

ISONAS™ Joins Forces With Advanced Wiring Solutions and Helps Improve Safety at Chicago Area School District; Implements Powerful Cloud-based Access Control Solution

With the uncertainty in today's world, most schools want to make one thing certain - that their security systems are keeping their staff and students safe. Many school districts across the nation are now investing in upgrades and expanding their existing security system infrastructure. Since most schools have had to adapt to the new normal and offer online classes, it's a perfect time to invest in security upgrades when staff and students are not on school grounds. Whether now or in the future, schools must be able to control who comes in and out of the building even with a few hundred students on campus or a few thousand. Cloud-based access control systems can offer schools the flexibility to control access remotely; which is needed now more than ever. When a major school district in the southwest suburb of Chicago was looking to control the flow of traffic during after-hour events, they wanted to find the right access control solution that could easily integrate with their fire alarm system and create one unified solution.



Security Challenges at Schools

With active shooter incidents on the rise over the years and the global pandemic creating havoc for schools, administrators and faculty are faced with an influx of challenges. From lockdowns to remote learning, schools need flexibility in their security solutions. Nobody knows this more than one Chicago-based premier low-voltage electrical contractor who handles structured cabling, security, access control, AV, and CCTV camera installations. [Advanced Wiring Solutions](#) has been in business for over 20 years, has worked with over 18 schools spanning across eight different districts and understands their specific needs. "Strict specifications need to be followed when it comes to helping schools become safer in these trying times," states Chris Beissmann, Senior Project Manager at Advanced Wiring Solutions. "We work closely with school administrators and IT Directors and understand their pain points and what types of solutions are out there to solve them."

Another big issue facing schools is controlling who can access the facility with keys. Schools find it extremely difficult to track who has keys to the buildings, and with employee turnover, it's imperative for administrators to collect keys of all prior staff members. "Having a cloud-based access control solution deployed eliminates the need for keys as staff can enter the building using ID badges that verifies their credentials to grant them access. This takes the burden off school administrators to collect and track physical keys from previous employees," says Beissmann.

The Windy City Gets A Lesson on Access Control

This large school district in a southwest suburb of Chicago recently identified the need to upgrade its access control system. With six buildings within the district, they wanted to be able to manage access at all buildings on one unified platform. The school district had three main priorities for the upgrade, which included controlling the flow of traffic during after-hour events, eliminating the need for keys to manually lock and unlock doors, and to finally have the ability to utilize remote access. Safety was a huge priority at the school district, which included keeping students and staff safe and secure in all six buildings. Without being able to control unauthorized visitors at all entrance ways, there was no way to effectively protect everyone district-wide.

The time had come to implement a new state-of-the-art access control solution that could easily expand on their existing system. Upon a strong recommendation from the school IT Director, ISONAS was awarded the project after the school put the project out for bid. ISONAS, a leading Colorado-based access control manufacturer of IP-based solutions and part of the Allegion family, works closely with its customers and offers best-in-class support and training. The school district believed in the power of the ISONAS Pure IP™ solution and knew it was the right cloud-based technology to overcome all their current challenges.

The project was on a tight timeframe and included installing 188 ISONAS RC-04 reader controllers in under three months on every access point within six buildings that made up the school district. "It's been a pleasure working with ISONAS from the onset of this project to completion," states Michael Sanfratello, President at Advanced Wiring Solutions. "From when we were in the bidding stage to deploying the access control system, ISONAS worked closely with the architects, engineers, and the school district to develop specifications for the design and installation in order to make it a perfect deployment."

In addition to the ISONAS hardware, the ISONAS Pure Access Cloud Software was deployed at the school district and provided them with remote access functionality. Pure Access, ISONAS's powerful software, is a cloud-based access control application that provides users the ability to manage their access control from anywhere at any time, on any device. During the installation of the ISONAS RC-04 reader controllers, Advanced Wiring Solutions was able to program each reader with a mobile phone or tablet through the cloud and easily test for functionality all in one trip. In addition, the ISONAS Pure Access 3.3 cloud-based application integrated seamlessly with the school's fire alarm system to release magnetic door holders in case of an emergency.

After installing the ISONAS reader controllers, the school successfully secured each entrance way and minimized the distribution of mechanical keys. The school district could now rest easy knowing that the power of the ISONAS access control solution was behind them to help track who entered exterior doorways in all buildings. In addition, the school district could now easily monitor all controlled doors remotely and set access schedules for regular school hours and after hours when special events and activities were taking place. Controlling the flow of traffic was important to them as certain areas were restricted to staff only.

The future of access control looks bright and continues to adapt with the ever-changing needs of schools across the nation. With cloud-based access control systems in place, remote lockdowns are made possible in emergency situations and daily access can be controlled effectively. Schools can now get a clearer picture of who is actually entering their grounds day and night, while not having to physically be on the premises. Moving forward, access control will continue to be an important part of a school's lesson plan and remain a top priority.

