

Essex H.S. Principal Rob Reardon talked about the murder suicide that occurred prior to the holiday break involving the loss of student, Gunnar Schumacher. The effectiveness and detail of the emergency team, along with the community plan, and students, all rose to this occasion over the first couple of days and the days that followed. The school maintained normalcy even amongst the tragedy. The auditorium was used as a gathering center. Movies, pictures, and just being together helped the students and the staff. The students were able to access counseling options. Services took place for Gunnar afterwards at the Alliance Church and the church community did a wonderful job for the family and for the students with the wake and the funeral. The School, church, police, and other entities totally supported the family. The crisis guide was reviewed, a team was in place, and people pulled together at the school. The communication between the school and family and police was great. All areas were very time efficient. He thanked the Essex Police. School counselors and staff will continue to offer assistance to social workers. First Call also provided support to the family. Gunnar's sister Elise is provided with a strong support system. Several schools and the whole community donated food, flowers, and several other things. It made the staff and students feel good. These donations came as far away as St. Johnsbury and Rutland.

“Run-Hide-Fight” Policy – Presented by Officer Kurt Miglinas - Offered as informational options, not recommendations.

Officer Miglinas showed a few short videos about perpetrators entering a place of business and how these three responses (Run, Hide, Fight) can be used to save lives. He reviewed the tips to survive a shooting that were presented in the videos. Be prepared for the worst. You must have a plan. 1) Run 2) Hide 3) Fight are options. Get out if you can. You are important, not your stuff. Call 911. Help others escape if possible. Hide if you can't get out safely. Act quickly and quietly. Turn out lights. Lock doors if possible. Silence your cell phone. Remain quiet and calm. If you are going to fight, improvise weapons. Commit to your actions. Be aware of your environment. Always have an exit plan. Be aware and be prepared. On average one person is killed every 15 seconds during a mass shooting incident. This is a reality that we all have to consider today.

Officer Miglinas briefly went over the process that UVM follows in an assaultive situation. For inside and outside of the building, block your doors. It's very important. There is no one procedure to recommend if in front of an armed intruder. Use common sense. Overcome the armed subject with force as a last resort. These are all additional options, depending on the situation, depending on the staff/student body.

Officer Miglinas also spoke on the A.L.I.C.E. process as well. Alert/Lockdown/Inform/Counter/Evacuate. He showed us a video that encourages to fight back. Counter attacking is the most controversial to the

perpetrator. Fighting is the absolute last resort. The developers of the plan feel that doing something is better than doing nothing. To learn more about A.L.I.C.E. you can go to the website: Alicetraining.com Run-Hide-Fight and A.L.I.C.E. are just options. This concept is foreign to most people. Be suspicious and have 360 degree awareness. A lot of the issues rely on personal judgment and that will always be a risk. Move and distract the perpetrator to keep from being a stable target. This relates back to the fight option. The scream or yell decision will have to be made at the time and the situation.

People entering Essex H.S. will start to face a greeter every day. Visitors must leave their keys at the front desk. Greeters will have triage training. Having the trained staff and greeters will help to slow down the perpetrator. This helps with allowing time for the police to arrive. Essex H.S. is looking to get smart phone apps of "411" with tips for kids in emergency situations. All would need to be age appropriate.

EPA – Presented by Mike Collins

Mike Collins from IBM Security/Safety spoke on EPA (Environmental Protection Agency). In the last few years, the number of school chemistry lab accidents has gone up quite a bit. It is just barely hitting the radar, and there is no research as to why. It is starting to get in the spot light. EPA has a voluntary program and will come in to a school and help inventory what you have, where it is located, manage your chemicals from entrance to exit, and make sure things are safe. You can make bombs and drugs out of certain chemicals. The EPA offers this service free of charge as far as their labor and inspection of the labs, but any disposals of chemicals or upgrades to the lab are not free.