

# VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE EDUCATORS



New VACJE Website Address is:  
[www.vacje.com](http://www.vacje.com)



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John B. Wilt, C.S.T, C.P.P., Editor & Publisher

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From the Desk of VACJE  
 President Martin Greenberg

*“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”*

— Edmund Burke

The quotation above has been attributed to Edmund Burke, an 18th-century philosopher. It has been quoted so many times by so many people that it has become a cliché. But here's the thing, most of the time a cliché becomes a cliché because it's true. There is no doubt that we find ourselves in tough times. But the good women and men in our association who serve mostly as educators and practitioners are helping on a daily basis to make the world we live in safer and more resilient in the face of its many challenges. In truth, our members, mostly public servants and parents, each in their own way, are helping to counter the dysfunction, corruption, and bad actors of our time. Those of us who are educators are also teaching the nation's future leaders about the rights of regular people and how having good hearts and strong minds can make a difference. Thank you for taking the time to be a part of our professional association and let us maintain the courage to continue our work in the years ahead!

In this report, I want to share some thoughts about Black history (the month of February is dedicated to that subject) and to welcome Virginia's newest director of its Department of Corrections—Chadwick Dotson. He recently authored the report about parole reform taking place in Virginia. In January 2023, Chadwick Dotson, former chair of the Virginia Parole Board (VPB), completed a programmatic review of VPB's duties, procedures, and administration. His report details that review and includes recommendations for legislative, administrative, and policy changes to improve the administration of the agency in fulfilling its public safety mission (see: <https://vpb.virginia.gov/files/1232/vpb-press-release-2023-01-06-report-governor.pdf>). Although Virginia abolished parole in 1995, offenders sentenced before then are still eligible. In September 2023, Governor Glenn Youngkin appointed Dotson as the 10th Director of the Virginia Department of Corrections. Dotson previously served as Chief Judge of the 30th Judicial Circuit and presided over the Circuit's Recovery Court program for the entirety of his tenure. Dotson also served on Virginia's General District Court bench, as a Special Assistant United States Attorney for the Western District of Virginia and was elected Commonwealth's Attorney for Wise County and the City of Norton. Prior to joining the Parole Board, Dotson served as Dean

of Students and Distinguished Professor of Law at Appalachian School of Law, where he taught Constitutional Law, Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure. Dotson also had a short stint in private practice as an attorney, following his graduation from law school. Dotson received his B.A. from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, VA, and his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, DC. Virginia's corrections department houses some 25,000 inmates in its prisons, and is responsible for probation officers and a range of alternatives to incarceration, as well as for programs to help inmates return to society when they have served their sentences.

It is always vital to take opportunities to recognize those leaders, innovators, and ordinary citizens who have helped pave the way for progress across our nation. In the case of Blacks in America, for too long, the stories of Black Americans were relegated to the footnotes of American history, shrouded by a veil of bigotry and ignorance. Black History Month affords us the opportunity to shed light on those stories, and to learn from our past as we recognize and honor the lives of those who have done so much to shape our collective history. In his recent proclamation, Governor Glenn Youngkin, pointed out that “Fort Monroe in Virginia was the site where the first Africans were brought in shackles to the Americas as slaves, and later Fort Monroe served as the first legal safe haven for freedom seekers before the Emancipation Proclamation. Throughout American history, Black Virginians have shown resilience and perseverance through political, social, and cultural oppression, from slavery, through Jim Crow and massive resistance, and have risen above to shape our lives today in countless ways. Virginia was home to many distinguished and impactful Black Americans, including civil rights pioneers Oliver Hill, Spottswood Robinson, Booker T. Washington, Dr. Robert Russa Moton, Maggie L. Walker, Dorothy Height, and Mary W. Jackson, to name a few. Black Virginians continue to shape the economic, cultural, political, and landscapes of Virginia and the country.” (Source: <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/proclamations/proclamation-list/black-history-month-2.html>).

I would also like to take note of the life of Winfred Rembert (1945-2021), a native of Cuthbert, Georgia, who spent his childhood as a fieldworker in the pre-civil rights South. Brought up by his great-aunt (“Mama”), Rembert used his talent for painting to look back to his youth in the days of segregation. “Despite the often grim working conditions he encountered (not to mention a near-lynching and years spent on a prison chain gang), Rembert's works focus on the joyous aspects of Black life in the 1950s South — the strong family and community bonds, the cultural vibrancy, and the many colorful characters that lifted the spirits of those who had little choice but to labor in the region's cotton and peanut fields....Rembert's works are painted on leather sheets that he hand tools and then dyes. These energetic compositions — with their engaging narratives of life in the rural South — have brought Rembert comparisons to noted African-American artists Hale Woodruff, Jacob Lawrence, Horace Pippin, and Romare Bearden. Rembert, who was self-taught, lived and worked in New Haven, Connecticut. His paintings are represented in a number of important public and private collections, and were the subject of a major exhibition at the Yale University Art Gallery in 2000.” He is the subject of two award-winning documentary films, “All Me: The Life and Time of Winfred Rembert” (2011) and the documentary “Ashes to Ashes” (2019), about the legacy of lynching in America. The book *Chasing Me to My Grave: An Artist's Memoir of the Jim Crow South* by Winfred Rembert, as told to Erin I. Kelly, with a

foreword by Bryan Stevenson, was published in September 2021, and won the Pulitzer Prize in 2022 (see examples of his art at: <https://adelsongalleries.com/winfred-rembert>).

This report to you is being made as I complete the second year of my presidency. Mostly through emails, I have attempted to share news items and some best practices in order to build-up our association. Still other Board members have worked hard in their capacities to have our association grow and to serve the best interests of our membership. But I respectfully want to ask each of you who are not yet directly involved to at least ask questions. And please do not forget to contribute items for publication in our newsletter—this issue initiates the 12th year of the newsletter's editorship under John Wilt. This is a remarkable record of service. There are a variety of new opportunities to get involved in committees and leadership or to learn about what is happening through some of our communications. The entire team and I are happy to give updates. I am especially interested to hear your ideas regarding potential speakers for VACJE Zoom webinars and workshops.

Finally, let me extend my deepest appreciation to welcome new members and to thank all current members who have or will take the time to renew his or her membership at our reduced annual dues rate. All of our volunteer VACJE Board members are striving to serve the best interests of our membership. Please check our WebPages for the latest activities of your association and its members. A major event that is about to take place is the result of the Board's planning—the holding of a first-time summit for all persons interested in the advancement of statewide criminal justice educators associations. The event is being held in conjunction with the 61st Annual Conference of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences at the Chicago Hilton from March 19 to 23, 2024. I will be serving as a co-moderator of this event. For additional information see page 2 of this newsletter.

Respectfully yours,  
 Martin  
 Mgreenberg955@gmail.com

TREASURER'S REPORT

THE BANK BALANCE AS OF  
MARCH 8, 2024

\$1,394.69

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## MISSION STATEMENT

**We, as criminal justice educators, have as our mission:**

- to advance, inspire, and promote the highest quality and practices of criminal justice education to students and practitioners in the community colleges, colleges, and universities within the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- to foster communication and support among all criminal justice educators in Virginia.
- to inform the membership of pending (or possible) changes in criminal justice programs or agencies among the post-secondary educational institutions in Virginia.
- to articulate a unified voice for official communication with other educational agencies, organizations, and/or the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- to enhance the quality of life-long educational experiences and opportunities for our criminal justice students.

**To accomplish this mission, we propose that the VACJE:**

- 1) Sponsor an annual meeting of criminal justice educators for the purpose of :
  - a. providing a forum for the expression of thoughts, ideas, and concerns;
  - b. share training and teaching methods and techniques;
  - c. conducting an annual business meeting;
  - d. allowing individuals to meet their peers throughout the state, providing an opportunity for individual networking;
  - e. presenting pertinent workshops and programs to enhance individual members professional development;
  - f. allowing an opportunity for the expression of individual viewpoints while arriving at a unified consensus or official position for the Association.
- 2) Sponsor semi-annual meetings as required for the above listed and/or other necessary reasons. These reasons might include:
  - a. providing a forum for Virginia Community College System (VCCS) Administration of Justice (ADJ) Peer Group Conferences;
  - b. discussing various articulation agreements;
  - c. developing or modifying changes in the VCCS ADJ Course Content Summaries;
  - d. providing for Administration of Justice/Criminal Justice Program professional development opportunities.
- 3) Maintain a current (and regularly updated) list of full-time criminal justice educators in the various Virginia educational and other selected institutions. The list should include:
  - a. the individual's name
  - b. faculty rank
  - c. job title or description
  - d. complete official mailing address
  - e. E-mail address
  - f. telephone numbers for: office, fax, residence (if desired)
  - g. home address (if desired for communication)
- 4) Communication with members via an informal newsletter, E-mail or Web Site page as appropriate. As a result of these missions -- the VACJE will create informal and formal networks to communicate, build alliances, and establish an environment of growth, challenge, and unlimited potential for all its members, as we advance quality criminal justice education in the State of Virginia and in the world.

## VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE EDUCATORS BY-LAWS:

### I. **Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Virginia Association of Criminal Justice Educators, hereafter referred to as the VACJE.

### II. **Purpose:** The purposes of the VACJE are to:

- A. Advocate for professional standards and competencies in criminal justice education;
- B. Continuously search for new techniques and approaches in the delivery of academic criminal justice programs to advance criminal justice education in the Commonwealth of Virginia;
- C. Provide professional development opportunities for criminal justice educators;
- D. Inform and update criminal justice educators of the current research findings in criminal justice education;
- E. Enable criminal justice educators to network, connect, collaborate and exchange innovative teaching approaches;
- F. Support criminal justice agencies in the recruitment of an academically and professionally educated workforce in the criminal justice field;
- G. Develop a criminal justice education curriculum at the college, university level, and secondary schools; supports the development in other recognized educational institutions, such as criminal justice training academies,
- H. Develop strategic community partnerships in the criminal justice field

### III. **Members**

- A. Regular membership in VACJE shall be open to all persons who engage in the teaching, training, or administration of education or training programs in the field of Criminal Justice or who are practitioners in criminal justice agencies or organizations.
- B. There shall be five additional categories of membership.
  1. Honorary life members, who may, in honor of their retirement and in recognition of at least 10 years of continuous service to VACJE be appointed as such by a majority of the members at a regular meeting of the membership. Honorary life members shall not be required to pay dues.
  2. Life members, who have paid in no more than 3 consecutive annual installments a sum to be determined from time to time by the board.
  3. Institutions and organizations that deliver or receive criminal justice education or training.

