



# QuEd up for Education

People and programs impacting our QCSD community

November 2, 2018

## Students receive ALICE counter training

*SRO Lee: "We don't want them to be sitting ducks."*

By Gary Weckselblatt

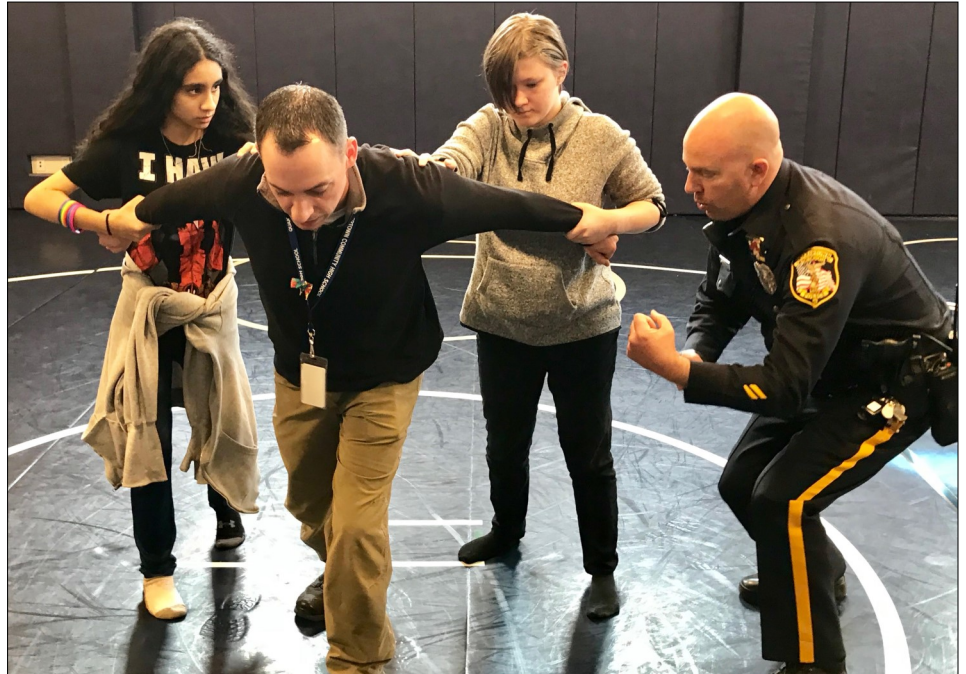
A sergeant in the Marine Corps Infantry with deployments to the Middle East and Africa, Sean Burke never thought he'd be using any of that training as a high school social studies teacher in the Quakertown Community School District.

"I didn't expect I'd be instructing students on stuff like this, the idea of force protection in the schools," Mr. Burke said after a recent ALICE counter training session. The district adopted ALICE training three years ago, in the summer of 2018. ALICE stands for Alert, Lock-down, Inform, Counter, Evacuate.

The ALICE philosophy is to use technology and information in a way that staff and students can make informed decisions in a crisis, remove as many people as possible from the danger zone, and provide realistic training so those involved in a crisis have a better chance of surviving. Students in each grade receive some form of training.

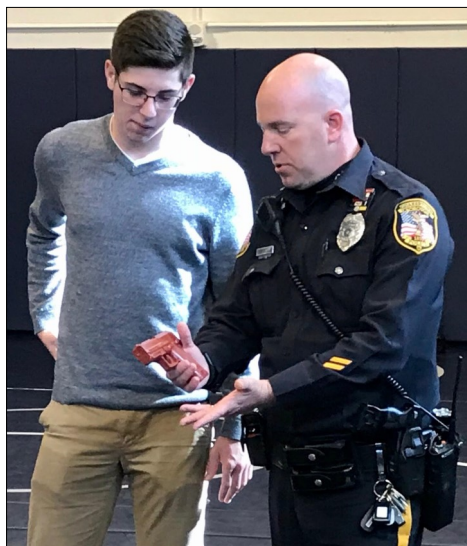
About two dozen students have signed up for training during their PRIDE period with Mr. Burke and School Resource Officer Bob Lee. The training takes place about every two weeks in the wrestling room, which has mats wall-to-wall. Props include tennis balls and two fake red guns -- a handgun and assault rifle. The adults talk to the students about the weapons, and allow them to hold them.

Both Officer Lee and Mr. Burke talk to students about different strategies to protect themselves and their classmates should an armed threat enter the school. "There's a lot of thinking outside the box," Officer Lee said. "We don't want them to be sitting ducks. There's a different game plan."



Students are taught ways to defend themselves against an armed threat.

Using himself as a prop, Mr. Burke shows students how to hold his arms and legs to take him down. They've also used tennis balls to show how an



School Resource Officer Bob Lee shows a fake handgun to a student.

armed intruder -- on separate occasions played by Officer Lee and a student -- can be distracted.

Recent back-to-back sessions had nine and 11 students. "With smaller groups it's a high level of training," Mr. Burke said. "There's been a core group of kids interested, and it's starting to expand out. As we give more classes, we'll get into the escape and evade. We want them to know the best course of action for their situation."

"We want to help students reduce their own fears and build confidence," Officer Lee said. "We'll be getting into more specifics about protecting ourselves and countering the bad guy. Each week we elevate the process a little more."

Gary Weckselblatt, QCSD Director of Communications, writes about the people and the programs that impact the Quakertown Community School District. He can be reached at 215-529-2028 or [gweckselblatt@qcscd.org](mailto:gweckselblatt@qcscd.org).



