

**St. Charles Community College**

**Campus Police Outreach Task Force**

**Wednesday November 9th, 2022 at 2:00pm – SSB Auditorium and Zoom**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Panel Participants:**

**Lt. Jeff Drake (Chair) Campus Police**

**Capt. Scott Binggeli Campus Police**

**Sgt. Brandon Misher Campus Police**

**Sgt. Adam Caupp St. Charles County PD**

**Sgt. Dave McCune Cottleville PD**

**Sgt. Tim Baker Wentzville PD**

**Audience: 79 total Auditorium - 38 Zoom - 41**

1. **Welcome to the Group Brandon Misher**

**•** Brandon welcomed everyone to the panel discussion on Active Shooter Response and introduced the guest speakers from St. Charles County, Cottleville, and Wentzville Police Departments. He also introduced Chief Bob Ronkoski from SCC Campus Police and Chief Steve James from the Cottleville Police Department who were in attendance. The guests shared their years of police service, and their various levels of expertise, education and training in Active Shooter, Dangerous Intruder, SWAT Team, MAC-TAC, and Threat Assessment.

1. **Mental Health information Kelly DeGeare**

SCC Mental Health Counselor Kelly DeGeare welcomed and addressed the audience members regarding the possibility of the discussion of Active Shooters and response techniques could bring up a traumatic response, and that she and SCC Case Worker Erin Schnurbusch were available in person and via Zoom for anyone who wished to speak about their feelings or receive counseling or referrals. She also noted that Student Activities Coordinator Caitlin Smothers and Student Life Manager James Bratcher were also available to speak to any students about their concerns.

1. **Question and Answer**

* The presentation was opened to questions from the audience inside the auditorium and

logged in on Zoom.

* The term MAC-TAC was explained to the audience as being an acronym for

**Multiple Assault Counter-Terrorist Action Capabilities,** and that training in MAC-TAC response was currently being taught to every police officer in St. Charles County, which is approximately 700 officers. Training has been updated for officers to respond more to intelligence-gathering than simple stimuli such as hearing gunshots when responding to confront and stop an active shooter or other threat.

