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Letters

April 12, 2007

Lockdown at WRHS was well executed

I had the opportunity to be an observer/evaluator at the lockdown drill conducted on April 3 at WRHS at the invitation of Sgt. Dave Armstrong of the Holden Police Department. Volunteer observers from area police and fire departments, Anna Maria College, and the State Police were also on hand to assess the event. I have worked as a consultant to law enforcement and the military for 15 years and have seen many simulations conducted by state and federal agencies that fell far short of what I saw on April 3.

While it is unfortunate that we need to train faculty, staff and students in the procedures to mitigate risk in the event of an armed school intruder, it is clear that in the post- Columbine, 9/11 era, it is a necessity. Due to the efforts of the leadership at WRHS, Sgt. Armstrong, Chief Sherrill, and others, the training and preparation paid off in a very well executed drill. The vast majority of the students, faculty, and staff followed procedure and created an environment that would have significantly reduced the risk of injury in the event that it would have been an actual school intrusion.

As a resident of Holden and a parent, I believe it important for taxpayers from the towns served by WRHS to recognize the asset that they have in the Holden police and fire departments, Sgt.



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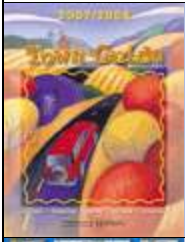
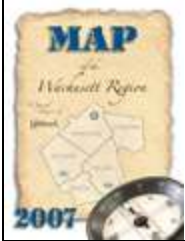


Armstrong and Chief Sherrill. As the public safety force of the small town that is the high school, they are proactive, expert in school security, and dedicated to the students and staff. We all hope that their expertise will never be fully demonstrated in an actual critical incident, but it is comforting to know they stand watch.



Rich Maguire

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