

Best Practices

2013 –2014
Reviewed by over 100 Security
Professionals

- ▶ **Director of Safety and Security**
- ▶ The school district or campus should have a Director of Safety and Security to oversee the program.
- ▶ If utilizing a School Resource Officer (SRO) on your campus, they should be an on-duty, law enforcement officer, who is highly visible and be required to make random rounds of the property.
- ▶ Be aware of the many anonymous tip line for safety and security concerns on the campus, e.g. Crime Stoppers.

- ▶ Implement an Anti-Bullying Policy that is strictly enforced.
- ▶ Develop Threat Assessment Teams and have training conducted by a qualified individual.
- ▶ When managing your security program and today's software, anticipate the future needs of the school and campus. Install systems and programs with long-term expansion capabilities to accommodate for future security needs and upgrades.

- ▶ **Vulnerability Assessment**
- ▶ Our culture has changed and crimes on school property have changed as well. Needs and deficiencies must be determined in order to have a security program that is effective.
- ▶ A Vulnerability Assessment is a critical on-site examination that is used to observe security that is currently in place, identify security deficiencies or excesses, determine what level of security that is needed and finally, to make recommendations for improvement to effectively control the identified risks.

- ▶ After the Vulnerability Assessment, you and the assessor together will conduct a cost/benefit analysis to determine if the recommendations are affordable, feasible and practical and can be budgeted as short-term or long-term projects.
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- ▶ The assessor will gather statistical data from law enforcement, such as, UCR, NIBRS, NCVS and DHS to examine the frequency of events in your area to determine what can be done to remove or reduce the threat to your campus.

- ▶ A Vulnerability Assessment should be completed annually (or more often if there are issues or significant changes to the building or campus) by a qualified individual. At this time, a review of all programs, policies and training will be done to ensure that you are addressing current security issues.

- ▶ **Security Program Management**
- ▶ Establish security policies and procedures that address identified risks and ensure that the security program has the approval and “buy in” of the school district and principal of the school. It is important that policies and procedures are documented and address Violence Prevention & Intervention and are supported by school faculty & staff and are consistently enforced.
- ▶ The school district as well as each individual campus, needs to effectively manage their security program using multi-levels of communication, policies and procedures, physical security, training, as well as response plans. There should be an effective process for short term and long term projects.

- ▶ Involve the parents (PTA and other volunteers) and students in your school safety/security program to assist and help educate students about policies and procedures.
- ▶ Identify and manage your assets by ensuring all prevention, detection and notification systems (alarms, lighting, CCTV, intercoms, etc.) are working properly and that high-theft and high-risk areas have the proper coverage.

- ▶ Integrate solutions with existing security systems and infrastructure for maximum return on your investment.
- ▶ Lock classrooms during classes with properly installed hardware.

Background Checks

- ▶ Conduct diligent background investigations (pre-employment, annually or as-needed/for cause) and drug testing for all faculty, staff, volunteers, contractors and vendors who are on school property.
- ▶ Implement fingerprinting for ALL school faculty, staff, volunteers, contractors and vendors who are on school property.

- ▶ **Lobby of the Administration Building**
- ▶ Install an intercom with door release button, inside the lobby vestibule.
- ▶ Have Digital Video Surveillance (CCTV) monitor the area.
- ▶ Issue and require all students grades 9 to 13, faculty and staff to visibly display color-coded, ID badges (or smart cards).

- ▶ Implement a Visitor Management Software System, including sign-in, photo verification, badge issue and escort, if required. Use a driver license scanner for positive visitor identification. Consider a color-coded badge system for access to specific floors or areas.
- ▶ Utilize a computer database sign-in either in the lobby or on-line when appointments are requested.

- ▶ Exterior doors should be locked at the start of school day (others are egress only and monitored) and only one entrance should be utilized that is equipped with intercom and Digital Video Surveillance System.
- ▶ Determine if walk-through metal detectors and/or hand held units need to be utilized.

- ▶ Utilize a panic button/duress alarm in the lobby, which transmits a signal to a center station who in turn will call the police.
- ▶ Have a written procedure for the use of panic/duress alarms. Determine if this should include an automatic lockdown of the school.

▶ **Signage**

- Install signage on campus to direct visitors, contractors and vendors to the office area to be processed for access.
- Post emergency escape route of travel maps on walls in all buildings and in all rooms that are in conspicuous locations.
- Letters to be 8 inches

- Doors (interior and exterior) and windows need to be identified by placement of a number or letter (which is approved by Police or Fire responders) to identify various rooms in the building and on the campus. Obtain information from other schools and your local fire department to meet standards. Some schools currently have 10" to 12" high room numbers. Use the same size numbers on front door. (Consider using retro-reflective, 3M Scotch light type material).