4. Student membership shall be open to those students pursuing academic study in criminal justice or a related field.
  5. Corporate sponsors and community partners who have expressed an interest in criminal justice educational initiatives.
- C. Voting: Each member in the above categories (Section III-A+B-1/2/3) whose dues for the current year have been paid are entitled to one vote in any election, referendum, or membership meeting. Student members, corporate sponsors, and community partners are excluded from voting privileges. Each institutional or organizational member shall appoint one person to carry its vote. No voting by proxy shall be permitted. Ballots shall be sent to the members in a manner determined by the VACJE Board and include mailed ballots (i.e., U.S. Postal Service) or electronic ballots. The Board will determine how ballots are to be returned and the deadline for voting. It is the responsibility of each member to ensure his/her business address and email address are currently on file with the association. Each member shall be assigned a membership number to account for all ballots.
- D. Dues: Membership dues shall be at such rate or rates, schedule or formula as may be approved by the Board of Directors from time to time.
- E. Termination:
1. Any member may be expelled by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors at a regularly scheduled Board Meeting, for conduct prejudicial to the mission and purpose of the VACJE, after due notice and opportunity to be heard by the board.
  2. A member who has not paid dues by December 01 will be dropped from membership.

#### IV. **Meetings**

- A. Timely notice of the location and time of meetings of the membership of VACJE, both annual and special, shall be provided to the membership.
- B. The Annual Meeting shall be held in the fall of each year, unless circumstances require the board to do otherwise.
- C. Special meetings of VACJE may be called by the president, by the board, or by one-tenth of the membership, upon 14 days written notice to the members, stating the purpose of the meeting.
- D. At meetings of the members, twenty percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum, and a majority of votes shall prevail.
- E. The Annual Meeting and special meetings may be held in-person or virtually, as determined by the Board of Directors.

#### V. **The Board of Directors**

- A. The board shall consist of the President, the Immediate Past President, vice president, treasurer, secretary, and not more than four directors-at-large.
- B. The board shall set policy, evaluate operations, monitor finances, and have responsibility for long-range planning.

- C. No public statement of policy by any member, representative, committee, group, volunteer, employee, director, or officer shall be binding upon, or constitute an expression of, the policy of the VACJE unless approved or ratified by a majority of the directors.
- D. Unless otherwise ordered by the Board, regular meetings of the board shall be held at least four times each year. Special or additional meetings of the Board may be called by the president and shall be called upon the written request of three directors, with at least forty-eight hours written notice having been given.
- E. A majority of the Board (5) shall constitute a quorum.

#### VI. **Election of the Officers and Directors**

- A. Upon receipt of the Nominating Committee's (See Section VIII, paragraph B) report and ballot, the President shall immediately distribute to all members in good standing, the names of the nominees on a Ballot approved by the Board of Directors and arrange for additional write-in names. The Board shall establish a minimum of two weeks for voting and the date and time by which all ballots must be received by the Chair of the Nominating Committee. The returned ballots shall be tabulated by the nominating committee. The nominees who receive the most votes shall be elected. The nominating committee shall certify the results to the President and a public announcement of newly-elected officers and directors shall be made as soon as appropriate.
- B. The terms of office for Officers and Directors At-Large shall be for two years.
- C. Vacancies
  1. The Board shall declare vacant any office or director-at-large position if that officer or director-at-large has been absent from two consecutive board meetings- Absences may be excused by vote of a majority of the Board, or
  2. There was no one elected to the office or director-at-large position.
  3. Recommendations for filling officer or director-at-large vacancies shall be made by the Nominating Committee. Vacancies on the board shall be filled by the board of directors by a majority vote at any regular board meeting.
- D. Upon completing four years of service as a director-at-large, an individual shall be ineligible to serve as a director-at-large for the following term in that position.
- E. Individuals who are not current in dues payment shall not be eligible for election, and when directors or other officers are not current, they shall be removed from office, and a vacancy declared within 30 days of the dues becoming due.

#### VII. **Officers and Duties**

- A. The officers of the VACJE shall be the President, the Vice President, and the immediate Past President, the secretary, and the treasurer. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these Bylaws.
- B. The term of office for the officers shall be as follows:
- President – Two-Years
  - Immediate Past President – Two Years
  - Vice President – Two Years
  - Secretary – Two Years
  - Treasurer – Two Years

The term of office of the President and Immediate Past President shall be limited to two (2) years following installation (or until the end of the respective term of the predecessor, if the person shall not have completed such term) and until the election of a successor. If the out-going President cannot fulfill the term of Immediate Past President, the most recent Immediate Past President will be asked by the Board to serve the remainder of that term.

In the event the President cannot fulfill the term of that office or his/her duties, the Vice President shall succeed to that office for the balance of that term.

The Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer may serve two terms. If the Vice President, Secretary, and/or Treasurer cannot fulfill the term of that office, or his/her duties, the Board shall appoint a person from the membership at-large to serve for the balance of the term. To receive the appointment from the Board, the member must receive a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

The term of office of the newly-elected officers and directors-at-large shall commence on January 1 following the election and end on December 31, at the end of the two-year term.

The officers and directors-at-large shall have such powers and perform such duties as may be provided by the Bylaws, parliamentary authority of the VACJE, *Robert's Rules of Order*, or as the Board of Directors may determine.

- C. No member shall hold more than one position on the Board at a time.
- D. The President of the board shall:
- Serve as the executive head of the VACJE, and shall preside at all meetings of the membership and the board.
  - Appoint all committee chairs from the Board members and approve all committee members.
  - Be an ex-officio member of all VACJE committees, but is under no obligation to attend committee meeting and is not counted as part of the committee's quorum.

- Serve as the official spokesperson for the Association and shall speak and act on behalf of the Board and the members within existing policy and Board decisions. The President may, at his/her discretion, delegate the spokesperson responsibility to another Officer or Director-at-large for a specific period of time.
  - Have authority to approve expenses not to exceed \$100 per occurrence without prior approval of the Board.
  - Have other duties as assigned by the Board from time-to-time.
  - Report to the Board, at every Board Meeting all issues addressed and actions taken in keeping with the provisions of this section.
- E. The Vice President shall serve as President-Elect and as program chair. In the absence of the president, the Vice President shall exercise the functions of the President.
- F. The immediate Past President shall assist the President in such duties as may be mutually agreed upon and shall chair and recruit members for the nominating committee.
- G. The Treasurer shall maintain the roll of the membership. The Treasurer also shall oversee receipt and proper disbursement of all funds by the VACJE. Such funds shall be kept on deposit in financial institutions approved by the board. Checks shall be signed by any two of the following: President, Vice President, and Treasurer. Checks drawn for less than \$100 require only the signature of one of those aforementioned. The Treasurer shall develop internal controls for the association which shall be reviewed and approved by the Board.
- H. The Secretary shall keep a formal record of each meeting and provide same promptly and in electronic form to the webmaster.

#### VIII. **Standing Committees**

Standing Committees are those identified in these Bylaws. The Chair of each Standing Committee shall be a member of the Board

- A. A Program Committee shall be chaired by the Vice President, who shall, with the assistance of the Board, recruit additional members to serve on the Committee. The program committee shall plan, publicize, and manage the annual meeting.
- B. A Nominating Committee composed of three members and chaired by the Immediate Past President shall be appointed by the President and approved by the board promptly after the new officers are installed.
1. It shall be the duty of the nominating committee to recruit and gain the consent of candidates for the board and for offices within the board, as well as for appointments and nominations made by the board to external groups.
  2. Every reasonable effort shall be made to recruit candidates who within the preceding three years have participated actively in VACJE

meetings and projects, and to recruit a sufficient number of candidates to give the membership a choice at the time of election.

3. The Nominating Committee shall solicit nominations (including self-nominations) from the membership.
4. The Nominating Committee shall submit its Report and Ballot to the President and the Board not later than October 1 of each even numbered year. The Board shall approve the Ballot and the President shall direct its publication and distribution to the members for voting. The list of candidates and their biographical information shall be made available on the VACJE Website and newsletter. The outcome of the election shall be made know at the Annual Meeting.
5. The nominating committee shall also present to the board for its approval the names of candidates to fill unexpired terms within 30 days of the Board's declaration that the position is vacant.

- C. The Communications Committee shall be chaired by a board member, who shall be appointed by the president with the consent of the board. That individual, and other committee members appointed by the President shall assume responsibility for printed and virtual communications materials and methods employed by VACJE.
- D. Other committees, such as ad hoc, special, or advisory, shall be appointed by the President as the Board or President shall from time to time deem necessary to carry on the work of the VACJE. Each Committee shall have a chair appointed by the president and shall report at the annual meeting on its activities during the preceding year.
- E. The term of membership on any committee is two (2) years and may be renewable.

#### IX. **Finances**

- A. The VACJE's fiscal year shall begin on September 1 and end on August 31.
- B. The accounts of the VACJE shall be audited bi-annually by two members appointed by the president with the consent of the board at the beginning of a new term of officers and Board members. The audit report shall be presented to the membership at the annual meeting.
- C. The VACJE shall be registered with the Virginia State Corporation Commission and the Internal Revenue Service.
- D. At the beginning of every new term for Officers and Board members, the Board will review and approve the internal controls of the Association.

#### X. **Parliamentary Authority**

- A. The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the VACJE in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the VACJE may adopt.

XI. **Amendment of Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended by the membership by a two-thirds vote of those eligible to vote, provided that the amendment has been recommended by the Board and subsequently distributed to the membership at least 30 days prior to the close of voting.

XII. **Dissolution**

The VACJE shall use its funds only to accomplish the objectives and purposes specified in these bylaws. On dissolution of the VACJE, any funds remaining shall be distributed to one or more regularly organized and qualified charitable, educational, scientific, or philanthropic organizations to be selected by the board of directors.

# VACJE

## Virginia Association of Criminal Justice Educators

### Membership Application and Information

New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

FACULTY RANK \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYER \_\_\_\_\_

WORK ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

### **ASSOCIATION DUES**

Annual Dues: \$30.00 • Life Membership: \$300.00 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Return The Completed Membership Application with the dues payment to the treasurer  
(Check made payable to VACJE)

For further information on membership, contact:

**John Wilt**  
Treasurer  
146 Greencroft Place  
Danville, VA 24541



## Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Summit Information:

“A Summit for Current and Future Leaders of Statewide Criminal Justice Educator/Practitioner Associations” will be held on Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 12:30 to 1:45 pm in conjunction with the 61st Annual Conference of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences at the Chicago Hilton. The purpose of this first-ever national summit roundtable is to promote the depth and breadth of the profession taking place in various states. The event should provide significant professional development opportunities for learning about the latest innovations in our field. We will also have the chance to connect with other professionals from outside our respective states—potentially learning a host of new ideas about developing successful criminal justice educational and practitioner based organizations. Please join the conversation by sharing your ideas and experiences. We wish to support the progress of both academic and practitioner associations. All are welcome to attend!

