

Uvalde DOJ Report Executive Summary: Key Takeaways

The most significant failure was that responding officers should have immediately recognized the incident as an active shooter situation.

Using the resources and equipment at hand they should have pushed forward immediately and continuously toward the threat until entry was made into the classroom and the threat was eliminated. These efforts must be undertaken by the first on scene, regardless of equipment and personnel available.

- Several of the first officers on scene initially acted to try to engage the subject and moved quickly toward classrooms 111/112 within minutes of arriving.
- Once they retreated after being met with gunfire, the law enforcement responders, including Chief Arredondo—the de facto on-scene incident commander—began treating the incident as a barricaded subject scenario and not as an active shooter situation.
- There was a 77-minute gap between when officers first arrived and when they killed the subject.

As more law enforcement resources arrived, **first responders on the scene, including those with specific leadership responsibilities, did not coordinate immediate entry into the classrooms, running counter to generally accepted practices for active shooter response to immediately engage the subject to further save lives.**

- **In addition to failing to appreciate the active shooter nature of the situation, responders also failed to act, even after hearing more gunshots at 12:21pm.**

There were also failures in leadership, command, and coordination. None of the LE leaders established an incident command structure to provide timely direction, control, and coordination.

Communications difficulties exacerbated these problems.

- Per UCISD policies, Chief Arredondo was the on-scene incident commander, but he lacked a radio, having discarded his radios during his arrival.
- On multiple occasions, Arredondo directed officers intending to gain entry into the classrooms to stop, determining that other victims should first be removed from nearby classrooms.

These failures were likely influenced by policy and training deficiencies.

- For example, recent training that UCISD PD provided seemed to suggest, inappropriately, that an active shooter situation can transition into a hostage or barricaded subject situation. And while many of the FOS had sufficient active shooter and incident command training, other key FOS responders lacked any active shooter training or incident command training.
- The majority of the officers from different law enforcement agencies had never trained together,
- The lack of pre-planning hampered even well-prepared agencies from functioning at their best.

UCISD = Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District

May 24, 2022 Timeline – Robb Elementary School (Uvalde, Texas)

11:33am: The subject entered Robb Elementary School with an AR-15 rifle. He immediately started shooting and within a minute, entered classrooms 111 and 112, connected via an interior door.

11:36am: Within 3 minutes, 11 law enforcement officers from the Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District (UCISD) and Uvalde Police Departments (UPD) arrived inside the school.

- Hearing continued gunfire, five responding LE ran toward classrooms 111/112. The other six LE did not advance down the hallway.
- One of the officers said to “line up to make entry” and within seconds, shots were fired from inside one of the rooms. Two officers were hit with shrapnel, and all retreated to positions of cover.
- After three attempts to approach the classrooms, the focus of the responders changed to evacuating other classrooms, attempting to negotiate, and requesting more equipment.

With this shift, responders then repeatedly described the subject over the radio as “barricaded.”

11:40am: 911 dispatch confirmed class was in session and reported receiving calls from victims.

- Chief Arredondo directed officers several times to delay making entry into classrooms 111/112.
- At several points, UCISD PD Chief Arredondo also attempted to negotiate with the subject.
- Others indicated that they were waiting for a tactical team to arrive.
- Chief Arredondo discarded his radios and communicated verbally or via cell phone throughout.
- Overwhelming numbers of law enforcement from different agencies self-deployed to the school.
- Arriving LE did not receive updates on the situation or direction on how to support the response.
- Many arriving officers incorrectly believed that the subject had already been killed.
- The lack of clear communication and command structure made coordination difficult.
- Concerned families were also arriving at the school.
- Incorrect and conflicting information was also being shared on social media with the UCISD posting that all students and staff were safe in the building.

12:21pm: (48 minutes after the subject entered the school) The subject fired four additional shots inside classrooms 111/112. Officers again did not make entry and presumed the classroom doors were locked.

12:36pm: Officers find a second set of keys and use them to open the janitor’s closet. They then wait to determine whether a sniper and a drone could eliminate the subject through the window.

12:48pm: (27 minutes after hearing multiple gunshots inside classrooms 111 and 112, and 75 minutes after first responders first entered Robb Elementary), officers opened the door to room 111, and a team composed of BORTAC members, a BORSTAR, and deputies from two local sheriffs’ offices entered the rooms, and officers killed the subject when he emerged shooting from a closet.

12:50pm: The subject was killed **77 minutes after the first officers entered the school** and after 45 rounds were fired by the shooter in the presence of officers.

There were 587 children, teachers and staff at the school. **19 children and 2 staff were killed.**

At least 17 survivors were physically injured. There was never a completely accurate injury count.