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**DELCO SCHOOL OFFICIALS GET ‘LESSONS LEARNED’
FROM VIRGINIA TECH INCIDENT OF VIOLENCE**
2010 Safe Schools Summit focuses on students and mental health issues

School violence, and specifically lessons learned from the 2007 shooting at Virginia Tech university, was the focus of the 2010 Safe Schools Summit, held Friday, Jan. 22, at the Drexelbrook Conference Center in Drexel Hill.

Lt. Timothy Lyon of the Virginia State Police traveled to Delaware County to provide an overview of the Virginia Tech shooting, including events that led up to the shooting, the response of school leadership and law enforcement, and what has been learned from the investigation.

Lt. Lyon, the incident commander during the 2007 incident, presented very sensitive material that can serve to help local community partners in preventing or interrupting this type of tragedy from occurring on a local campus.

District Attorney G. Michael Green sponsored the Summit, which was attended by 200 representatives from local law enforcement agencies, public and Archdiocesan schools, and colleges and universities in the county. Safe Schools Summits have been held since 1998 and have focused on issues such as bullying, teen suicide prevention, and response to emergencies.

District Attorney Green and County Council Chairman John J. Whelan both stressed the importance of the Safe School Summits in keeping students safe from violence in school settings.

They were joined Friday by FBI Special Agent John J. Brosnan, the FBI agent for Delaware and Chester counties whose office is in Newtown Square.

“The goal of the Safe Schools Summit is to foster a relationship between law enforcement and the education community to ensure the safety of children and young people attending schools in Delaware County,” District Attorney Green said. “This year, the Summit topics are lessons learned from the Virginia Tech shooting and resources for school leaders dealing with students with mental health issues.”

(more)

(Safe Schools continued)

Council Chairman Whelan said families, including his own, want to believe that their children are safe when they go to school, but “we are all too aware that we live in a world where violence can happen anytime, even in our schools.”

“We want to let people know about the resources that are available to help in a potential mental health crisis that involves a young person,” Chairman Whelan said. “Our goal is to be proactive, not reactive. We want to help prevent a crisis or manage a situation before a tragedy takes place.”

The 2010 Summit was attended by representatives from all school districts and the 11 colleges and universities in Delaware County, along with several officials from nearby counties.

During the afternoon session, representatives from private and public agencies discussed procedures for dealing with emotionally disturbed students charged with a crime.

Eileen Courtney, the Supervising Liaison Prosecutor, presented a panel discussion comprised of court officers from the District Attorney’s Office, defense attorneys, probation officers and social workers. The panelists details how their agencies work and what opportunities exist to prevent a tragedy from happening.

“One of the great things about the Safe School Summits is that everyone gets a chance to meet face-to-face – school administrators, police, social workers and members of the District Attorney’s Office. When a crisis does happen, we’re already part of a team,” Whelan said.



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KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE FROM VIOLENCE
2010 Safe Schools Summit

Lt. Timothy Lyon, (left) the incident commander from the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting, joined Delaware County District Attorney G. Michael Green and County Council Chairman Jack Whelan at the 2010 Safe Schools Summit, which focused on “lessons learned” that lead to the prevention of tragic incidents like the Virginia Tech tragedy. The Safe Schools Summit was held Jan. 22 at the Drexelbrook Conference Center and was attended by representatives from law enforcement and all schools, colleges and universities in the county.