



## Private-school security conference sells out fast

By:

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WILTON, Conn.—The Connecticut Association of Independent Schools organized a security summit within 48 hours of last month's deadly school shootings in Newton, Conn., and the conference sold out within 48 hours of being advertised.

More than 225 registrants signed up for the conference, which will be held Thursday, Jan. 24. More had to be turned away due to the venue's space limitations, said Doug Lyons, executive director of CAIS. Further workshops will be planned for those who couldn't attend, he said.

"In the aftermath of a school tragedy, it's important for schools to renew their commitments to taking appropriate steps to ensure community safety," Lyons said. "Our 100 member schools have questions and concerns."

Lyons, who used to be a public school superintendent, said independent schools "are particularly responsible and concerned" about school safety, as are the students' parents. An independent survey conducted a few years ago showed that safety was the primary reason parents elected to send their children to private schools, he said.

"At every one of my schools, safety is the top priority," he said.

Topics at the summit will include emergency planning, threat assessment and crisis communication at day schools and boarding schools. Speakers will be Alyssa Keehan, senior risk counsel and an expert on threat assessment, United Educators; Bo Mitchell, former Wilton, Conn., police commissioner, now president of 911 Consulting; Jane Hulbert, crisis communications consultant to the National Association of Independent Schools and founder of The Jane Group; and Myra McGovern, senior director of publication information for NAIS.

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