The summit event is also sponsoring a first-ever exhibit table at the conference. If you have any posters or other announcements related to your state association of interest, please consider using this table to display and distribute these materials. Feel free to contact any of the following ACJS members who will be attending the summit for any additional information: Martin Alan Greenberg, VACJE President; Stephen T. Young, Marshall University; Kathy Oborn, Los Angeles Pierce College; Anthony Nocella, Salt Lake Community College; Citlaly Palau, Texas A & M International University; Ivan Godfrey, SUNY Ulster Community College; Jeffrey Rush, University of South Alabama; Julie Q. Smith, Columbus (Indiana) Police Department; and Kishon Hickman, Seton Hall University. The event’s hotel room location is: Salon C1, Stevens Salon Lower Level, Hilton Chicago; Session Code: 182. You can find a current list (43 pages) of 2024 ACJS Conference presenters and emails online at: [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.acjs.org/resource/resmgr/2024\\_docs/2024\\_acjs\\_presenter\\_contact\\_.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.acjs.org/resource/resmgr/2024_docs/2024_acjs_presenter_contact_.pdf)

**VACJE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & DIRECTORS**

**Martin Greenberg - President**  
*mgreenberg955@gmail.com*

**Joseph DeStefano--Immediate Past President**  
*jdestefano@pdc.edu*

**Jeffrey Rush--Acting Secretary**  
*andysip@gmail.com*

**Jillian Noel--Vice President**  
*jcnobel@averett.edu*

**John Wilt--Treasurer**  
*jbwilt@aumail.averett.edu*

**John Wilt--Director & Newsletter Editor**  
*jbwilt@aumail.averett.edu*

**Mike Wagner--Director**  
*mwagner@silercitypd.org*

**Francie Dye--Director**  
*dyef@centralvirginia.edu*

**Denise Bissler--Director**  
*dbissler@rmc.edu*

**LIFE MEMBERS**

<b>Gary Boyer</b>	<b>Bud Levin</b>
<b>Irving Comer</b>	<b>Jay Malcan</b>
<b>Emma Cox</b>	<b>John Mocello</b>
<b>Lynda Cooksey</b>	<b>Michelle Newton-Francis</b>
<b>Renee Douglas</b>	<b>Ray Smith</b>
<b>Dennis DuBuc</b>	<b>Vickie Holland Taylor</b>
<b>Martin Greenberg</b>	<b>Tom Varner</b>
<b>Jim Johnson</b>	<b>John Wilt</b>
<b>James Husband</b>	<b>Nicolle Parsons-Pollard</b>
<b>Tim Kindrick</b>	<b>Robin Widener</b>
<b>Jerry Lane</b>	<b>Delmar Wright</b>

**MEMBER NEWS**



Christina Mancini, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor at Virginia Commonwealth University’s L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs. She received her doctoral degree from Florida State University’s College of Criminology and Criminal Justice in 2009. Dr. Mancini has published over forty articles in *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, *Criminology*, *Crime & Delinquency*, the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, and other crime and policy journals. Her current research examines sex offender policy, public opinion, race and perceptions about offending, and violent victimization. She is the author of two books: *Sex Crime, Offenders, and Society: A Critical Look at Sexual Offending and Policy*, 2nd Ed. (2021, Carolina Academic Press) and *Campus Crime and Safety*, 2nd Ed. (2022, Kendall Hunt). Psychology/Special Education from New York University. Ellen previously was a tenured associate professor of psychology at SUNY Cortland.

Martin Greenberg holds lifetime board certification in security management from ASIS International. His court experience includes service as senior court officer, acting court clerk, and judicial clerk. As a board member and later president of the Auxiliary Police Benevolent Association of the City of New York, Inc., he was instrumental in securing the first uniform allowance for auxiliaries under the Lindsay Administration.

Martin’s academic, professional, and volunteer work have been recognized by: the Northeastern Association of Criminal Justice Sciences; the John Jay College of Criminal Justice Doctoral Program; New York Law School (the American Jurisprudence Award in Trials and Appeals Practice); the New York City Police Department’s Auxiliary Forces Section; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Virginia State Police; Ohio State University’s Office of Minority Affairs; the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences; and the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. Many of his publications have appeared in the *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* as well as *The Police Chief*. He is currently working on a seventh book with co-author Dr. Beth Easterling of Mary Baldwin University. The new book concerns the history of police education and training. Each of his previous books involved case studies involving public justice programs and issues. More information about his research work can be found at: <https://www.amazon.com/~e/B09BK4BP65>

## MEMBER NEWS CONTINUED



Dr. Judith A. Harris is an Associate Professor of Criminal Justice in the Department of Criminal Justice and Social Work at the University of Houston Downtown. Dr. Harris is the associate director of the Bayou Connection, which hosts the Central Police University Cadets from Taiwan each year for ongoing training. Dr. Harris specializes in reentry and recovery for those with and without criminal convictions. Her Senior Seminar classes are service-learning opportunities, specifically with students working with the Harris County Sheriff's Office jail inmate populations.



Dr. John Watts is an Assistant Professor and Program Director of the Criminal Justice and Restorative Justice Program at the University of Saint Joseph. He is a retired Chief Probation Officer with 20 years of experience working at the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch, Court Support Service Division (CSSD).

Dr. Watts is a national trainer and consultant with the SAMHSA's GAINS Center and Policy Research Associates and holds certifications as a Criminal Justice Additions Professional (CCJP) and in Forensic Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (F-CBT). Dr. Watts earned his Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Arts from Charter Oak State College, a Master's Degree in Management and Organizational Leadership from Albertus Magnus College, and a Doctorate Degree in Criminal Justice from Saint Leo University.



Dr. Shane Kelley, Ed.D. is the Associate Dean for Public Safety and Legal Studies programs. As a faculty member and leader with over twenty years of higher education experience in student support, faculty administration, and the online classroom, he began his time at Purdue Global in 2005. Dr. Kelley previously served as academic chair for graduate and undergraduate public safety programs and academic chair for undergraduate criminal justice programs prior to that. Before becoming academic chair in 2010, he served as Associate Director of Academic Advising for the Criminal Justice, Legal Studies, and Nursing programs after being promoted as an Academic Advising manager. He has also developed online course curriculum for Pearson Education and is an Air Force veteran. Dr. Kelley's research in criminal justice has a strong focus on diversity, including social justice and policy, collective efficacy, and critical criminology. As a higher education administrator, Dr. Kelley focuses on e-service learning and faculty and student satisfaction.

## MEMBER NEWS CONTINUED



Robert England began his criminal justice career in 1987. Since that time, he has worked with various police agencies in a number of roles and functions. He has served as a police chief, patrol supervisor and a communications supervisor in his career. He is a sworn and certified law enforcement officer which enables him to bring real-life experience to criminal justice agencies in administrative and leadership matters. In addition to his criminal justice career, Robert has been a full-time educator for the past 29 years. He is a former high school teacher responsible for founding many of Virginia's high school level criminal justice programs statewide. He was responsible for developing state standards and writing the state training curriculum during that time. He was appointed to several state level committees and advisory boards while serving in that capacity. Robert also served as a high school principal before leaving k-12 education and becoming a college professor nearly 20 years ago. Robert served as Dean at the college before becoming program director of the police science, corrections science and the private security school. In addition, he also serves as the Campus Crime Prevention Coordinator and works very closely with campus police in their daily duties. Robert has received numerous awards for innovative leadership, teaching and community service. Over the past 12 years, Robert has owned and operated England Consulting Group and has trained and advised thousands of officers all over the United States.

Robert received his B.S. and M.A. degree in Criminology from East Tennessee State University, M.A. in Educational Leadership from Virginia Tech and his Ed.S degree in Leadership and Supervision from Virginia Tech. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family, road-cycling and playing golf.



William Wilkerson

I have been in law enforcement for going on 27 years. I have worked for Richmond Sheriff's Office twice (1993 and 1999), VCU Police Department, USAF Security Forces and I got my first Chief's job at Blue Ridge Community College in 2018. I am a Desert Shield/Desert Storm veteran as a US Marine. I have two bachelor's degrees and I completed all of my graduate work at VCU for a Masters in Kinesiology and Health Science (I walked but I need to re-take the final test). I am currently enrolled in the master's program at Liberty University for a criminal justice degree with a focus in homeland security. I transferred to CVCC as Chief of Police in March 2021, and I have been a chief now going on 6 years. I just recently got my Chief Executive Certification through the VACP and I have attended two command colleges to include Northwestern's Command School. I have attended others as well to include the Professional Executive Leadership School (PELS) and FBI Leeda.

## MEMBER NEWS CONTINUED



Member John Wilt (front row, far left) at a family gathering following the Kansas City, Missouri Marathon. The October 21, 2023 KC Missouri Marathon completes the list of running marathons in each of the 50 states.



With help from Alpha Upsilon Lambda Professional Chapter members, VACJE member and Chapter Advisor John Wilt collected and disposed of litter on December 23, 2023 at the Goodyear Blvd. site.

## MEMBER NEWS CONTINUED



honorary plaque presented to Chuck Kehoe for his many years as a diligent and faithful secretary to the Virginia Association of Criminal Justice Educators. The picture was taken at the Science Museum of Virginia in Richmond, VA. Chuck is a train enthusiast!



honorary plaques presented to David Giroux and Don Fortunato for their outstanding October 7, 2023 presentation regarding "Wellness for First Responders". The "Wellness for First Responders" presentation took place at Central Virginia Community College, Merritt Hall. Pictured, L-R are: Don Fortunato, (Ret), Arlington County Police Department, VACJE member John Wilt, David Giroux, Deputy Chief, Arlington County Police Department, VACJE member William Wilkerson, Chief of Police, Central Virginia CC and member Francie Dye, Workforce Training Coordinator, Central Virginia Community College.

## MEMBER NEWS CONTINUED



March 6, 2024

Martin Greenberg, Ph.D.  
Russell Sage College  
Albany, New York

*Re: Teaching, Learning, & Scholarship Section Fellow Award*

Dear Dr. Greenberg:

Congratulations! The Teaching, Learning, & Scholarship Section of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences has awarded you the 2024 Fellow Award in recognition of distinguished contribution to criminal justice education. The TLS officers were in unanimous agreement that you have made outstanding contributions to teaching and learning and are thrilled to award you with our section's highest honor.

As the award winner, you will receive \$100 and a plaque of recognition. The TLS section officers and I hope to see you in Chicago. The TLS annual award winners will be announced and honored at the ACJS meeting on Wednesday, 3/20 at 9:30AM at the TLS General Business Meeting in the Lake Huron Room, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Hilton.

Kindly respond to this letter to confirm your acceptance of this award and your conference attendance. In addition, please confirm the mailing address and how your name should appear on the plaque.

In closing, I would like to congratulate you again on your outstanding achievement. Your tireless commitment to education is inspiring. Thank you for your contributions to criminal justice teaching, learning, and scholarship!

