

NEWS

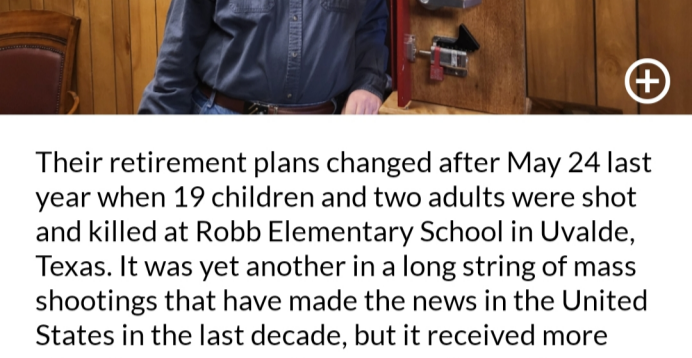
# Littleton company seeks to implement in-school active shooter protection systems in Mass.

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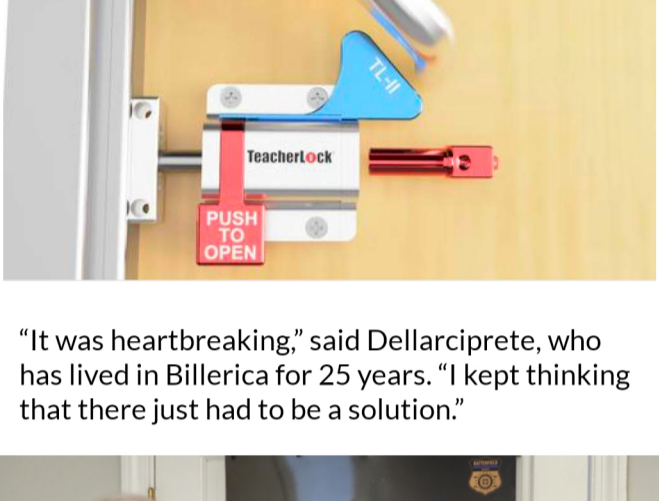
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LITTLETON — Safety in Seconds CEO Dick Dellarciprete and Chief Financial Officer Robert Carson were each retired from their careers as of early last year.

Dellarciprete, of Billerica, was in sales and marketing representing products like TiVo, and had once served on Billerica's Commission on Disabilities. Carson, of Scituate, was a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve as a Medical Service Officer, in which he served for 27 years.



Their retirement plans changed after May 24 last year when 19 children and two adults were shot and killed at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. It was yet another in a long string of mass shootings that have made the news in the United States in the last decade, but it received more attention because of how young the victims were and for the heavily criticized police response to the shooting.



"It was heartbreaking," said Dellarciprete, who has lived in Billerica for 25 years. "I kept thinking that there just had to be a solution."



The issue was forced back into the limelight again late last month when a shooter gained access to the Covenant School in Nashville, Tennessee, and killed three children and three adults.

Solutions to the mass shooting problem have been debated ad nauseum for more than a decade, mostly centering on the ideas of gun control or mental health care reform. Until a solution can be implemented that stops the shootings from happening at all, solutions that limit the loss of life when a shooting does occur are needed, Dellarciprete said, which is where Safety in Seconds comes in.

Dellarciprete began researching what types of physical protection solutions existed already, and found that several companies were each offering individual products like specialized door locks and ballistic barriers for doors and hallways, but the products were each segmented to different companies, and each only provided partial protection on their own.

"Each of them are trying to sell these to different school systems, but they only solve a piece of the puzzle, not the whole problem," said Dellarciprete.

So, Dellarciprete and Carson brought three companies — Battenfield Security, Ballistic Barrier Solutions and TeacherLock — together to try to sell their respective products to school systems as a full security package. Battenfield Security develops ballistic door barriers that can be deployed when a shooter is detected. Ballistic Barrier Solutions makes deployable ballistic curtains that can roll down from a ceiling to block doors, hallways and windows. TeacherLock develops bulletproof locks that can easily be switched on and keep a door shut to a shooter.

"With these products we could lock down a school within 30 seconds of the alarm going off," said Dellarciprete. "If our products were in place in Nashville, nobody would have died."

The next step after bringing these three companies together, Dellarciprete said, was to market the products to school systems, which they found for the most part did not have the funds to implement these systems, as each product is fairly expensive. A TeacherLock for a single door can cost more than \$300, and one door barricade from Battenfield Security can cost at least \$1,500.

Carson noted how mass shootings, particularly ones that happen in schools, can have lasting impacts for survivors years later.

"On Friday I had lunch with a close friend of ours who lives in Newtown, Connecticut. Their granddaughter was in Sandy Hook Elementary School at the time of the shooting [in 2012]," said Carson. "The conversation was still so painful even all these years later. These kids all still have the scars, and when Nashville happened these scars were regenerated."

These mass shootings are happening so often that now, Carson said, it is difficult to remember ones that happened even just in 2023. Monday marked the nation's 15th mass killing this year, when a shooter in Louisville, Kentucky, [killed at least four people and wounded several others](#) inside a bank before being killed by police.

"Does anyone even remember the shooting at Michigan State? They start to kind of fade away," said Carson, referring to the shooting at Michigan State University Feb. 13 that left three students dead.

Because individual school districts can have difficulty affording these sorts of systems, Carson said, they are trying to see if it would make more sense to approach it at the state level, and to try to secure state and federal funding to implement these sorts of products in districts at a larger scale.

"There isn't an appetite for gun control, and there isn't enough funding for mental health services. So what is left? Protection," said Carson. "We are passionate about these kids, because all these schools thought it wouldn't happen to them, but it did."

Once they can start implementing their ballistic products in schools, Dellarciprete and Carson said they want to expand further to put them in government buildings, courthouses, post offices and other locations that may be the target of a mass shooter.

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