



# Keeping School Children Safe: A Priority

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*Educators Dialogue With Public Safety and Security Professionals at Gardner-Webb University*

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES, October 18, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- School personnel are charged with keeping millions of children safe during the school day. To assist regional school systems in developing active shooter response plans, [Gardner-Webb University](#) partnered with Atrium Health (Charlotte, N.C.), Charlotte Fire Department, [Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department](#) and the [Department of Homeland Security](#) to provide a free forum. Held recently at the GWU Charlotte Center, "Protecting Our K-12 Students" gave principals, teachers, counselors and administrators the opportunity to hear the latest research and dialogue with public safety and security professionals.

The keynote speaker was Bryan Warren, corporate security director with Atrium Health and a consultant to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Warren received his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from GWU in 2012. He also holds a Master of Business Administration and has over 29 years of healthcare security experience.

He presented findings from the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center, which examined 28 mass shooting incidents in 2017. These attacks were acts of workplace violence, domestic violence, school-based violence or terrorism. "Similar themes were observed in the backgrounds of the perpetrators," Warren noted. "Over three-quarters of perpetrators made concerning communications and/or elicited concern from others prior to carrying out their attacks."

After Warren's remarks, a panel featuring Maj. Steven Brochu of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, Chief Kent Davis of the Charlotte Fire Department and District Commander Wilfred Horrach of the Department of Homeland Security, answered questions related to trainings, drills, mental health awareness, and communication. The discussion was moderated by David Rhew of the N.C. Public Transportation Association.

Those in attendance were representatives from Cleveland County (N.C.) Schools, Pinnacle Classical Academy (Shelby, N.C.), Isothermal Community College (Spindale, N.C.), East Albemarle (N.C.) Elementary, Carolina Day School (Asheville, N.C.), Gaston County (N.C.) Schools, Alexander County (N.C.) Schools, Trinity Christian School (Rutherfordton, N.C.), and British International School and Northside Christian Academy (Charlotte).

Robert Brown, headmaster at Pinnacle, appreciated the opportunity to receive the latest data and analysis. "It was incredible to hear professionals explain the step-by-step process—what they are seeing and how you train your staff," Brown observed, "and to have it mesh with what we have been doing."

Jackie Lalor, school nurse and director of operations at Carolina Day School, agreed. "One of the things that has been helpful for me is the reinforcement of all the research I've been doing the past year, and the way that we are adapting and changing our crisis response procedures based on the newest information," she shared.

The program is one of several informative and educational events hosted each year by Gardner-Webb and community partners. The presentations feature a variety of topics, including business, healthcare, religion, history, the arts and scholarly research.

"We are honored to provide a forum for school leaders to collaborate with members of local and government agencies in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County to enhance student safety," shared Dr. Catherine Burr, associate provost for Adult and Distance Education, who helped coordinate the program. "Our partnership with expert panelists enhanced the discussion focused on educational safety in our community."

Gardner-Webb University and community partners regularly host a variety of programs for the community. Located in the North Carolina foothills, the University is a place where Christian compassion meets critical thinking. A private, Christian, liberal arts university, Gardner-Webb emphasizes a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics to prepare students to become effective servant-leaders within the global community. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.

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