Very truly yours,

*Tara Parrello*

Tara Parrello, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Dominican University New York  
Executive Counselor, Teaching, Learning, & Scholarship Section, ACJS

**MEMBER LIST**

Jay Albanese  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
jsalbane@vcu.edu

Lisa Baker  
Northern Virginia CC  
labaker@nvcc.edu

Daisy Ball  
Assistant Professor, Coordinator of Criminal Justice  
Roanoke College  
221 College Lane  
Salem, VA 24153  
540-375-5413  
dball@roanoke.edu

Denise Bissler  
Director of Criminology  
Randolph Macon College  
114 College Avenue  
Ashland, VA 23005-5505  
804-752-7380  
dbissler@rmc.edu

John Jay Bolling  
Program Head Administration of Justice Professor  
Dabney S. Lancaster Community College  
22 Surry Court  
Daleville, VA 24083  
540-529-6701  
jbolling@dslcc.edu

Lawrence Caldwell  
1636 W. Lorain St., Apt. 301  
Monroe, MI 48162  
Lgc31469@yahoo.com

Corey Call  
Criminal Justice Program  
Longwood University  
Rotunda Room 204  
Farmville, VA 23909  
callcp@longwood.edu

James Carr  
George Mason University  
Department of Criminology, Law and Society  
Enterprise Hall 3rd Floor  
4400 University Drive MS 4F4  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
(540) 379-4469  
Jcarr20@gmu.edu

Matthew Vance Carter  
Danville Police Department (Retired)  
Carpenter Bldg. Room 112  
112 Matthew Circle  
Danville, VA 24540  
434-548-1614  
matthewvcarter@gmail.com

Hayley Cleary  
Criminal Justice & Public Policy Virginia  
Commonwealth University Raleigh Bldg. 2009E  
1001 W. Franklin Street Box 842028  
Richmond, VA 23284  
hmcleary@vcu.edu  
(804) 827-0475

Herke Csongor  
University of Pees  
1 of the square 48th  
Criminal & Civil Procedural Law Department  
Pees 7622  
36 209875647  
herke.csongor@ajk.p.te.hu

Joseph DeStefano  
Assistant Professor of Administration of Justice  
PDCCC  
PO Box 737  
Franklin, VA 23851  
757-925-6330  
jdestefano@pdc.edu

Tim Dickinson  
Northern Virginia CC  
tdickinson@nvcc.edu

Jeff Dodson  
Criminal Justice Program  
Virginia Western CC, Duncan 17  
Roanoke, VA  
jdodson@virginiawestern.edu  
(540) 857-6014

Dennis Dubuc  
AJ Program  
New River C C  
5251 College Drive  
Dublin VA 24084  
540-674-3600 x4471  
ddubuc@nr.vccs.edu

Francie Dye  
Workforce Training Coordinator,  
Workforce Solutions  
Professional & Career Studies Division  
Central Virginia Community College  
Lynchburg, VA  
434-832-7765  
dyef@centralvirginia.edu

Beth Easterling  
Assistant Professor &  
Co-Director of the Criminal Justice Program  
Mary Baldwin University  
P. O. Box 1500  
Staunton, VA 24402  
beasterling@roanoke.edu  
540-887-7000

Robert England  
Mountain Empire CC  
rengland@mecc.edu

Kingsley Uchenna Ejiogu  
Department of Criminal Justice  
University of Maryland Eastern Shore  
Princess Anne, MD 21853  
(410) 651-8914 (O)  
kejiogu@umes.edu

Kim Farmer

Bluefield University  
kfarmer@bluefield.edu  
Jason Ferguson  
Head, Public Safety Programs  
Central Virginia Community College  
3506 Wards Road  
Lynchburg, VA 24502  
fergusonj@centralvirginia.edu  
(434) 832-7797

Brittany N. Freelin  
Assistant Professor of Criminology  
Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and  
Criminology  
Randolph-Macon College  
P.O. Box 5005  
Ashland, VA 23005-5505  
(804) 412-2036  
brittanyfreelin@rmc.edu

Brenda Geiger  
Department of Criminology, Western Galilee College  
Hamichlala Road  
Acre, Israel 2412101  
brendag@wgail.ac.il  
972-544991283

Byron Greenberg  
Virginia State University  
bgreenberg@copdr.edu

Marty Greenberg  
955 Inman Road  
Niskayuna, NY 12309  
mgreenberg955@gmail.com  
518-280-5527

Judith Harris  
University of Houston-Downtown  
harrisjud@uhd.edu

Lynne M. Harrison  
Vice President, Averett University  
Graduate and Professional Studies, Criminal Justice  
2020-2022  
Averett University  
420 West Main Street  
Danville, VA 24541  
lharrison@averett.edu  
804-691-8005

James Hodgson  
Criminal Justice Program Director  
Graduate and Professional Studies  
Averett University  
420 West Main Street  
Danville, VA 24541  
434-791-6881  
jhodgson@averett.edu

Charles Kehoe  
Adjunct Faculty  
Wilder School  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
P. O. Box 842028  
Richmond, VA 23284-2527  
804-873-4949

## MEMBER LIST

Shane Kelley  
Purdue University Global  
skelley@purdueglobal.edu

Bud Levin  
Administration of Justice  
Blue Ridge CC  
Box 80  
Weyers Cave VA 24486  
540-453-2228  
budlevin@gmail.com

Thomas Liverman  
Virginia Wesleyan University  
tliverman@vwu.edu

Jay Malcan  
611 Watch Hill Road  
Midlothian, VA 23114-3065  
804-477-5960  
jmalcan@aol.com

Christina Mancini  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
cnmancini@vcu.edu

John Marks  
Department of Criminal Justice  
Louisiana State University of Alexandria  
8100 Highway 71 South  
Alexandria, LA 71302  
(318) 767-2620  
jmarks@lsua.edu

Paige Merkord-Reed  
2340 Four Leaf Circle  
Dayton, VA 22821  
304-707-1883  
preed@marybaldwin.edu

Mark Moore  
Security & Safety  
Bucks County CC  
275 Swamp Road  
Newtown, PA 18940  
mark.moore@bucks.edu

Stephen Morreale  
Criminal Justice Program  
Worcester State University  
486 Chandler Street  
Worcester, MA 01602  
smorreale@worcester.edu  
(508) 929-8417

Jillian Constantine Noel  
ADJ Faculty  
Germanna Community College  
10000 Germanna Point Drive  
Fredericksburg, VA 22408  
540-834-1033  
jnoel@germanna.edu  
jcnoel@averett.edu

Michelle Newton-Francis, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Undergraduate Faculty Advisor  
Department of Sociology  
American University  
Washington DC 20016-8072  
Phone:(202) 885-2485  
Email:  
mnewtonf@american.edu  
mnewton@averett.edu

Nicolle Parsons-Pollard  
Monmouth  
Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs  
Georgia State University  
Citizens Trust Building  
75 Piedmont Avenue Suite 340  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303  
404-413-2688  
nicollepp@gsu.edu

Andrew Raridon  
Mary Baldwin University  
awraridon@marybaldwin.edu

Paige Reed  
Mary Baldwin University  
P. O. Box 1500  
Staunton, VA 24402  
304-707-1883  
preed@marybaldwin.edu

Jeffrey Rush  
Adjunct Instructor  
Department of Political Science & Criminal Justice  
University of South Alabama  
Trainer, Child Trafficking Solutions Program (CTSP)  
(205) 434-1067

Raymond Smith  
P O Box 327  
Grottoes, VA 24441  
540-453-2231  
smith.raymond94@yahoo.com

Erick Snow  
New River CC  
esnow@nr.edu

Chief Mike Wagner M.A.  
Siler City Police Department  
312 N. Chatham Avenue  
Siler City N.C. 27344  
919-726-8630  
mwagsva@gmail.com

Vickie Holland Taylor  
Professor Emerita  
Danville Community College  
203 Oakwood Circle  
Danville, VA 24541  
434-489-7991  
vjla13@gmail.com

Gwen Udell  
George Mason University  
Criminal, Law & Society Department  
414 Colgan Hall, Sci Tech, MSN 4F7  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
gudell@gmu.edu  
(571) 233-6024

Edward Weeks  
Lasell University  
edweeks@lasell.edu

Robin Widener  
Assistant Professor  
Virginia Highlands CC  
P. O. Box 828  
Abingdon, VA 24212-0828  
rwidener@vhcc.edu  
276-739-2408

John Wilt  
Professor Emeritus, Danville Community College  
146 Greencroft Place, Danville, VA 24541  
jbwilt@aumail.averett.edu  
434-770-8822

Jason Williams  
Virginia Community College System  
jwilliams@vccs.edu

Tomicka Williams  
Assistant Academic Department Chair  
College of Social & Behavioral Sciences  
2550 Northwestern Avenue, Suite 100  
West Lafayette, IN 47906  
(770) 375-8858  
tnwilliams@purdueglobal.edu  
Purdue University Global

Delmar P. Wright-President, Saint Leo University  
3908 Maidens Road  
Powhatan, VA 23139  
804-873-6971  
delmar.wright@saintleo.edu

John Watts  
University of Saint Joseph  
1678 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT  
jwatts@usj.edu  
203-606-6680

William Wilkerson  
Central Virginia CC  
3506 Wards Road, Lynchburg, VA  
wilkersonw@centralvirginia.edu  
540-609-4377

Riane Bolin  
Radford University  
rbolin1@radford.edu

Cheri Chambers  
Saint Leo University  
cheri.chambers@saintleo.edu

**MEMBER LIST**

**Jeffrey Rush**  
307 N. University Blvd. Mobile, AL 36688

**Krystal Cappola**  
Keiser University & Xcelerate Solutions  
k.cappola@student.keiseruniversity.edu

**Mildred Johnson**  
Geneva College  
mljohns01@geneva.edu

**David Giroux**  
Arlington County Police Department  
dgirou@arlingtonva.us

**Kevin Fornshill**  
George Mason University  
kforshi@gmu.edu

**Riane Bolin**  
Radford University  
mailto:rbolin1@radford.edu

**Cheri Chambers**  
Saint Leo University  
cheri.chambers@saintleo.edu

**Mildred Johnson**  
Geneva College  
mljohns01@geneva.edu

# Critical Incident Review Active Shooter at Robb Elementary School



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the authors nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

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Published 2024

# Content Advisory

The team took great care to be intentional about the words used in this report to convey the facts. Nevertheless, the descriptions may be activating for some readers due to the explanations of this mass casualty incident, including the age of the victims.

The team deliberately does not name the subject to avoid glorifying the subject's actions and out of respect for the victims' families.

For resources, including free and confidential emotional support, please visit <https://988lifeline.org/> or call/text 988 to reach the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

# Dedication

This report is offered to honor the memories of the innocent victims—young students and teachers—who were senselessly killed on May 24, 2022, at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. To memorialize those whose lives were taken, we created remembrance profiles to capture the spirit of each victim and to amplify their voices, which were silenced. These can be found in “Appendix A. Remembrance Profiles” and online at <https://cops.usdoj.gov/uvalde>.<sup>1</sup>

This report is also dedicated to the survivors—those who feared for their lives and the lives of their loved ones—who selflessly risked their own safety to call for help and to try to protect others and who witnessed the horror, watching in anguish as the event unfolded. To hundreds of survivors in this community, we know the negative impacts, including physical, mental, and emotional injuries, will not end and that your grief remains very heavy. Many of you continue to bear the scars and pain you suffered from the loss of your loved ones and the loss of your sense of safety in your own community.

