

Hello -

We know it is important to do everything we can, under the direction of our public safety partners, to train our students and staff in how to most effectively save lives in an active shooter incident. While this important work is necessary, it can also be scary or traumatic for some of our students.

In response to an article that was recently printed in the [Atlantic](#) about the traumatic effects of conducting these drills, I connected with our public safety partners for their input – my thanks to Chief McGill in Novato, Chief Bishop in San Rafael, and Sheriff Doyle for their thoughtful responses and ongoing partnership. The conclusion was that the benefits of conducting these drills far outweigh the negative implications. I am providing a brief recap of what I learned since it may be helpful when answering parent or community concerns about this matter. Here are some of their key points:

- Marin public safety agencies do not conduct the graphic unannounced type of drills discussed in the Atlantic piece.
- Public safety agencies do not use students or anyone not directly briefed and part of a drill as a willing volunteer.
- Public safety agencies conduct rigorous and realistic drills for their officers, but do not conduct these drills on campuses during the school day or anywhere where students or staff would be traumatized.
- All training and drills are closely coordinated with school districts.
- Modified lockdown drills are needed as a rehearsal for students and staff response such as clearing halls, locking classrooms, simulating barricading doors, etc. While these rehearsals can still cause some anxiety, particularly to our younger students, the benefits outweigh that concern trauma especially if the drill is managed appropriately by teachers.

In an effort to help alleviate some of this trauma, I am providing the following resources to help our schools reduce any negative effects on our students and staff.

[Best Practice Considerations for Schools in Active Shooter and Other Armed Assailant Drills](#)

Thank you for all that you do every day to support the safety and well-being of our students!