

## What are Options-Based Responses?

- Options-Based Responses is best practices guidance for schools in the event of an active-shooter situation on campus. It's based on a national standard for school safety on active-shooter preparedness and response that was endorsed by federal agencies in 2013.
- At its core are the options "run, hide, or fight," which means:
  - If you can do so safely, run to a safe location.
  - If you can't run, hide or lockdown in a secure location and barricade.
  - If you have no safer option, use violent force to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter.
- The core focus of Options-Based Responses is training the **adults** on campus to make these decisions. It **does not** mean training your children to fight an armed intruder.

## How is this different from what schools do now?

- Since the attack at Columbine High School in 1999, school officials have had one option in the event of an active-shooter situation: lockdown and wait for rescue. This is called a single-option strategy.
- What's new is that school officials have more response options in addition to lockdown in the unlikely event of an active shooter on campus.
- The adults on your child's campus will be trained and equipped to choose the response option that best protects students.

## Why the change?

- Your child's safety is our top priority, and is a shared responsibility.
- While schools are among the safest places for children, we wanted to ensure that we are equipped with the best information and training in the event of an emergency situation involving an armed intruder.
- Over time, law enforcement experts have found that lockdown does not offer sufficient protection in every situation.
- Lockdown, with barricading, is still the cornerstone response to active shooters.
- Options-Based Responses ensures the best guidance for incorporating "run, hide, or fight" in our school's safety plans.
- Research and experience show that options – active responses – in addition to lockdown save lives.
- By implementing positive changes based on the best research and top law enforcement minds, we are further ensuring the safety of our students.

## What does this mean for my child?

- Your children likely won't see much of a difference. Students will continue to do what they do now in any situation: Follow the direction of their teachers, whether it's in a drill or during a real or suspected incident.

- Much like a fire drill, employees and students will learn how to safely evacuate a building. Drills may evolve into “lockdown-plus,” which would include practicing lockdown and evacuation, or discussing options like barricading.

### **How was this decided?**

- These best practices were established after thorough, thoughtful discussion and research among education and law enforcement leaders in your community.
- The San Diego County Office of Education led a workgroup with representatives from school districts and law enforcement agencies around the county to study the federal recommendations of “run, hide, or fight” and how best to apply them in schools.
- This work was based on research and guidance from federal experts in law enforcement, education, and emergency management.
- The San Diego County Police Chiefs’ and Sheriff’s Association formally endorsed the results of this workgroup – the use of an options-based approach for schools in active-shooter situations.