It is our intention to honor all of you by remembering your loved ones and representing your stories, sharing them here with the rest of the country. We hope that our review of the events of May 24, 2022, can provide answers to the remaining questions and lessons that may help others in the future.

The country mourned with the Uvalde community on that tragic day. While we remain heartbroken by your loss, we are driven by the need to provide an authoritative accounting of the days and months leading up to that day, the response that transpired on May 24, and the events and actions that followed.

The following page lists the names of the victims.

---

<sup>1</sup> Placement of the Remembrance Profiles is based on requests from some of the families of the victims.

Below are the names of the innocent lives lost that day:

Nevaeh Alyssa Bravo, 10

Jacklyn "Jackie" Cazares, 9

Makenna Lee Elrod, 10

Jose Flores Jr., 10

Eliahna "Ellie" Amyah Garcia, 9

Irma Linda Garcia, 48

Uziyah Sergio Garcia, 10

Amerie Jo Garza, 10

Xavier James Lopez, 10

Jayce Carmelo Luevanos, 10

Tess Marie Mata, 10

Maranda Mathis, 11

Eva Mireles, 44

Alithia Haven Ramirez, 10

Annabell Guadalupe Rodriguez, 10

Maite Yuleana Rodriguez, 10

Alexandria "Lexi" Aniyah Rubio, 10

Layla Marie Salazar, 11

Jalilah Nicole Silguero, 10

Eliahna Cruz Torres, 10

Rojelio Fernandez Torres, 10

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# Executive Summary

On May 24, 2022, a mass shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, shook the nation. With just two days left in the school year, a former student armed with an AR-15 style assault rifle took the lives of 19 students and two teachers, physically injured at least 17 others, and left countless families, friends, and a community grief-stricken for their unimaginable loss. In the aftermath of the tragedy, there was significant public criticism of the law enforcement response to the shooting. At the request of then Uvalde Mayor Don McLaughlin, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) announced on May 29, 2022, that it would conduct a Critical Incident Review (CIR) of the law enforcement response to the mass shooting. Recognizing that “[n]othing can undo the pain that has been inflicted on the loved ones of the victims, the survivors, and the entire community of Uvalde,” the Attorney General stated that the goal of the CIR was to “assess what happened and to provide guidance moving forward.”

A full understanding of the response of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies and personnel is critical for addressing many unanswered questions, identifying crucial lessons learned, enhancing prevention initiatives, and improving future preparation for and responses to mass shootings in other communities. In providing a detailed accounting and critical assessment of the first responder actions in Uvalde, and the efforts since to ameliorate gaps and deficiencies in that response, the CIR is intended to build on the knowledge base for responding to incidents of mass violence. It also will identify generally accepted practices for an effective law enforcement response to such incidents. Finally, the CIR is intended to help honor the victims and survivors of the Robb Elementary School tragedy.

The CIR was led by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) with the support of a team of subject matter experts with a wide variety of relevant experience, including emergency management and active shooter response, incident command, tactical operations, officer safety and wellness, public communications, and victim and family support (see “About the Team”). The CIR team collected and reviewed more than 14,100 pieces of data and documentation, including policies, training logs, body camera and CCTV video footage, audio recordings, photographs, personnel records, manuals and standard operating procedures, interview transcripts and investigative files and data, and other documents. The CIR team visited Uvalde nine times, spending a total of 54 days on site. The team conducted over 260 interviews of individuals from more than 30 organizations and agencies who played a role in or had important knowledge or information about areas related to the review. Those interviews included personnel from the law enforcement agencies involved in the response to the mass shooting, other first responders and medical personnel, victims’ family members, victim services providers, communications professionals and public information officers, school personnel, elected and appointed government officials, survivors and other witnesses, and hospital staff.

## Organization of the Report

This report provides the results of the independent, comprehensive assessment conducted by the CIR team. The period for collecting documents and data through this CIR was June 2022 until June 2023, defined throughout the report as the review period. To organize this comprehensive review, the team established the following areas of focus:

- **Incident Timeline Reconstruction.** This chapter provides an authoritative account of pertinent facts leading up to, during, and immediately following the tragic mass shooting.
- **Tactics and Equipment.** This chapter examines tactical approaches and availability of special tools and equipment during the critical 77 minutes between the arrival of first responders on scene through the classroom entry and killing of the shooter.
- **Leadership, Incident Command, and Coordination.** This chapter examines the leadership, incident command, decision-making, and coordination actions that took place across responding agencies and law enforcement leaders.
- **Post-Incident Response and Investigation.** This chapter assesses the establishment of post-incident investigative command and activities, victim identification, and crime scene management, as well as administrative investigations and after-action reviews.
- **Public Communications During and Following the Crisis.** This chapter examines communications activities and approaches with and between government entities (including law enforcement) and the general public, family members, professional media, social media, and others.
- **Trauma and Support Services.** This chapter analyzes support and resources provided to survivors, victims, responders, and other stakeholders.
- **School Safety and Security.** This chapter documents the school safety planning and assesses the security apparatus of the Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District (UCISD).
- **Pre-Incident Planning and Preparation.** This chapter assesses the training, agreements, and procedures for law enforcement, other first responder agencies, and other relevant stakeholders in the critical areas of active shooter response, incident command, emergency management, and other significant areas.

## Terminology and Treatment of Names

Names are important. The team deliberated on the treatment of names and decided on the following:

- The subject's name is not used to avoid glorification.
- Only elected officials and chief executives of agencies are named where appropriate. All other individuals are left unnamed.

Additionally, this report refers to “victims” and “survivors” interchangeably to respect that some people prefer to be referenced as survivors and others as victims. The CIR team was also cognizant of and attempted to avoid terminology like “triggered,” “targeted,” and other gun-related language as well as time frame references (which typically convey celebrations, such as “anniversaries”), out of respect for the fact that these terms are often activating for some victims, survivors, responders, and family members.

## Overview of CIR Factual Observations

At 11:33 a.m. on the morning of May 24, 2022, the subject entered Robb Elementary School equipped with a high-powered AR-15 rifle. He immediately started shooting and within a minute entered classrooms 111 and 112, which were connected via an interior door.

Within 3 minutes of the subject’s entry into the school, 11 law enforcement officers from the Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District (UCISD) and Uvalde Police Departments (UPD), including supervisors, arrived inside the school. Hearing continued gunfire, five of the responding first on scene (FOS) law enforcement ran toward classrooms 111/112. The other six FOS did not advance down the hallway, including UPD Acting Chief Mariano Pargas, who was in the best position to start taking command and control, and to start coordinating with approaching personnel. One of the officers said to “line up to make entry” and within seconds shots were fired from inside one of the rooms. Two officers were hit with shrapnel, and all responders retreated to positions of cover.

After three attempts to approach the classrooms, the focus of the responders shifted from entering classrooms 111/112 and stopping the shooting to evacuating other classrooms, attempting to negotiate with the subject, and requesting additional responders and equipment. With this shift from an active shooter to a barricaded subject approach, some responders repeatedly described the subject over the radio as “barricaded” or “contained.” Yet within four minutes from FOS arrival, 911 dispatch confirmed that class was in session and reported that they had received calls from victims.

Chief Pete Arredondo of the UCISD Police Department (UCISD PD) directed officers at several points to delay making entry into classrooms 111/112 in favor of searching for keys and clearing other classrooms. Occupants of other classrooms were at risk of further injury as a result of the high-powered nature of the shooter’s AR-15 style rifle and from possible crossfire once classrooms 111 and 112 were entered. At several points, UCISD PD Chief Arredondo also attempted to negotiate with the subject. Others called out over the radio for additional resources and indicated that they were waiting for a tactical team to arrive, such as Uvalde special weapons and tactics (SWAT), the Texas Department of Public Safety (TXDPS), and the U.S. Border Patrol Tactical Unit (BORTAC). Chief Arredondo, who became the de facto on-scene commander, was without his radios, having discarded them during his arrival, and communicated to others either verbally or via cell phone throughout the response.

Over the course of the incident, overwhelming numbers of law enforcement personnel from different agencies self-deployed to the school. Leadership on scene, however, had not established command and control, to include an incident command post (ICP), staging area, or clear perimeter around the hallway

or the school. Thus, arriving personnel did not receive accurate updates on the situation or direction for how to support the response efforts. Many arriving officers—based on inaccurate information on the scene and shared over the radio or from observing the lack of urgency toward entering classrooms 111/112—incorrectly believed that the subject had already been killed or that UCISD PD Chief Arredondo was in the room with the subject. As leaders from additional law enforcement agencies arrived, including Uvalde County Sheriff Ruben Nolasco, the lack of clear communication and command structure made coordination difficult. Emergency medical responders faced similar challenges as they deployed. They struggled to identify who was in charge, and ambulances encountered streets blocked by law enforcement vehicles.

Concerned families were also arriving at the school. They likewise had difficulty obtaining information about their loved ones' status. Incorrect and conflicting information was also being shared on social media with the UCISD posting that all students and staff were safe in the building and later posting messages about reunification that conflicted with the UPD posts.

At 12:21 p.m., 48 minutes after the subject entered the school, the subject fired four additional shots inside classrooms 111/112. Officers moved forward into formation outside the classroom doors but did not make entry. Instead, presuming the classroom doors were locked, the officers tested a set of keys on the door of a janitor's closet next to room 112. When the keys did not work, the responders began searching for additional keys and breaching tools. UCISD PD Chief Arredondo continued to attempt to communicate with the subject, while UPD Acting Chief Pargas continued to provide no direction, command, or control to personnel.

After another 15 minutes, officers found a second set of keys and used them to successfully open the janitor's closet. With working keys in hand, the officers then waited to determine whether a sniper and a drone could obtain sight of and eliminate the subject through the window. Those efforts were unsuccessful.

At 12:48 p.m., 27 minutes after hearing multiple gunshots inside classrooms 111 and 112, and 75 minutes after first responders first entered Robb Elementary, officers opened the door to room 111. A team composed of BORTAC members, a member of the U.S. Border Patrol Search, Trauma, and Rescue Unit (BORSTAR), and deputies from two local sheriffs' offices entered the rooms, and officers killed the subject when he emerged shooting from a closet. The subject was killed at approximately 12:50 p.m., 77 minutes after the first officers entered the school and after 45 rounds were fired by the shooter in the presence of officers.

There were 587 children and many other teachers and staff members present at Robb Elementary School that fateful day. In the end, 19 children and two staff were killed, with at least 17 survivors physically injured. Since not all the children and staff present at Robb Elementary at the time of the shooting were brought to the hospital or otherwise assessed for any medical concerns, it is unknown how many in total sustained physical injuries as a result of this incident.

Wounded and deceased victims were transported to Uvalde Memorial Hospital, while the majority of other victims were transported to the Uvalde Civic Center, where the Reunification Center was eventually established. At the hospital and the center, some families were reunited with their children. But other families received incorrect information suggesting their family members had survived when they had not. And others were notified of the deaths of their family members by personnel untrained in delivering such painful news.

