BUILDING A 911 DISPATCHER PIPELINE WITH LOCAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

CommsCoach
by GovWorx

Introduction

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Public safety agencies across the United States face an ongoing challenge: staffing and retaining qualified 911 emergency communications centers (ECCs). As the first point of contact in emergencies, telecommunicators play a critical role in public safety operations. Most public safety roles have a defined career path, but emergency communications is often overlooked as a career path and the hiring pipelines are not well established.

This guide will help agencies solve this challenge by developing partnerships between 911 centers and local educational institutions. By collaborating with high schools and community colleges, agencies can create training programs that introduce students to the profession, equip them with foundational skills and prepare them for entry into the emergency communications workforce.

This approach not only helps secure the future of 911 operations but also offers students meaningful, career-oriented opportunities in public service.

Step 1: Identifying Potential Educational Partners

A strong dispatcher pipeline begins with identifying schools and colleges that are well-positioned to implement or integrate a public safety curriculum.

Agencies should look for:

- High schools offering career and technical education (CTE) or magnet programs
- Community colleges with existing coursework in public safety, emergency management, or criminal justice
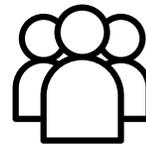-

It is essential to engage key stakeholders—principals, CTE coordinators, program directors, and academic advisors—who can evaluate the alignment between your agency's goals and their educational mission.

Action Items

Develop a list of local high schools and collegest.

Identify existing public safety-related programs and contacts

Step 2: Initiating Contact with Educational Institutions

Once prospective partners have been identified, the next step is to initiate contact.

Agencies should communicate the mutual benefits of the program clearly, emphasizing:
- Career opportunities for students in a high-demand, mission-driven field
- Community impact through strengthened public safety readiness
- Real-world learning experiences that enhance student engagement and employability

A tailored introductory email or letter of intent is a recommended first step in securing interest and arranging initial meetings.

We have included a sample page next!

Action Items
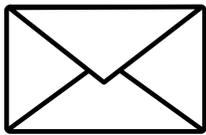
Draft a clear, compelling outreach message

Schedule one-on-one meetings with school decision-makers

Sample Outreach Message

Subject: Building a Stronger Community: Introducing a 911 Dispatcher Training Initiative

Dear [Recipient's Name],

My name is [Your Name], and I represent [Your Agency Name]. We're excited to share a new initiative designed to build a sustainable talent pipeline for 9-1-1 dispatch centers by collaborating with local high schools and community colleges. Inspired by successful programs such as the Veterans Tribute Career and Technical Academy in Las Vegas, our goal is to offer students meaningful career pathways while addressing the critical workforce needs of our community.

We believe your institution would be an excellent partner in this endeavor. By working together, we can:
- Provide students with direct access to practical, career-oriented training
- Equip students with essential skills through innovative AI-driven simulations and hands-on experience
- Strengthen community safety and workforce readiness

We would love the opportunity to discuss this initiative further and explore how our collaboration can benefit your students and the broader community. Our agency can even provide the trainers as well as recommendations for tools that can support the training in your classrooms.

Could we schedule a meeting to discuss this initiative in more detail? Please let me know your availability, and we can set up a convenient time to connect.

Thank you for considering this partnership. I look forward to your response.

Warm regards,
[Your Name]
 [Your Title]
 [Your Agency Name]
 [Contact Information]

Step 3: Engaging Other Public Safety Agencies

Expanding involvement to include neighboring public safety agencies can enrich the program and enhance collaboration.

Partners might include:
- Public safety answering points (PSAPs) and emergency communications centers (ECCs)
- Police, fire, and EMS agencies

Working together, agencies can share resources, co-develop training materials, and create a unified message for engaging educational partners.

Action Items

PLAN

Organize an inter-agency planning session

Create a joint proposal to present to schools

Step 4: Structuring the Curriculum

The heart of the program lies in its curriculum. It should combine theoretical knowledge with practical skills relevant to emergency communications.

Core components may include:
- Emergency call-taking and communication protocols
- Crisis decision-making and stress management
- Technical tools (CAD systems, radio operations, telephony)
- Teamwork and customer service skills

Agencies can collaborate with educational staff to co-design or adapt existing curricula.

BX3 Public Safety can help. They have sample curriculum that can be used as a foundation that can be purchased.
lori@bx3publicsafety.com

Action Items

| Collaborate with educators to draft a comprehensive course syllabus | Explore certification or accreditation pathways |

Step 5: Preparing for Instructional Materials & Student Exposure to ECC Environments

Before students participate in sit-alongs, simulations, or access audio/video materials, it's essential that both ECCs and educational institutions work collaboratively to ensure:

- Parental/guardian notification and consent
- Instruction on confidentiality, HIPAA, and sensitivity to live emergency communications
- Alignment with district and ECC policies
- Pre-clearance for access to sensitive systems or environments (CJIS compliance, background checks if required)
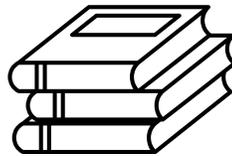
Students should receive foundational instruction in ethics, confidentiality, and the legal standards related to protected information prior to any observational activity in a live environment. This ensures both student preparedness and ECC integrity.

