

## Local Schools



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# Missouri Highway Patrol and Local Law Enforcement Participate in Active Shooter Training

AUGUST 21ST 2022 BY DEE LOFLIN

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The Missouri State Highway Patrol conducted intruder training at Dexter High School. Other police departments along with Dexter Police Department were Bloomfield, Stoddard County Sheriff and the Bernie Police. Training has been ongoing during the summer.

“The Dexter Police Department takes school safety serious and we are glad to partner with the highway patrol to provide this training,” stated Dexter Police Chief Hank Trout. “This year we have included Stoddard County (Sheriff’s Department), Bloomfield, Bernie, and all officers here at Dexter in the training. We will continue to do that throughout the training.”

The training included drills simulating an active shooter situation, classroom work and a virtual simulation program. The virtual simulation program allowed the officers to walk through a school virtually during an active shooter situation. The program demonstrated what it would be like to walk through the school looking for the threat while staff and students were attempting to escape the building.

“We are doing multi agency active threat training today. The Dexter High School has been gracious enough to let us use their facility,” said trainer Corporal Ricky Vannada with the Missouri Highway Patrol. “We are meeting not only our officers but the Dexter Police Department, Stoddard County Deputies and officers from other agencies within Stoddard County.”

“We are teaching them the same training that we received from the federal law enforcement training center, which is a standard that is being taught across the country in active threat,” continued Vannada. “We are teaching them to respond to threat immediately upon arriving to the scene and we are teaching them techniques that will allow them to effectively locate the threat and stop it.”

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“It is important to stay current on the training that deals with active threat because as you can see it is always changing,” said Vannada. “We try to keep up to date on the techniques. And one thing this training basis on is we don’t normally train together. Normally highway patrol is not training with the sheriff’s department or sheriff’s department is not training with municipality. This is a standardized training that is being taught so that when agencies do meet up at a location we can all be on the same page and locate the threat.”

Vannada and Trout both said if an incident like this were to occur in Stoddard County that it would be a multiple agency response to the scene. Trout said if an incident occurred and Stoddard County or other towns such as Essex or Bloomfield needed them, the Dexter officers would be there.

“It is a multiple agency response,” said Vannada. “That is what this training is for. It is just that we have some type of standard that when we do meet up we are able to function even as a single officer or as a team.” Vannada said before the officers can allow parents into a school building following such an incident they have to be sure it is safe to enter.

“That is why we have training like this so when that does happen we are able to effectively respond,” said Vannada. “The point of this training is speed of response. We are trying to get to the threat as fast as possible to stop it and then we can contact parents and answer questions.”

Vannada said the police department in the town where the incident occurred would be in command. For example if the incident were in Dexter then the Dexter Police Department would be in command and a command post of some kind would be set up and information would be relayed through.

“Because 911 is going to be flooded with calls there should be a point set up where that information is funneled into one location,” said Vannada.

“We would like to thank the Dexter administration for allowing us to do this here at Dexter Schools, which they always support us” said Trout. “School safety is a priority for them.”

Let's hope and pray that nothing like this ever happens in our community.

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