In the days, weeks, and months following the tragedy, survivors, families, and responders received varying levels of support services. Many organizations arrived in Uvalde in the days that followed to assist survivors and families in accessing mental health and other victim support resources. But since then, difficulties with tracking victims and transitioning service providers have meant that some victims, family members, and community members have not received services.

Public communications challenges continued throughout the response and in the aftermath of the tragedy. Both impromptu and scheduled news conferences and media engagements contained inaccurate and incomplete information. Victims, families, and community members struggled to receive timely and accurate information about what occurred on May 24. And although government officials and school administrators hosted several family briefings and school board meetings over the weeks and months after the shooting, those events offered limited information and few substantive responses from officials and, in some cases, exacerbated the distress of the families.

## Overview of CIR Team Analysis

Based on these facts, the CIR team identified several critical failures and other breakdowns prior to, during, and after the Robb Elementary School response and analyzed the cascading failures of leadership, decision-making, tactics, policy, and training that contributed to those failures and breakdowns. From the facts and analysis, the CIR team has been able to identify generally accepted practices for an effective law enforcement response to similar mass shootings and offer recommendations in hopes that in the future, law enforcement would be able to act quickly, save lives, and prevent injuries to the greatest extent possible.

The most significant failure was that responding officers should have immediately recognized the incident as an active shooter situation, using the resources and equipment that were sufficient to push forward immediately and continuously toward the threat until entry was made into classrooms 111/112 and the threat was eliminated. Since the tragic shooting at Columbine High School in 1999, a fundamental precept in active shooter response and the generally accepted practice is that the first priority must be to immediately neutralize the subject; everything else, including officer safety, is subordinate to that objective. Accordingly, when a subject has already shot numerous victims and is in a room with additional victims, efforts first must be dedicated to making entry into the room, stopping the subject, and rendering aid to victims. These efforts must be undertaken regardless of the equipment and personnel available to those first on the scene.

This did not occur during the Robb Elementary shooting response, where there was a 77-minute gap between when officers first arrived on the scene and when they finally confronted and killed the subject. Several of the first officers on scene initially acted consistent with generally accepted practices to try to engage the subject, and they moved quickly toward classrooms 111/112 within minutes of arriving. But once they retreated after being met with gunfire, the law enforcement responders, including UCISD PD Chief Pete Arredondo—who we conclude was the de facto on-scene incident commander—began treating the incident as a barricaded subject scenario and not as an active shooter situation.

As more law enforcement resources arrived, first responders on the scene, including those with specific leadership responsibilities, did not coordinate immediate entry into the classrooms, running counter to generally accepted practices for active shooter response to immediately engage the subject to further save lives. Instead, law enforcement focused on calls for additional SWAT equipment (which should not delay the response to an active shooter), requests for delivery of classroom keys and breaching tools (which may not have been necessary to gain entry), and orders to evacuate surrounding classrooms prior to making entry into classrooms 111/112.

In addition to the overall failure to appreciate the active shooter nature of the situation, responders also failed to act promptly even after hearing gunshots around 12:21 p.m., which should have spurred greater urgency to confront the subject but instead set off a renewed search for keys.

There were also failures in leadership, command, and coordination. None of the law enforcement leaders at the scene established an incident command structure to provide timely direction, control, and coordination to the overwhelming number of responders who arrived on the scene. This lack of structure contributed to confusion among responders about who was in charge of the response and how they could assist.

Communications difficulties exacerbated these problems. Per UCISD policies, Chief Arredondo was the on-scene incident commander, but he lacked a radio, having discarded his radios during his arrival thinking they were unnecessary. And although he attempted to communicate with officers in other parts of the hallway via phone, unfortunately, on multiple occasions, he directed officers intending to gain entry into the classrooms to stop, because he appeared to determine that other victims should first be removed from nearby classrooms to prevent further injury.

These failures may have been influenced by policy and training deficiencies. For example, recent training that UCISD PD provided seemed to suggest, inappropriately, that an active shooter situation can transition into a hostage or barricaded subject situation. And while many of the FOS had sufficient active shooter and incident command training, other key FOS responders lacked any active shooter training or incident command training. The vast majority of the officers from different law enforcement agencies had never trained together, contributing to difficulties in coordination and communication on the day of the incident. The lack of pre-planning hampered even well-prepared agencies from functioning at their best.

## Chapter by Chapter Summary

As noted above, the CIR team organized the review of the Robb Elementary School response by focusing on particular topics. A summary of the CIR team's observations and recommendations for each of these chapters is provided below.

### Chapter 1. Incident Timeline Reconstruction

This chapter provides an authoritative account of pertinent facts leading up to, during, and immediately following the tragic mass shooting.

### Chapter 2. Tactics and Equipment

Police active shooter response tactics have undergone significant changes and evolution over the years. Throughout most of history, the police response to an active shooter incident was to secure a perimeter and call out a SWAT team and, in some cases, negotiators. Most officers lacked specialized, advanced training and preparation to handle such situations. The watershed moment in tactical changes occurred following the Columbine massacre in 1999. Following Columbine, law enforcement expert tacticians and associations testified that the new paradigm for responding to crises like Columbine is rapid deployment. Rapid emergency deployment puts significant responsibility on the first responding officers, who may not be fully equipped or trained as a SWAT team member. First responders are instructed to go toward the violent offender, if necessary, bypassing injured victims and placing themselves in harm's way.

"Chapter 2. Tactics and Equipment" examines the tactics and pieces of equipment that were contemplated, sought, and deployed over the course of the incident response at Robb Elementary School, beginning with the initial officers' approach from outside the school and ending approximately 77 minutes later when the medical triage of victims inside classrooms 111/112 began.

#### Selected Observations

*To see the full list of Observations, see "Chapter 2. Tactics and Equipment."*

- The first officers on scene immediately moved toward the sound of gunfire and into the West Building of Robb Elementary to stop the shooter, which was in adherence to active shooter response generally accepted practices. Once inside the building, five of the first officers on scene continued to press down the hallway and toward a barrage of gunfire erupting inside of rooms 111/112. (Observation 1)
- After officers suffered graze wounds from shrapnel, the first officers on scene did not penetrate the doors to rooms 111/112 and repositioned to a barricaded subject situation. This mindset permeated throughout much of the incident response, even impacting many of the later responding officers. Despite their training and despite multiple events indicating the subject continued to pose an active threat to students and staff in the building, including the likelihood

and then confirmation of victims inside the room, officers on scene did not attempt to enter the room and stop the shooter for over an hour after they entered the building. The shooter was not killed until approximately 77 minutes after law enforcement first arrived. (Observation 3)

- The effort to clear and evacuate the entire West Building was intentional and directed by Chief Arredondo, to preserve and protect the lives of the children and teachers who remained in the hot zone, while the shooter remained an active threat with multiple victims in rooms 111/112. This was a major contributing factor in the delay to making entry into rooms 111/112. The time it took to evacuate the entire building was 43 minutes, beginning at around 11:38 a.m., when Chief Arredondo realized there were occupants in room 109 that he could not access, and ending at 12:21 p.m., when four shots were fired, and that same room was finally evacuated through the windows. During this time and prior to 12:21 p.m., there were multiple stimuli indicating that there was an active threat in classrooms 111/112—including: the barrage of gunfire during the initial response; the children and teachers observed when evacuating the classrooms; the single shot fired at 11:44 a.m.; the notification that class was in session; the notification from an officer on scene that his wife, a teacher, was inside classrooms 111/112 and shot; and multiple radio broadcasts of a 911 call from a student inside the classroom. (Observation 6)
- Some officers on scene believed that they were waiting for more assets to arrive, such as shields and a specialized tactical team, to make entry. (Observation 7)

## Selected Recommendations

*To see the full list of Recommendations, see “Chapter 2. Tactics and Equipment.”*

- Officers responding to an active shooter incident must continually seek to eliminate the threat and enable victim response. The shooter’s immediate past actions and likely future actions serve as “triggering points” that indicate the appropriate response should be in line with active shooter response protocols.<sup>2</sup> An active shooter with access to victims should *never* be considered and treated as a barricaded subject. (Recommendation 3.1)
- Law enforcement training academies and providers should ensure that active shooter training modules include the factors in determining active shooter versus barricaded subject situations. (Recommendation 3.3)

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<sup>2</sup> IACP (International Association of Chiefs of Police), *Model Policy on Active Shooter* (Alexandria, VA: International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2018), <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/policy-center-resource/active-shooter>.

- Officers responding to an active shooter incident must first and foremost drive toward the threat to eliminate it. In the event there are resources available and an opportunity to evacuate bystanders and victims from the hot zone, officers must balance the risk posed by evacuation versus the risk posed by remaining in lockdown and potentially in the crossfire. Evacuations in such circumstances must be conducted in the most expeditious manner, limited to those immediately in harm’s way, and not at the expense of the priority to eliminate the threat. In the case of Robb Elementary, the CIR team concludes that the effort to evacuate was protracted and should not have caused such significant delay in the eventual entry into rooms 111/112. (Recommendation 6.1)
- Officers responding to an active shooter incident must be prepared to approach the threat and breach or enter a room using just the tools they have with them, which is often a standard-issue firearm/service weapon. (Recommendation 7.1)

### Chapter 3. Leadership, Incident Command, and Coordination

Leadership in law enforcement is absolutely critical, especially in moments of a dire challenge, such as the active shooter incident at Robb Elementary School. It requires courageous action and steadiness in a chaotic environment. Leadership can arise regardless of rank or title. Such moments require steady and commanding actions and based on facts gathered for this report, this leadership was absent for too long in the Robb Elementary School law enforcement response.

“Chapter 3. Leadership, Incident Command, and Coordination” describes key principles related to leadership in an active shooter incident, including the need to direct an immediate response to the active shooter threat and to establish a coordinated and collaborative command and control system. The chapter analyzes the actions of leaders from several law enforcement agencies, including UPD, UCISD PD, UCSO, TXDPS, and CBP in responding to the shooting at Robb Elementary School. The chapter discusses incident command and management; coordination with other law enforcement agencies, including mutual aid; self-deployment by other local, state, and federal law enforcement personnel; and emergency medical services/fire medical response.

