



State of North Carolina
Department of Justice

Roy Cooper, Attorney General

April 23, 2009

The Hon. Worth Hill, Sheriff
Durham County
P. O. Box 170
Durham, N. C. 27702

Dear Sheriff Hill:

Ten years ago this week, two armed students walked into Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado and killed 13 people and wounded 23 more in a matter of minutes. This tragic shooting shocked us all and spurred a comprehensive review of the way law enforcement officers approach situations with an active shooter and the way schools approach safety.

After Columbine, we began to advocate a technique called rapid deployment which teaches officers who are the first to arrive on the scene to enter the building and find and subdue any active shooters. This replaced the old technique of "surround and contain" which required officers to wait for the SWAT team.

Rapid deployment saves lives. Just last month, a gunman killed eight people at a nursing home here in North Carolina. Carthage Police Officer Justin Garner, who had been trained to use rapid deployment technique, was able to stop the shooter's murderous rampage within minutes of arriving on the scene. But for his courageous and well-trained actions, many more lives likely would have been lost.

We've pushed to get all North Carolina officers trained in rapid deployment so they can respond swiftly and effectively when lives are at stake. As you know, rapid deployment is now a part of our Basic Law Enforcement Training curriculum in North Carolina and was included as part of the 2008 in-service training package for law enforcement agencies.

Since rapid deployment training was initially developed by my department in 2001(both at the NC Justice Academy and the State Bureau of Investigation), the Justice Academy has trained 634 instructors from 247 law enforcement agencies. These instructors are then able to go back to their communities and train more officers.

Through this effort, thousands of North Carolina officers have been trained to respond to an active shooter situation.

I encourage you to make sure that all of your officers are trained in the latest rapid deployment techniques. For updated courseware or to find out about training opportunities through the Justice Academy, please contact Coy Poole at (910) 525-4151 or cpoole@ncdoj.gov.

Thank you for all you do to protect the people of our state and keep your community safe.

With kind regards, I am

Very truly yours,

Roy Cooper

RAC/sm