

## Beware of untested security “solutions”

As an architect, you know the type of material you choose can make a significant difference in quality, efficiency and overall look of a building. Likewise, the type of door hardware can greatly impact the level of security. Even worse, though, there are certain products or “solutions” that can put a building—and the people in it—at risk. This is particularly a concern in the education market as there is an increase in use of untested security and lockdown products.

A lot of these untested products are being installed on interior classroom doors and egress doors serving assembly spaces. Instead of providing protection, these products are actually hampering teachers and staff members’ ability to safeguard themselves and students. Considering that the greatest threat to school security involves student-on-student or student-on-teacher violence, there is an increasing concern that these products are detrimental to safe school efforts.

“Students and teachers are about 30,000 times more likely to experience a non-fatal violent assault or theft-related crime in school rather than a fatal active assailant,” says April Dalton-Noblitt, director of vertical marketing, Allegion. “It’s important to protect students and staff from a violent intruder, but schools must also protect them from more likely causes of harm. These include student-on-student or student-on-teacher violence or uncontrolled access to property.”

Below is a list of practices that should be avoided. Advise your education clients that any of these so-called “solutions” may actually place a student or staff member in harm’s way, instead of safeguarding them from danger.





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### Unsafe security practices

- Door hardware that forces an individual to step out of the room to lock the door, exposing that person to the intruder or conflict in the hallway.
- Hardware with “unrestricted ability” to lock or unlock the door. This lets anyone - including students - take control of an opening.
- Magnets or tape on the door to prevent latching. Not only is this a code violation if the door is fire-rated, but in lockdowns, one wants the door to latch without having to open the door first.
- Exterior doors that don't automatically close or can be left propped open, potentially preventing them from being in a ready position during an emergency lockdown.
- Security devices that are not permanently attached to the door, requiring staff to locate and attach the device in the midst of a lockdown emergency where seconds count and physical and emotional stress is extreme.
- Hardware that slows or prevents egress during an emergency situation.
- Devices that attach to the door closer arm to prevent the door from being opened. This is a violation of the egress codes.
- Floor bolts or other devices that obstruct the door and don't let it close.
- Any option that might be accessed or used by an unauthorized person acting with ill-intent. This could be a student, visitor or another staff member.

\* National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC; 2010.

[Click here for more information about creating safe schools](#) or [contact an Allegion Architectural Consultant](#) for assistance with your education building specification.

### About Allegion

Allegion (NYSE: ALLE) creates peace of mind by pioneering safety and security. As a \$2 billion provider of security solutions for homes and businesses, Allegion employs more than 8,000 people and sells products in more than 120 countries across the world. Allegion comprises 27 global brands, including strategic brands CISA®, Interflex®, LCN®, Schlage® and Von Duprin®. For more, visit [www.allegion.com](http://www.allegion.com).

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