Top 10 ways to keep your school building secure

Ensuring safety is job one

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A safe learning environment for any K-12 campus or district demands proper planning and support from all constituents. Every day actions can get you where you need to go and can make a big difference in your overall security. To help ensure the safety of your students, faculty, administrators and visitors to your school, here are 10 ways you can keep your buildings secure:

1. Assess risks annually
Campus/district constituents, including faculty, staff, police/security, administration and the community at large should be included when creating a security assessment team. Charge the group with tasks to identify strengths and weaknesses of your security program. Review your current security technology, as well as safety and security-related policies. Identify aspects of the security program that need improvement, then prioritize implementation of those needs.

2. Install or upgrade security cameras
Video surveillance systems and other security camera devices tie together video with access control. You can customize the system with pre-determined actions based on specific events to allow controlled access to buildings and campus environments.

3. Install access control equipment
With electronic access control, you can more easily manage entering and exiting while improving security and safety. In an emergency, exit devices provide a safe way out of all doors, with re-entrance controlled by card access or other credentials. A security management system helps eliminate the need for mechanical keys, and it can simplify access control management at all the buildings in your district. The system incorporates electronics, security integration and door hardware to improve overall security and safety.

4. Implement intelligent card procedures
Card access control solutions allow campus administrators to eliminate mechanical keying. Proximity cards, biometrics, bar codes, smart cards, or other credentials give authorized cardholders access when and where they need it. Access can be easily removed for anyone no longer employed by the school district.

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5. Limit entrances/exits to campus buildings

Today's demands for safety compel school security administrators to limit the number of entrances and exits available for use by visitors. By designating a single entrance to each building, you can better control security and safety. A combination of intrusion detection, access control and video surveillance provides the strongest protection for access points.

6. Implement visitor management procedures

Visitor management procedures can help to prevent access by unauthorized individuals to K-12 schools. Solutions include keeping doors locked during class hours and requiring all visitors to funnel through a central access point to prevent them from entering without notice. School administrators or security officers should visually inspect and interact with each visitor. You may implement a procedure to run background checks on all visitors or issue badges to identify visitors in the building. Other solutions call for registering visitors by their drivers' licenses or other forms of identification.

7. Install an IT infrastructure

An IT infrastructure allows you to integrate all the buildings in your district into a centralized network. Typically, security management systems include access control, video surveillance and door alarm monitoring on one platform. A district command control center allows security personnel to monitor all sites and gain more control over the security and safety of the campus or district.

8. Install access control devices to entrances/exits

Retrofit kits allow you to convert your mortise and cylindrical door closers and exit device applications to electric latch retraction systems. You can reap significant cost savings and eliminate the need to replace the entire device.

9. Improve communications

You can significantly improve support of your district's security efforts by sharing information with your campus/district constituents, including faculty, staff, police/security, administration and the community at large. Take regular steps to inform those within your organization and community of your efforts and why those efforts are important. For example, address security technology in new student orientations or when training faculty and staff.

10. Improve training

Regular training is essential to any security program. By clearly defining the role each school employee plays with regard to school safety, security and operations can contribute significantly to a successful security program.

Learn more about securing your school

For more information about securing your school building, 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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