

STAFF EDITORIAL



LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE LOCKDOWN

OVERLAND DID A LOT OF THINGS RIGHT, BUT WE CAN ALWAYS DO MORE

School shootings are now a tragic reality that occurs more than we'd like to admit. CCSD constantly tries to prepare us with lockdowns in case there is a threat in the school, but of course prepared drills are nothing like the actual event, especially when you are in the middle of it.

During Overland's lockdown, the staff and security were well prepared and calm overall. The security quickly escorted students that were in the hall or had an off period into the library or a nearby classroom. Parents and students were contacted with a text almost immediately stating that Overland and Prairie were on a lockdown because of a potential threat in one of the buildings and to not return to the school if they were off campus.

This text caused students to realize that the lockdown was not a drill, and students mostly took it seriously and kept quiet. CCSD took the threat seriously, acting quickly and still updating parents and students by tweeting and retweeting the Aurora Police Department.

With the sudden lockdown there were still several things that Overland could have done better and could improve in case of a

similar situation in the future.

Teachers were not communicated with at all, while students and parents were the first ones to know that the lockdown was not a drill. Teachers should have been updated so that they can let students that were scared know what was happening.

Students were the ones that were learning all the updates through social media and looking up the news as soon as it happened. With all the information coming through mostly snapchat, there were many rumors that were quickly spread; such as shots being heard in the IST.

One way to solve this would be to give teachers walkie talkies to be able to communicate with each other safely and know exactly where the threat is inside the building. There should be a code that teachers know that inform them that the lockdown is not a drill so they can take it seriously from the beginning.

Our classroom doors are also still extremely unsafe as they all have windows on them that serve no purpose. If there was ever a dangerous person inside the building, they could look through and

see kids hiding on the floor, and even with a locked door, they could break the window and open the door from the inside.

Overland as well as all other schools should have doors that can be locked from inside because the doors we have now only lock from the outside. This means that teachers have to step outside the classroom to lock the door before re-entering the classroom, putting them in danger if there was someone in the hall. There are many security devices that teachers can have in their class at all times that are placed under the door to prevent it from being opened.

Also there are many classes that have large windows in them. These become dangerous as there is nothing covering them, especially on the first floor. There should be something installed that is able to quickly cover the windows. Dark drapes can be installed that would cover the windows, not allowing anyone to look inside the classroom.

Additionally, during the lockdown students were sitting in the same class for hours. In the case of another serious lockdown, there are essentials that need to be provided. The lockdown was still in effect during all of third and lunch, and students got extremely hungry and thirsty but had no way of getting food or water. There needs to be an emergency box with food, such as granola bars and water so that students can still eat when trapped in a class for hours.

The first aid kits that are also provided in each classroom are not ef-

“ THE ALICE TRAINING INSTITUTION (ALERT, LOCKDOWN, INFORM, COUNTER, EVACUATE) PROFESSIONALLY TRAINS TEACHERS AND STUDENTS, IN WHAT TO DO DURING AND ACTIVE SHOOTING. ”

fective enough to treat a student that has been injured. The kits are mostly made up of only band-aids, but other essentials need to be added, such as gauze pads, adhesive bandages, wound cleaning agents, antiseptic, ibuprofen, and tweezers.

One of the biggest problems during the lockdown was the need for many students to go to the bathroom. Some teachers resorted to providing a trash can, while others were told they had to make students "hold it" until security could escort students one by one to the bathroom. There was no real effective solution for the bathroom, and teachers were not trained in what to do in these situations. While the only real solution might be to make sure you go to the bathroom before going to class, emergencies happen, and security needs to have a better plan than telling students to hold it in.

Until we find a permanent solution that will end the threat of guns in school, we will most likely have to continue dealing with lockdowns. We can make sure, though, that we are the most prepared we possibly can be at all times.

The ALICE training institution (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) professionally trains teachers and students in what to do during an active shooting. They promote proactively handling the threats instead of only practicing traditional lockdowns. Using a program like the ALICE institution to train our Overland staff is a good way to better prepare ourselves in case there is ever a dangerous situation in our school.

Overall our staff and security made us as students feel safe, and we can always count on them to keep us as safe as they can, but we still need to take professional steps to ensure that we are indeed safe inside of our own school if a tragedy occurs.

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