or co-authored magazine articles, such as a cover story for Campus Safety Magazine entitled <i>14 Severe Weather Survival Tips</i> in April of 2012. He also wrote a cover story for School Planning and Management Magazine entitled <i>After the Storm: Recovery Planning for Disasters in Schools</i> in May of 2012. He has written other articles for School Planning and Management Magazine, as well as The Safety Net, an electronic publication of Safe Havens, International. He recently completed a project as a subject matter expert in tornado preparedness for the American Clearinghouse of Educational Facilities. In June 2012, he co-authored a white paper with Michael Dorn, <i>Fight, Flight or Lockdown: Teaching Students to Attack Active Shooters Could Result in Decreased Casualties or Needless Deaths</i>.</p> <p>Mr. Satterly co-authored the United States Department of Homeland Security Active Shooter training program for K12 schools, institutions of higher learning and places of Worship. As part of the 2013 White House School Safety Initiative. Mr. Satterly has been interviewed as a school safety authority for School Transportation News Magazine, Campus Safety Magazine, and recently was interviewed by Youth Radio, a radio station with 51 million listeners a year.</p>

	<p>During his 24-year education career, Mr. Satterly served as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teacher, coach, and mentor</li> <li>○ Assistant Principal of two different Indiana middle schools.</li> <li>○ School Safety Specialist for an Indiana school district.</li> <li>○ REMS Grant Writer and Project Director</li> <li>○ 2011 Indiana Assistant Principal of the Year</li> <li>○ Finalist - 2012 Campus Safety Magazine School Security Director of the Year</li> </ul> <p>A twelve-year veteran of the United States Army, Mr. Satterly uses his experiences as an Infantryman to drive his desire to protect others. He has taken numerous law enforcement training courses, and has received certification in the Active Shooter Doctrine from the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy. A certified School Safety Specialist through the Indiana Department of Education, he is also a graduate of the 2007 FBI Citizen’s Academy through the Indianapolis Field Office, and holds certification as a Gang Specialist through the National Gang Crime Research Center in Chicago. The Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy, the Indiana Association of School Principals have routinely used Mr. Satterly’s school safety expertise.</p>
	<p><b>Phuong Nguyen, SHI Analyst – Subject matter expert, report co-author, and Editor-in-Chief</b></p> <p>Phuong Nguyen serves as the Public Information Officer for Safe Havens International (SHI). Mrs. Nguyen tallies data for and prepares all written reports for SHI assessment projects. A formally trained, experienced and skilled researcher, Mrs. Nguyen has analyzed assessment data, prepared documents, and provided oversight for reporting for all SHI school safety assessment projects since 2010, including major projects for the Center for Safe Schools funded by Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Hawaii Department of Education, the Wisconsin Homeland Security Council, the Indiana Department of Education, and the Maine Department of Education, covering more than 2,000 public, private, charter, independent, and parochial schools. Mrs. Nguyen has also assisted in conducting on-site school security and emergency preparedness assessments for public, independent, and faith-based K12 schools in 17 states and the District of Columbia. Mrs. Nguyen also assisted SHI with off-site evaluation work for a security assessment for an independent Christian school in Nairobi, Kenya after the school was ranked as the number one soft target for terrorist attack in Kenya by the U.S. State Department.</p> <p>Mrs. Nguyen served as the content editor for the peer reviewed book <i>Staying Alive – How to Act Fast and Survive Deadly Encounters</i> which was released on bookstores by Barron’s in May 2014. Mrs. Nguyen also co-authored the <i>IS 360: Preparing for Mass Casualty</i></p>