#### Selected Observations

*To see the full list of Observations, see “Chapter 3. Leadership, Incident Command, and Coordination.”*

- Leadership from UPD, UCISD PD, UCSO, and TXDPS demonstrated no urgency for establishing a command and control structure, which led to challenges related to information sharing, lack of situational statuses, and limited-to-no direction for personnel in the hallway or on the perimeter. (Observation 4)
- Failure to establish a unified command led to limited multiagency coordination. (Observation 5)
- There was no uniformly recognized incident commander on the scene throughout the incident. (Observation 8)

- UCISD PD Chief Arredondo was the de facto incident commander on the day of the incident. Chief Arredondo had the necessary authority, training, and tools. He did not provide appropriate leadership, command, and control, including not establishing an incident command structure nor directing entry into classrooms 111 and 112. (Observation 9)
- On the day of the incident, no leader effectively questioned the decisions and lack of urgency of UCISD PD Chief Arredondo and UPD Acting Chief Pargas toward entering classrooms 111/112, including within their respective agencies and agencies with concurrent/overlapping jurisdiction (e.g., Uvalde County Sheriff Nolasco, Uvalde County Constable Zamora, Uvalde County Constable Field, TX Ranger 1). (Observation 12)

### **Selected Recommendations**

*To see the full list of Recommendations, see “Chapter 3. Leadership, Incident Command, and Coordination.”*

- Agency leaders must immediately determine incident status and the appropriate command structure for the event. Leadership must continually assess and adjust as the threat and incident evolve. (Recommendation 4.1)
- As soon as possible and practical, the lead agency should establish a unified command that includes a representative from each primary first responder agency to facilitate communication, situational awareness, operational coordination, and allocation and delivery of resources. (Recommendation 5.1)
- The ICP should provide timely direction, control, and coordination to the agency leadership, other agencies, and other critical stakeholders before, during, and after an event or upon notification of a credible threat. The ICP must also serve as an intelligence collection and dissemination node. (Recommendation 7.4)
- Agencies should create and train on a policy, and set an expectation that leaders will act in a manner consistent with that policy during critical incidents. (Recommendation 12.1)
- A memorandum of understanding (MOU) or memorandum of agreement (MOA) needs to be developed among agencies within a county or region that provides clarity on who is in command, taking into consideration an agency’s training, experience, equipment, and capacity to take the lead during a multiagency response to a critical incident. (Recommendation 12.2)
- Agencies should use the Incident Command System (ICS) for more than large-scale tactical events. They should incorporate as many of the ICS principles as possible in response to varying levels of emergencies or planned events, so ICS becomes a regular component of the agency’s culture. (Recommendation 13.1)

## Chapter 4. Post-Incident Response and Investigation

Establishing investigative command after a multiagency response to a mass casualty incident is critical to ensuring effective control and coordination of the scene and responsive resources, assignment of investigative assets, collection of information and intelligence, and external and internal communication. In the wake of a critical incident involving a law enforcement response, multiple investigations and reviews will often occur. In addition to a criminal investigation of the subject, critical incidents often result in one or more administrative investigations of officer conduct during the incident.

The “Post-Incident Response and Investigation” chapter centers around criminal and administrative investigations and associated activities and processes that took place at Robb Elementary School, such as management of the crime scene, evidence collection, and interagency coordination in such efforts. Additionally, it describes several critical incident reviews that were initiated following the tragedy.

### Selected Observations

*To see the full list of Observations, see “Chapter 4. Post-Incident Response and Investigation.”*

- The involvement of local agencies in the hallway during the incident led the district attorney, in consultation with the TXDPS, to assign Texas Rangers to solely investigate the incident. (Observation 1)
- Body-worn camera (BWC) video captures officers walking into the crime scene without an investigative purpose or responsibility in the immediate aftermath of the incident. Furthermore, in the days that followed, crime scene preservation was compromised, and the crime scene team had to continually stop and start their important work when non-investigatory personnel entered the hallway and classrooms 111/112 for the purpose of viewing the scene. (Observation 4)
- The Texas Rangers Crime Scene Team processed and exhaustively documented an incredibly challenging crime scene that put their training, policies, and procedures to the test. The team conducted an after-action review to examine their efforts and learn as an organization. (Observation 9)
- Among the agencies with the most involved personnel, most have not completed administrative investigations into their officers’ actions on May 24. (Observation 11)

### Selected Recommendations

*To see the full list of Recommendations, see “Chapter 4. Post-Incident Response and Investigation.”*

- Agencies should have a formal agreement or understanding on investigative command after a multiagency response. (Recommendation 1.1)

- Leaders must respect the integrity of the crime scene and only access it with a declared and documented legitimate purpose. Crime scenes need to be held without contamination until completed. The crime scene team should be permitted to do their methodical work without continuous interruptions by VIPs who want to enter the crime scene but have no probative need to do so. (Recommendation 4.1)
- Agencies in regional proximity to each other should conduct multiagency tabletop exercises for complex investigations that may necessitate mutual aid and support from each other. Doing so will build greater interagency coordination in activities like evidence collection as well as understanding of jurisdictional boundaries, capabilities, processes, and expectations among partner agencies. The tabletop exercises should include local, state, and federal agencies, as appropriate, and be designed to exploit weaknesses, uncover strengths, and develop solutions. (Recommendation 7.1)
- Agencies should adopt parallel investigations policy for criminal and administrative investigations, including for major incidents, while taking diligent steps to ensure that information derived from compelled administrative interviews are completely walled off from any criminal investigation into the officer's or agent's actions. (Recommendation 11.1)
- Agencies that engage in after action/critical incident reviews should adequately resource the effort to ensure high-quality and timely reports of lessons learned and areas for organizational improvement. (Recommendation 12.1)

## Chapter 5. Public Communications During and Following the Crisis

Public communications during and after a disaster, emergency, or mass violence event is itself an intervention that can help victims and community members prepare and respond effectively. Communications from trusted leaders who exude a sense of calmness, competency, control, and compassion that integrate trauma-informed information can also help those impacted manage their stress and distress reactions to these events. Thus, both internal and external communications are vitally important in every disaster, emergency, and mass violence incident. These communications must be timely and accurate and provide as much information as appropriate at any given time, providing the community with a sense of trust and confidence during a time in which many are learning the most devastating news that anyone can receive.

The “Public Communications During and Following the Crisis” chapter describes critical components for coordinated communication during and after a tragedy, including the identification of a public information officer (PIO) and the establishment of a Joint Information System (JIS), housed by a Joint Information Center (JIC). The chapter canvasses the public communications in the days, weeks, and months following the shooting at Robb Elementary School and describes how inaccurate and untimely information combined with inconsistent messaging created confusion and added to the victims' suffering.

## Selected Observations

To see the full list of Observations, see “Chapter 5. Public Communications During and Following the Crisis.”

- Inaccurate information combined with inconsistent messaging created confusion and added to the victims’ suffering, both on the day of the incident and in the days after the mass shooting. (Observation 1)
- Family members encountered many obstacles to locating their loved ones, getting access to the hospital, and getting information from leadership, law enforcement, and hospital staff in a timely manner. This includes initial information posted by UCISD on the reunification site followed by a series of contradictory posts between UPD and UCISD on reunification. This added to the confusion, pain, and frustration. (Observation 5)
- Spokespersons for UCISD and TXDPS, the only agencies speaking publicly, did not coordinate their messaging during the afternoon of the incident. Some conflicting information was shared by the two agencies. (Observation 11)
- All social media public messaging was posted only in English. The one exception to this was the FBI San Antonio Field Office’s messaging starting on May 25. (Observation 15)
- The extent of misinformation, misguided and misleading narratives, leaks, and lack of communication about what happened on May 24 is unprecedented and has had an extensive, negative impact on the mental health and recovery of the family members and other victims, as well as the entire community of Uvalde. (Observation 18)

## Selected Recommendations

To see the full list of Recommendations, see “Chapter 5. Public Communications During and Following the Crisis.”

- To establish leadership and a sense of order, the lead agency must be swift, proactive, accurate, and transparent in its messaging. Relevant information that is not law enforcement-sensitive should typically be released as soon as it is confirmed. However, speed must be balanced with the need for accuracy. It is critical that information is verified before it is released even when there is tremendous pressure to release information quickly. (Recommendation 4.3)
- When reunification is complete and the victims’ families have been notified, the lead agency should release that information to the community. This is a crucial step in unifying the community to start the healing process. (Recommendation 6.2)
- The lead agency should institute incident command and establish a JIC for coordinating the release of all public information, including victim information from all medical facilities that can be incorporated into coordinated news briefings. (Recommendation 7.1)

- When an organization recognizes that an error has occurred, it should admit the mistake and share what actions it is taking to rectify the problem and prevent it from happening again. Even when the mistake is egregious, an agency can maintain or seek to regain public trust by being open and holding itself accountable to the community. In these moments, a law enforcement agency can build community trust by holding itself to the highest possible standard. (Recommendation 13.1)
- In a community with a large population with limited English proficiency, officials should post emergency information in English and in other predominant languages. This inclusive approach will help ensure that critical public safety messages reach a larger audience and will help boost trust. (Recommendation 15.1)
- Intentional transparency is needed for the victims, survivors, and loved ones who are seeking answers about what happened; however, authorities need to provide information in a trauma-informed, victim-centered, and culturally sensitive manner. (Recommendation 24.1)

## Chapter 6. Trauma and Support Services

Support services for individuals who are exposed to tragedies like a mass casualty incident, including victims, family members, the broader community, and responders, are essential. Helping those affected understand that they can access crisis counseling, learn good coping skills, reach out to social supports, and access their innate strengths to build their resilience, can protect against people developing a mental illness as a result of their exposure to a traumatic event and its aftermath. Adequate support, services, and resources all contribute to recovery and healing.

“Chapter 6. Trauma and Support Services” assesses the support and resources provided to survivors, victims, responders, and others involved in the shooting at Robb Elementary School. This chapter describes the acute services provided in the first 24–72 hours following the shooting, including during the evacuation process and the establishment of the Reunification Center for families and survivors. It also describes intermediate and long-term survivor and victim family support; support services for law enforcement and other responders; and management of emotional/trauma support for the broader Uvalde community following the tragic incident at Robb Elementary School.