Action Items

Work with school administration to determine required permissions and parental notifications	Establish classroom sessions covering HIPAA, confidentiality, and ethical behavior.	Coordinate with ECCs on any background or ID verification requirements for students.

Sample Outreach Letter for Parent/Guardian Notification

NOTE: The following sample letter is a template to guide your communication. It must be reviewed and approved by your educational institution and ECC to ensure it complies with all school and agency policies.

Sample Letter:

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I'm excited to inform you about an upcoming opportunity your student will have as part of their Emergency Telecommunications education. On [DATE], [STUDENT NAME] will have the chance to participate in a sit-along experience at [ECC AGENCY NAME], observing professional 9-1-1 calltakers and dispatchers in action.

This opportunity will take place outside of school hours and students will be supervised in coordination with the agency staff. While this is a valuable and rewarding experience, it's important to note that students may hear or observe real-time emergency calls that could involve high-stress or sensitive situations.

In preparation, we have reviewed stress management techniques and thoroughly covered confidentiality, ethics, and HIPAA regulations in class. However, if your student is affected by any part of this experience, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or to our school's counseling office for support.

We are proud to offer this experience as a way to connect classroom learning with real-world application and to help students determine if this career path is right for them.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

[Instructor Name]
[School or Program Name]
[Contact Info]

Step 6: Leveraging AI Simulations for Training

Integrating simulation technology can significantly enhance student readiness by offering realistic training environments.

AI-powered platforms, such as CommsCoach, provide:
- Real-time emergency call scenarios
- Targeted feedback and performance metrics
- Repetitive practice for skill mastery

These tools allow for immersive learning without requiring full-time instructor supervision, reducing training costs and increasing student confidence.

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Action Items

Contact vendors for demos or pricing proposals

Develop a plan to integrate simulations into coursework

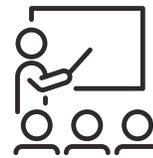# Step 7: Staffing the Program

ECCs can provide instructional support by engaging their own personnel. Instructors with field experience bring authenticity and expertise to the classroom, bridging the gap between theory and practice.

Action Items

Identify dispatchers interested in teaching or mentoring

Provide them with basic instructional training and support
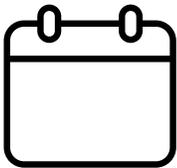
Step 8: Recruiting Students

Generating student interest is key to building a sustainable pipeline. Awareness campaigns and community outreach efforts should highlight:

- The critical role of dispatchers in public safety
- Career benefits, including job stability and public service impact
- Success stories from former students or dispatchers

Action Items

Schedule and organize recruitment events.

Distribute marketing materials customized for students and families

Step 9: Sharing Simulation Costs

Simulation software and training tools can be costly, but funding options are available.

Agencies and schools can:
- Share costs through licensing agreements or resource pooling
- Negotiate educational discounts with vendors
- Pursue grants and sponsorships from public and private sources

Action Items

Formalize a cost-sharing structure

Research and apply for available funding sources

Step 10: Launching and Evaluating the Program

Program launch should be accompanied by a commitment to ongoing evaluation.

Performance tracking and continuous feedback will help ensure:
- Students are achieving learning objectives
- Instructional methods are effective
- Partnerships remain productive and mutually beneficial

Action Items

Set up mechanisms for data collection and analysis

Host review meetings with all stakeholders
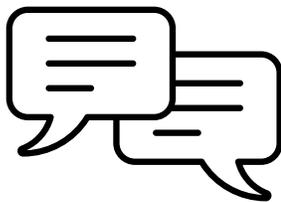
Step 11: Sustaining and Expanding the Program

For long-term success, agencies must invest in program continuity and expansion.

This includes:
- Ongoing recruitment of students and instructors
- Continuous curriculum updates based on industry trends
- Strong relationships with schools and public safety partners

Action Items

Maintain communication with program alumni and partners

Adapt and grow the program to serve a wider student base

Conclusion

In today's complex public safety environment, staffing 911 centers with competent, well-prepared professionals is more critical than ever

In today's complex public safety environment, staffing 911 centers with competent, well-prepared professionals is more critical than ever. By partnering with local educational institutions, agencies can take control of their workforce pipeline, provide students with valuable career opportunities, and strengthen the fabric of their communities.

This white paper offers a roadmap for building such partnerships from the ground up. The steps outlined are not only feasible—they are proven. With intentional effort and collaborative spirit, agencies can ensure their teams are staffed with the next generation of skilled, dedicated dispatchers.

For more information on curriculum development contact BX3 Public Safety Lori@bx3publicsafety.com

To learn more about how simulation technology, such as CommsCoach, can enhance your program and help develop future-ready dispatchers: