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Understanding your school security options

**The best defense in an emergency
is preparedness**

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The state of school security and emergency preparedness

More than a decade after the Columbine High School shootings, school security and emergency preparedness issues remain top priority for K-12 organizations. Schools of every size and structure have a host of options available today; from state-of-the-art networked systems encompassing multiple locations to high-security key systems that help maintain access control at the most basic level. Some strategies include everyday actions that can be implemented immediately at no or low cost, while others may require more long-term planning both in terms of logistics and budget.

Common strategies for improving physical security include:

- **Reduced school access.** Limit access into buildings to single entrances. Install monitoring systems with video surveillance systems. Retrofit older doors and locks with newer hardware and locking systems. Install electronic access control devices with card readers or other identification systems.
- **Visitor management systems.** Employ systems to identify and record visitors to schools. These may range from basic sign-in logs and visitor identification badges to advanced technologies that scan drivers' licenses, conduct background checks and produce visitor ID cards.
- **Surveillance cameras.** Equip the main entrance with surveillance cameras, speakers and electronic door openers to better monitor primary entrance points. Cameras can monitor entranceways, hallways, stairwells and other common areas, such as cafeterias and parking lots. Provide local law enforcement agencies with remote access to school cameras. Consider installing cameras on school buses to deter misbehavior and provide evidence of violators.
- **Communication enhancements.** Public address systems, two-way radios, and other communications devices can improve classroom-to-office communications and expedite verbal messages.

- **School design and remodeling.** Include security experts in the planning stages of a building renovation, remodeling or new construction. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design [CPTED] provides proven methods to reconfigure main entrances that funnel visitors to the main office, improve visibility and lines of sight in hallways, and enhance adult supervision capabilities.
- **School emergency plans.** Prepare a written crisis plan. Conduct lockdown, evacuation and shelter-in-place drills, as well as traditional fire and tornado drills. Create floor plans and mapping systems for use by first responders and emergency personnel. Develop threat assessment teams and protocols. Train staff and students on how to respond to different emergencies. Collaborate with law enforcement, fire and rescue, emergency medical services, emergency management agencies, mental health agencies and other community partners to improve emergency responses.

Learn more about protecting your students

For more information about school security, please contact a professional security consultant in your area by calling **888.758.9823** or fill out the **Contact Us** form on our website at allegion.com.

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