### Selected Observations

*To see the full list of Observations, see “Chapter 6. Trauma and Support Services.”*

- Once the children and adults were rescued from their classrooms during the evacuation process, they received limited instruction and direction on where to proceed. Due to the chaotic nature of the evacuation, children and school personnel were not adequately evaluated medically prior to being transported to the Reunification Center. As such, injured victims had delayed medical care and were at risk of further injury. (Observation 1)
- The establishment of a Reunification Center was delayed and chaotic. Families and next of kin received conflicting instructions on the location of the center. (Observation 6)

- The death notification process was disorganized, chaotic, and at times not conducted in a trauma-informed manner. (Observation 9)
- Responders were not provided timely, immediate access to trauma and support services, and many reported feeling abandoned and unsupported in the weeks and months following the critical incident. Others reported being aware of the services but electing not to use them. (Observation 14)
- Shared trauma is a concern for the Uvalde community due to compounding factors, including the size of the community and its interrelatedness. For the hundreds of law enforcement, medical, behavioral health, and government personnel who responded to this incident, shared trauma can make what happened even more overwhelming. Law enforcement’s trauma is also exacerbated by the backlash from the community—as the community’s trauma is exacerbated by the lack of an adequate response from law enforcement. (Observation 16)
- The Uvalde community continues to need support and guidance as it struggles with the negative impacts of the failed response, a lack of accountability for those implicated in this failure, and remaining gaps in the information about what happened to their loved ones. (Observation 43)

## Selected Recommendations

*To see the full list of Recommendations, see “Chapter 6. Trauma and Support Services.”*

- Officials should ensure all victims of a mass violence incident are screened medically and assessed for mental health concerns soon after evacuation and no later than 24-48 hours post-incident. (Recommendation 2.1)
- In the weeks and months following an incident, victims and family members should receive follow-up or continued monitoring to ensure they are receiving the necessary mental health care and other services. (Recommendation 2.2)
- Victim advocates should be assigned to communicate with and assist families. Each family member of a deceased person and each injured victim should be assigned a victim advocate who works with that family/victim consistently throughout the treatment and recovery period, having frequent communications to ensure the family/victim is aware of and able to access needed services and supports. (Recommendation 9.4)
- Local officials engaging in trauma and death notifications should consult national resources and ensure best practices are followed when providing these notifications. Preparedness and planning can help a locality identify areas where they have fewer trained or experienced staff, thus the areas where they need mutual aid supports. (Recommendation 11.1)
- Leaders from responder agencies need to provide services to all personnel involved in a mass casualty incident (MCI), which for some agencies means everyone on their staff. These services should include resources on post-disaster behavioral health and secondary traumatic stress, referrals to health care providers, and peer support. (Recommendation 14.5)

- As part of disaster preparedness planning, communities—including law enforcement—need to plan for the aftermath of a critical incident. This planning should include generally accepted practice processes, education and training, support, and resources. A trauma-informed, culturally sensitive approach should be applied to the victims, survivors, and impacted community members, as well as responders and their families. (Recommendation 16.3)
- A family assistance center(FAC) should be established within 24 hours of an incident with a security plan that includes external law enforcement presence and a process for internal vetting of providers and those seeking services. (Recommendation 18.1)
- The definition of responders should be expanded, consistent with generally accepted practices, to include disciplines other than law enforcement, fire, and rescue staff, such as dispatchers, EMTs, health care providers, ambulance drivers, behavioral health providers, and faith-based leaders. This should be reflected in all support services provided by resiliency centers, nongovernmental and governmental entities, and other support service providers. (Recommendation 31.2)

## Chapter 7. School Safety and Security

While the primary goal of school districts across the United States is to educate, they must also prepare for myriad threats to school safety and security, ranging widely in scale and seriousness. In addition to certain safety functions maintained at the school district administration level, such as threat assessment teams, school safety committees, student counseling services, and physical security maintenance and upgrades, many school districts throughout the nation partner with local law enforcement agencies to establish school resource officer programs, and some create their own police departments. Among the 1,207 independent school districts in Texas, 309 (about 26 percent) have their own police department, including the UCISD.

“Chapter 7. School Safety and Security” reviews the safety and security apparatus of UCISD on May 24, 2022, including UCISD policies and procedures on active shooter response and incident command and their policies on locked doors, use of an emergency alert system, history of drills and exercises, establishment of its police department, and district-wide and campus planning processes around school safety.

## Selected Observations

*To see the full list of Observations, see “Chapter 7. School Safety and Security.”*

- UCISD’s campus safety teams met infrequently, and annual safety plans were based largely on templated information that was, at times, inaccurate. (Observation 5)
- UCISD had a culture of complacency regarding locked-door policies. Both exterior and interior doors were routinely left unlocked, and there was no enforced system of accountability for these policies. Door audits were conducted, but not done systematically, nor were they documented. On May 24, all of the exterior doors and at least eight interior doors of the West Building, where the incident took place, were unlocked. (Observation 8)
- Law enforcement arriving on scene searched for keys to open interior doors for more than 40 minutes. This was partly the cause of the significant delay in entering to eliminate the threat and stop the killing and dying inside classrooms 111 and 112. (Observation 10)
- Four years into its existence, the UCISD PD was functioning without any standard operating procedures. A range of UCISD employees, including administrators, faculty, support staff, and police officers, told the CIR team they had no knowledge of, nor had they been informed about, their school police department’s policies and procedures. The UCISD PD has recently drafted standard operating procedures. (Observation 18)

## Selected Recommendations

*To see the full list of Recommendations, see “Chapter 7. School Safety and Security.”*

- School district police departments should enter into MOUs that establish mutually agreed upon clear jurisdictional responsibilities with other neighboring agencies that are likely to respond to a critical incident on school property. The MOUs should account for not only routine criminal activity, but also critical incidents. The MOU should address the issue of unified command, in addition to incident command, and account for the capacity and capabilities of the respective agencies. (Recommendation 2.1)
- Law enforcement, first responders, emergency management, and other municipal government agencies should coordinate with school districts to conduct multiagency preparedness exercises on at least an annual basis. Exercises should operate in accordance with the state and local regulations regarding active threat exercises. The exercises should be incorporated into the emergency operations plans and Campus Safety Plans. (Recommendation 3.1)
- Communities should adopt a multidisciplinary approach to school safety that includes school police, law enforcement, school officials, mental health professionals, and other community stakeholders. It is especially important that all voices in the school community be heard, including faculty, staff, administrators, counselors, nurses, resource officers, parents, and

students. Every stakeholder must feel empowered to play a role in reducing fear and raising the level of safety in and around schools. Each campus should establish and train school safety committees that will meet at least monthly for this purpose. (Recommendation 4.2)

- School districts should invest in upgrading or replacing all doors (or locks) throughout its campuses to remedy this issue, so that doors can be locked from the inside. (Recommendation 9.1)
- School districts should implement universal access boxes. A universal access box refers to a locked box that contains master keys, located near the entry points of school buildings, that can be accessed by authorized emergency first responders and school district staff. (Recommendation 10.1)
- School districts should ensure that emergency alert systems are well-understood by all staff. In the case of UCISD, district leadership should issue a district-wide clarification on the use of PA systems in conjunction with Raptor emergency alerts. (Recommendation 11.1)

## Chapter 8. Pre-Incident Planning and Preparation

Pre-incident planning is crucial in preparing for and responding to mass violence incidents, as it enables agencies and organizations to develop strategies and procedures to respond quickly and effectively to such incidents. The planning process involves identifying potential risks and hazards, assessing the likelihood and potential impact of incidents, and creating plans and procedures to respond to them. When a mass violence incident occurs, a community's response is not limited to one agency, but falls to multidisciplinary stakeholders, including law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, hospitals, victim service providers, prosecutors, emergency management, government and civic leaders, media, businesses, and individual community members. The planning process—coordinating routinely among all relevant stakeholders, developing agreements, and conducting multidisciplinary trainings, exercises, and drills—is foundational, as are relationship- and trust-building.

Most failures in response can be traced back to failures in pre-incident planning and preparation, and this is true of the mass casualty incident at Robb Elementary School. “Chapter 8. Pre-Incident Planning and Preparation” describes the policies and procedures, training, mutual aid agreements, and other formal coordination efforts in Uvalde prior to May 24, 2022, and explains how those pre-incident processes impacted the response at Robb Elementary School.

### Selected Observations

*To see the full list of Observations, see “Chapter 8. Pre-Incident Planning and Preparation.”*

- Responding agencies lacked adequate related policies and, in most cases, any policy on responding to active attackers. (Observation 1)
- The Uvalde emergency operations center (EOC) developed an adequate emergency management plan. However, not all the relevant agencies and organizations actively participated in the process, drills, and exercises which ultimately contributed to a failed emergency response on May 24, 2022. (Observation 2)

- The MOU between UPD and UCISD PD that was active the day of the incident failed to adequately outline the expectations and authorities for a response to a mass violence event. The agencies failed to exercise the MOU, nor cross-train in preparation for a critical incident. (Observation 3)
- Responding agencies had minimal exposure to incident command system (ICS)/National Incident Management Systems (NIMS). Of those serving in top leadership positions within the primary responding agencies, only UCISD PD Chief Arredondo and the TXDPS regional director had taken training in ICS/NIMS. (Observation 6)
- Responding officers had levels of active shooter training that varied in terms of their length of time and quality, leading to failures in operationalizing the training. (Observation 7)
- Personnel from responding agencies rarely trained and exercised in a multiagency environment. (Observation 8)

### Selected Recommendations

*To see the full list of Recommendations, see “Chapter 8. Pre-Incident Planning and Preparation.”*

- Every agency must have a clear and concise policy on responding to active attacker situations. (Recommendation 1.1)
- Agencies should regularly review after-action reviews (AAR) with other regional agencies to plan as a region for a coordinated and collaborative response to possible similar events. (Recommendation 1.2)
- Agencies should consider obtaining state- or national-level accreditation to adopt and maintain standardized policies and procedures. This process also ensures accountability and transparency that can enhance confidence and trust in law enforcement among the communities they serve. (Recommendation 1.3)
- Regional public safety partners should plan, train, and exercise unified command for complex incidents. This includes federal, state, and local law enforcement, fire, EMS, and emergency management as well as other governmental and non-governmental agencies that would respond to a critical incident. (Recommendation 2.9)
- Elected officials should establish a Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) Group to provide policy guidance to incident personnel and support resource prioritization and allocation. Typically, these groups are made up of government agency or private sector executives and administrators whose organizations are either impacted by, or provide resources to, an incident. MAC Groups enable decision-making among senior officials and executives, and delegate command authority to the incident commander to cooperatively define the response and recovery mission and strategic direction. Additionally, MAC Groups identify operational priorities and communicate those objectives to the Emergency Operations Center and the pertinent functions of the Incident command system and the joint information center. (Recommendation 2.11)

- Interagency training, drills, and exercises help to build relationships at the front-line officer level and, if attended by law enforcement supervisors, can further strengthen relationships and the efficacy of a multiagency response to a mass casualty incident. Though policies may differ slightly among agencies, overarching commonalities are the same in an active attacker incident. (Recommendation 8.1)
  - Each PIO should draft a crisis communication plan and practice it at least four times a year with smaller events. This will help identify problem areas and solutions and ensure everyone is familiar with the plan and knows their role instead of trying to figure that out during a crisis. (Recommendation 12.2)
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We hope the observations and recommendations in this report will improve the preparation and response by those law enforcement agencies assessed during this review, as well as other law enforcement agencies throughout the country. We also provide this independent review of what transpired as a measure of dedication not only to those who lost their lives on May 24, but also to the surviving victims, family members, and others deeply and forever affected by this tragedy.

# Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
AAR	after action review
BORSTAR	Border Patrol Search, Trauma, and Rescue
BORTAC	Border Patrol Tactical Unit
BWC	body-worn camera
CBP	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
CCTV	closed-circuit television
CIR	Critical Incident Review
COPS Office	Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
DOJ	U.S. Department of Justice
FOS	first on scene
IACP	International Association of Chiefs of Police
ICP	incident command post
ICS	Incident Command System
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
MAC Group	Multiagency Coordination Group
MOA	memorandum of agreement
MOU	memorandum of understanding
PIO	public information officer
SWAT	special weapons and tactics
TXDPS	Texas Department of Public Safety
UCISD	Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District
UCISD PD	Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District Police Department
UCSO	Uvalde County Sheriff's Office
UPD	Uvalde Police Department



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U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services  
145 N Street NE  
Washington, DC 20530

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