	<p><i>Incidents: A Guide for Schools, Higher Education, and Houses of Worship</i> web training program on active shooter prevention and preparedness for the United States of Education as part of the 2013 White House School Safety Initiative. Mrs. Nguyen has also served as a co-author for six web courses on the prevention of and preparedness for active shooter events and is currently co-authoring six terrorism web courses for Scenario Learning Inc.</p> <p>Prior to her work with Safe Havens, Mrs. Nguyen worked in the following roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1999 to 2001 - Adjunct faculty member teaching English at Vietnam National University, Hanoi.</li> <li>○ 2002 to 2004 -Administrative Assistant - Office of International Relations at Vietnam National University, Saigon.</li> <li>○ 2004 to 2005 - Research Assistant - Vietnam Center at Texas Tech University.</li> </ul> <p>Mrs. Nguyen completed the following degrees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1999: BA degree in English Linguistics at Quinhon University, Vietnam - Honors Graduate number one student in her department.</li> <li>○ 2002: MA in Applied Linguistics at Vietnam National University in Saigon, Vietnam.</li> <li>○ 2006: MA in Mass Communications at Texas Tech University with a 3.9 GPA.</li> </ul> <p>Present: Enrolled in the MS dual degree program for Cyber Security/MBA at the University of Maryland University College with a 4.0 GPA.</p>
	<p><b>Ulric Bellaire, SHI Adjunct Analyst – Subject matter expert and report co-author</b></p> <p>Mr. Bellaire is a 13 year police veteran with three years of experience in supervisory positions. He began his career in law enforcement with the Macon Police Department as a Patrolman and a Neighborhood Police Officer with the AmeriCorps Cadet Program. After two years with the Macon Police Department, he accepted a position with his current school system police department where he has received extensive formal training in school policing, youth intervention and emergency management. Mr. Bellaire has extensive experience working in the prevention of youth gang violence.</p> <p>Mr. Bellaire is a certified Field Training Officer who now holds the rank of police sergeant, he trains officers on using proactive approaches when policing school settings and is the Field Training Supervisor and oversees the department's Field Training Program. He has certifications in law enforcement supervision and management. He also served in the Army Reserves with the 921<sup>st</sup> Field Hospital in Sacramento, California, and received an honorable discharge after fulfilling his commitment. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in</p>

	<p>Computer Information Systems from Mercer University and is currently working on his Master's in Business Administration at Wesleyan College.</p> <p>Since joining the school district police department, Mr. Bellaire has received extensive training in emergency preparedness and has more than seven years of experience conducting school safety, security, climate, culture and emergency preparedness assessments in a school district serving 24,000 students. Mr. Bellaire also serves as an adjunct analyst with SHI and has helped the SHI team to assess schools in Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools in North Carolina and was part of the thirty-two SHI team members to conduct school safety, security, and emergency assessments for all schools operated by one of the tenth largest school districts in the United States – Orange County Public Schools in Florida. Mr. Bellaire also assisted with a school safety, security, climate, culture and emergency preparedness assessment for two campuses for the University School in Ohio and for all four campuses of the Bolles School in Jacksonville, Florida. Mr. Bellaire is currently serving on the project team to conduct safety, security, climate, culture and emergency preparedness assessment for 160 Catholic schools in Florida.</p>
	<p><b>Rachel Wilson, SHI Staff – Document research</b></p> <p>Rachel Wilson has worked extensively with SHI over the past six years in our training video unit as well as providing logistical support for our school safety, security, and emergency preparedness assessment team for assessments for twenty school districts and independent schools in thirteen states as well as the District of Columbia. In addition to her support role, Rachel has served as an adjunct analyst, conducting staff interviews and crisis scenario simulations on several of our school assessment projects. Rachel also served as our liaison for 32 SHI analysts on a massive school security assessment project for 205 schools in Orange County Florida.</p> <p>An experienced photographer, she also performs professional quality photography and video during production for SHI training videos. Rachel has assisted in production for over one hundred SHI school safety training videos, including serving as producer and editor for the web series <i>Ask Safe Havens</i>. As the Safe Havens staff photographer, Rachel's photos have been used for numerous school safety articles, books, manuals, training videos and web courses. Rachel's photographs were used extensively for the United States Department of Homeland Security active shooter response web course that is part of President Barack Obama's White House School Safety Initiative. Her photos of school safety programs, drills and exercises are also in use in many other FEMA web courses and training programs.</p>



As a native Spanish speaker, Rachel also serves as interpreter and translator for the Safe Havens team when needed, including serving as a translator for school site visits and interviews in Mexico and Bolivia. Rachel has also provided translation for a number of Safe Havens Video projects requiring subtitling or overdubbing into Spanish.

Prior to her work with Safe Havens International, Rachel served as a yearbook, candid, sports and event photographer for Lifetouch, one of the largest school photography companies in the United States. In this capacity she worked with hundreds of schools providing services on site, at events as well as in the main studio. Rachel also served in the Safety Department for Land Transportation, working with the Safety Director to develop screening programs and maintain driver screening and safety logs. Here she assisted in the development of a paperless driver information tracking system to facilitate background and drug screening and re-screening.