* Question about giving code words over a P.A. system when an active shooter is on the campus. Jeff Drake explained that at St. Charles Community College we do have an all-campus public address system, and we do announce the presence of an active shooter or other deadly threat on campus as soon as we know about it, however we do not use code words, that we use plain language.
* Comment from audience that they heard an active shooter banged on doors and said he was the police to gain access to locked areas. The panel advised that people should remain in their secure area until they verified the person knocking on the door was an officer, which could be by calling 911 on a cellphone and asking the dispatcher if officers were indeed on the scene and knocking on their door.
* Comment from audience that they had taken the 4-E Active Shooter Response Training course a few years ago and that it was a basic “Run-Hide-Fight” type of training, and they asked if anything has changed. The panel replied that the basic run-hide-fight philosophy was still the best practice, but that new things are being learned all the time as more of these incidents occur, which can highlight special response techniques for particular situations or facilities when an active shooter is present. However, the run-hide-fight technique is still the prevailing response recommended by law enforcement agencies. Detailed explanations followed, such as “hide” does not mean lying under a desk, which has been shown to be ineffective, but that “hide” means concealment in a secure area, with barricades or other barriers to slow down the attacker. The “run” component was also highlighted to include the suggestion of knowing where the exits are whenever you enter a building or interior space before something goes wrong.
* Panel members explained the modern police response, which basically means the officers go immediately into the building and confronts the shooter to neutralize the threat, and that this was not the standard procedure until after the Columbine shooting in 1999, that prior to that the officers were trained to set up a perimeter and wait for the SWAT Team to arrive. It became apparent that many more lives would have been saved if officers went into the Columbine High School as soon as they arrived and engaged the shooters. Going forward the accepted police response has been to go in immediately and not wait for the SWAT Team. A comment on the Uvalde school shooting highlighted that the officers did not appear to be properly trained in the current response techniques because they waited outside the building for an extended period of time.
* A question from the audience regarding getting away from the building during an escape from an active shooter situation, and should they leave the campus completely. Panel replied that it was acceptable to get off campus, but also that it might not be easy to drive off campus due to the very large police, fire and EMS response coming into the campus drives, and that they might need to leave campus on foot.
* A question from the audience from an educator, wanting to know if there was any liability on instructors that requires them to put the safety of their students first. The panel all agreed that it was not an educator’s legal responsibility to see to the safety of their adult students in a college setting, and that there was no civil or criminal liability in play. It was mentioned that instructors and fellow students could help encourage others escape to safety rather than just stay put in a classroom or other enclosed area. Panel officer said in 484 active shooter events, he had never seen any citizen held liable for deaths or injuries, and that law enforcement shoulders most of any liability.
* Panel officer commented that police officers’ duties and responsibilities are different from a citizen’s during a life-threatening situation, and the hierarchy on the level of importance in saving lives is taught with the acronym “HIPS” which means “Hostage” “Innocents” “Police” and “Suspect”, which means police officers are 3rd on the list, so we focus on saving the lives of any hostages and innocent people first, we protect ourselves and our fellow officers the best we can while performing those duties, and that the suspect’s life has the lowest priority.
* Question from Zoom, observation that some areas on this campus do not have solid wooden doors, and some are just covered by glass, so how would they protect themselves from an active shooter? SCC officers on the panel said that we are currently evaluating areas or offices that do not have lockdown capability, and we will be offering targeted response suggestions for such areas, but that the basic technique “fight” does apply in open areas when escape or concealment is not possible, such as throwing objects at a shooter because it causes him to hesitate and protect himself from the objects, allowing time to escape or overpower the shooter.
* Question from Zoom, what can students do to look for warning signs from other students that they may become or are planning to be a shooter? Panel answers included noticing students who are being bullied, isolated or made fun of….that this has been noted in previous school shootings as a contributing factor. Also changes in behavior such as withdrawing from socializing, missing classes, dropping grades, poor hygiene, falling asleep in class, angry outbursts or acting out in class are things that fellow students and instructors can identify. Kelly DeGeare added that the Student of Concern form that is on the bottom of the main page of the SCC website can be completed confidentially and submitted to the Mental Health counselors for evaluation and contact with the student to figure out what problems they are experiencing and hopefully get them the resources they need.
* Question from Zoom, is there medical or first aid training available from SCC on helping treat victims in an active shooter situation. Panel officers from SCC noted that we have offered some basic first aid training along with our CPR and AED training. Officers also noted that part of MAC-TAC training for police officers is how to stop bleeding with tourniquets for limbs and on the torso.
* Question from Zoom, what is the best way to call for help during an active shooter incident. Panel replied that the quickest way was to contact our department at ext. 8545 or calling (636) 922-8545 from a cellphone because it goes directly to our dispatch center, but if you cannot remember that number, 911 will get the dispatch center for Cottleville, who will call our dispatcher and let them know what’s happening, which takes several seconds longer than a direct call. A comment from the audience was that there are numerous emergency phones in every hallway on campus. Panel also noted the “Blue Light” phones on each parking lot and at the Campus Lake Apartments building call our dispatch center as well.
* A comment from the audience, a staff member who has moved to a new area wanted to know how our department knows where a call is coming from on campus. Chief Ronkoski answered this by explaining that they Campus Directory gets updated in a timely manner whenever an employee or an entire department moves to another location on campus. The staff member asked if sending in an IT ticket as a reminder that they have moved would be okay, and he replied that it wouldn’t hurt.
* Question from the audience, an instructor wanting to know how to get CPR training on campus. He was advised to contact our department and tell us of his interest in the training.
* Panel officers following up on an earlier question on barricading a room or office. Officers stressed that anything which slows down or causes resistance to a shooter will deter him from entering an area, and it gives people time to prepare an assault to disarm or disorient the shooter, buying valuable time for law enforcement to arrive and engage the shooter as well. Suggestion that people practice or rehearse what items they would use to barricade their office or classroom, and how they would respond if a shooter tried to enter.
* Brandon Misher wrapped up the presentation, thanking the guest speakers and the audience for attending. Chief Ronkoski picked the winning ticket for the in-person attendance prize, and upon getting the list of participants on Zoom he will pick a winner from that group as well. The presentation was officially closed.

**Next Meeting will be early in the Spring Semester – 2023 (Date TBA)**