

## South Lyon Community Schools'

# ALICE Program

**M**ANY schools across America are shifting gears from traditional lockdown strategies and adopting new active-shooter response strategies, such as Navigate360's ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) program.

While troubling to think about, the importance of schools having a response plan in place for potentially dangerous and/or deadly incidents is a grim necessity. ALICE was developed through a collaboration between law enforcement, educators and administrators and was designed to improve mindful decision-making during any violent situation to increase chances of survival.

Navigate360 said that traditional lockdown protocol was established in Los Angeles in 1980 as a response to criminal activity near schools, like drive-by shootings, but has since been adopted in many schools for all types of threats.

Traditional lockdowns in schools begin with an announcement from the main office being made alerting students and staff of a lockdown. All doors are locked, windows are covered and students hide in a corner away from the door, waiting for the all-clear signal.

While traditional lockdowns can be beneficial, they act as a passive, one-size-fits-all approach to threats, and have proven to not always be the most effective. For example, a group of students locked in a classroom may make a shooter's mission easier, giving them an immobile target.

Alternatively, ALICE is a comprehensive approach to handling individual situations in the best and safest way possible.

In the acronym, Alert stands for the first notification of danger and becoming aware of the threat to know how to make the next move. Lockdown may be a preferable option in some scenarios, but it's not the only one. The room should be locked and barricaded immediately following the alert. Inform refers to the continual clear and direct communication being sent out to the entire school giving details so that the best decisions can be made. Counter

does not refer to fighting back, rather it is a last resort in the event of the shooter gaining entry to a room. Countering includes creating noise, movement, distance and distraction to reduce the shooter's accuracy. Evacuate refers to making one's way out of the building only when it is safe to do so. For instance, when information is given that the shooter may be on the opposite side of the building.



The District implemented ALICE in 2018, said Assistant Superintendent of South Lyon Community Schools, Brian Toth.

"Our students and staff have done a great job of practicing and reviewing the ALICE protocol," he said. "It's something that we train and practice every year."

Ensuring the best outcome in an unthinkable situation requires not only preparation, but also teamwork.

"We have great relationships with our local law enforcement agencies, such as the South Lyon, Green Oak Township and Washtenaw police departments and the Oakland County Sheriff's Office," Toth said. "They have been instrumental in supporting us as we've undergone our ALICE protocols and practices."

To learn more about ALICE and South Lyon Community Schools, visit [www.alicetraining.com](http://www.alicetraining.com) and [www.slcs.us](http://www.slcs.us).

