

Case Study

Iowa Western Community College

With the help of Allegion™, the college developed an integrated security plan to regain control over its campuses

As students fill Iowa Western Community College this fall, the college will have peace of mind knowing that recent security enhancements are in place. Since its founding in 1966, the college has expanded to include a main campus in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and four satellite locations. The college enrolls nearly 6,000 students and offers on-campus housing for more 1,200 of them.

In 2016, Iowa Western decided to take proactive steps to enhance campus security. With the support of the local community, a \$14 million bond issue was passed for security improvements on Iowa Western campuses. To accomplish these security upgrades, the college chose to leverage the support and expertise of a trusted security company, Allegion™.

Out with the old: Assessing campus security

With the funding approved, Iowa Western and Allegion started their security assessment. The goal was to develop an integrated security solution that included: physical access control software, closed circuit TV, mass student notification, automation to their student enrollment system and active shooter and exterior opening lockdown. It was also crucial that Iowa Western regain control over its key system and standardize door hardware across campuses.

Brian Sutter, director of facilities at Iowa Western Community College, said his initial priorities were establishing a lockdown solution and





identifying weak points for the buildings. The college was vulnerable to people who were accessing buildings and rooms without permission, there was aging hardware and the condition of some exterior doors and campus lighting needed addressed. On top of that, the lack of consistency in hardware made it difficult to stock materials. Sometimes this meant waiting weeks for parts, which then compromised the security of the campus.

Once it was time to develop a security plan, Allegion organized physical access control software presentations with four of the leading providers in the higher education market. Each provided hands-on demonstrations of their products so Iowa Western could determine which would best meet all of their needs.

Once the college selected a physical access control software, Allegion worked with Iowa Western's IT and facilities staff, architects, electrical engineers and the Allegion Division 8 and Division 28 specialist to develop a holistic security plan and bid documents. This team went building-by-building to document each opening to ensure it provided the level of integration and automation desired by Iowa Western.

"Iowa Western had been using an offline access control software system which required campus staff to visit each door to make any changes," said Doug Talbott, electronics specialist at Allegion. "It was important to establish a security environment which could be automated and controlled from multiple locations and medias."

John Torchia, end user consultant at Allegion, added, "Iowa Western wanted software that could initiate a lockdown with the push of a single button in the event of an emergency. It was also important that the software could be standardized across their locations."

Key control was another concern for the school. It's common for schools using physical keys to have challenges with key management. There's a lot of turnover in student housing each year and students and staff sometimes neglect to turn in their keys.

"Loss of control of the key system was a struggle we weren't going to win," said Sutter. "At one point, there were more than 100 keys that were unaccounted for."

Adding to the matter, the satellite locations were on separate key systems, according to Torchia. To regain control, the college needed to unify all campuses to consistent key systems and an integrated security solution.

Sutter, who has worked for Iowa Western for 15 years, said, "I've been able to witness the college grow, and with that growth has been the challenge of maintaining a consistent and conducive student environment. Iowa Western did their best in managing the growth. That said, with Allegion and their consulting team, we were able to change our mindset to a more security-oriented process."

In with the new: Upgrading security solutions and access control

Since an emergency lockdown solution was a top priority, Allegion provided Iowa Western with samples of Schlage's wireless electronic locks to use in the football and wrestling complex. As part of Allegion's try-me program, the college was able to interact with the [Schlage AD-400, NDE cylindrical](#) and [LE mortise wireless locks](#) before implementing the solution across campus.

From there, Allegion's team fulfilled the college's security needs with a vast portfolio of solutions, including [Von Duprin® 99 Series exit devices](#), [LCN® 4040 XP Series closers](#), [Ives® hinges](#), [Von Duprin Concealed Vertical Cables](#), [Glynn-Johnson® accessories](#), hardwired readers and a combination of Schlage AD-400, NDE and LE wireless locks.

Introducing such a large amount of new hardware can be daunting, but Torchia and his team made sure that all parties were supported during the process.

"Once the contractors and integrator were on board, I held pre-installation training classes," he said. "I normally give these to end users and contractors that will be installing Allegion hardware to go over the do's and don'ts and things

they see in the field. We went over templating, how to install the product and how to prevent issues down the road—maintaining quality control.”

Iowa Western regained control over its key systems after years of turnover and unaccounted for keys. Randy Franklin, key systems consultant for Allegion, set up three new master key systems using [Schlage's Everest 29™](#) restricted keying solutions. In addition, the school moved to electronic credentials to reduce the risk and nuances associated with lost and stolen keys.

“The college wanted to upgrade control and security in the residence halls on the Council Bluffs campus,” said Torchia. “Instead of mechanical keys, students are using credentials. As of the last month or so, every single suite and interior room doors have NDE or LE wireless electronic locks.”

“Students do not like carrying keys on them all day, so a large body of students would leave their housing doors unlocked all day, or they would displace their keys, which creates obvious safety concerns,” said Sutter. “Electronic credentials have opened up a new world for Iowa Western. We’re able to provide students the ability to access living spaces, workout areas, labs and much more—all within parameters arranged by the college. This is all accomplished with one card that is lightweight and easy for students to keep with them.”

Card-only access will overcome the problem of people getting into buildings without permission as they can now efficiently control access and monitor the flow of people across campus.

Results: Life safety, peace of mind and a valuable relationship

Sutter said, “Our main focus through this whole process has been life safety. Life safety of any Iowa Western stakeholder. Student life is obviously a large part of that and creating a system where we’re able to give students a more secure environment was at the top of our list.”

So far, security upgrades have been successful. The project is still ongoing, and they hope to have their integrated security solution completely up and running before students return this fall.

“The physical security will be improved greatly, but the bigger part is we’re going to have peace of mind knowing we will be able to handle a bad situation in an organized manner,” said Sutter. “Once everything is in place, we will be able to maintain a much tighter system because we’re not handing out mechanical keys. We’ll be able to control access and monitor the flow of people with the integrated cameras.”

Sutter found that the value of working with Allegion goes beyond the hardware installed. “Allegion has been a great partner for us,” Sutter said. “They’ve always been there for me when I have questions, no matter how small. Allegion helped put us on a path toward a unified solution across our campuses.”

About Allegion

Allegion (NYSE: ALLE) is a global pioneer in safety and security, with leading brands like CISA®, Interflex®, LCN®, Schlage®, SimonsVoss® and Von Duprin®. Focusing on security around the door and adjacent areas, Allegion produces a range of solutions for homes, businesses, schools and other institutions. Allegion is a \$2 billion company, with products sold in almost 130 countries. For more, visit www.allegion.com.

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