▶ **Perimeter of the Campus**

- Clearly identify the perimeter of the campus and utilize the CPTED concept of territorial reinforcement so school property is easily identifiable from public property. Install fencing and lighting, as necessary.
- ▶ In remote or high risk areas of the campus, consider the ASIS International standard for fencing: 7' in height (with 3 strands of barbed wire if necessary), placed 6 inches apart.

Landscape Recommendation

- Follow the CPTED Concept of maintaining bushes no higher than 3 feet and tree branches trimmed to 8 feet from the ground.

Perimeter

- ▶ **Perimeter of the Building**
 - Improve/upgrade/maintain the door hardware on all outside entry doors and install anti-prop alarms.
 - Have full perimeter lockdown capability—either manually or automatic, but ensure that it meets local codes.
- ▶ Consider the use of bollards to prevent vehicular access to buildings.

- ▶ Enforce the policy of no parking areas and designated drop-off areas. No standing/no loitering areas must be addressed and enforced.
- ▶ Before planting shrubs or bushes around buildings, consider the growth rate and the maintenance that will be required. Bushes should be no taller than 3 feet and set back 1 yard from buildings or walkways, per CPTED Concepts.

- ▶ **Access Control Systems**
- ▶ A closed campus proactive capability with electronic access control and audit database and anti-pass-back feature should be utilized.
- ▶ Keep access points to a minimum. The general idea is to have one (or few) entrance(s) and many exits.

- ▶ Monitor the school parking lot with CCTV and issue color-coded parking permits with designated parking areas for students, faculty, staff and visitors.
- ▶ Before an incident occurs, ensure first responders will have access to buildings (issue all-access cards or master keys at training exercises).

- ▶ **Key Control**
- ▶ If you don't have 100 % control over your master and grand master keys, then you must re-key.
- ▶ Establish a Key/Card Management Program and assign someone to manage it.

- ▶ Re-key mechanical locks, if keys are lost, stolen, not returned at a termination or otherwise unaccounted for.
- ▶ Consider the use of keyless access control systems so that access can immediately be terminated if a card or code is lost, stolen or if someone is terminated.

- ▶ **Lighting**
- ▶ Install adequate lighting on campus—especially by walkways, around doorways and in parking areas. A properly illuminated area acts as a psychological and physical deterrent and can reduce criminal opportunity.
- ▶ Refer to OSHA, IESNA and ANSI for lux and foot candle lighting level recommendations. Test illumination annually with a light meter and be cognizant that foliage on trees may obstruct lighting.

- ▶ Be aware of light trespass on neighboring properties.
- ▶ Consider installing cost-effective LED lighting.
- ▶ Have a Lighting Maintenance Plan in place to quickly identify burned out bulbs or inoperable lights. Assign and display numbers on light poles so those requiring attention can be easily identified. Inoperable fixtures or burned out bulbs must be repaired or replaced within 24-hours.

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- ▶ A situation that needed to be corrected—during an assessment of a school, I was in the loading area for shipping and receiving that was also the handicap access area. There were at least 8 different variations of bulbs being used for lighting in that location. Lighting needs to be uniform, cost effective with the correct footcandles at various locations.

- ▶ **Digital Video Surveillance**
- ▶ Retain 30-days of surveillance unless otherwise required.
- ▶ Consider utilize digital recorders and consider cloud-based storage.
- ▶ Ensure CCTV coverage is adequate and utilize video analytics.

- ▶ Install IP video cameras and determine if you need a fixed camera or a pan, tilt, zoom (PTZ) unit. (PTZ cameras work well, but are expensive—almost 3x cost of a fixed camera and need on-site monitoring to be effective. Budget for this type of investment. Determine the purpose of your video surveillance program—monitoring and response, forensic purposes only, or both.

- ▶ Exterior lighting should be adequate for CCTV resolution and color rendition index (CRI).
- ▶ Integrate CCTV with access control, especially visitor management.
- ▶ Install CCTV around perimeter of building, with attention to doors and accessible windows.

- ▶ There are standard locations established for certain types of cameras and monitoring. For example, at the main entrance, exterior entry points, cafeteria, hallways, high-risk areas, high theft areas, computer labs, etc. Cameras are never installed at any location where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as in a restroom or a locker room. Cameras are also typically not put in instructional areas such as classrooms. There may be other areas identified by school staff, faculty or assessment that are identified as “hot spots” where video surveillance would be beneficial.

- ▶ Integrate CCTV with alarm (intrusion detection) systems. For example, if a door is propped open, the camera zooms in to determine the cause and then sends notification that a response is required.

- ▶ Establish a partnership with local law enforcement to give them remote access to CCTV for a critical incident or a crime in progress. If the school has an intrusion detection system and it is activated at night, law enforcement or security can respond remotely and disrupt a crime in progress. In this instance, video surveillance may also be used as evidence for prosecution.

- ▶ **Fire Alarm Systems**
- ▶ Conduct regular fire drills and ensure faculty and staff can quickly determine if all students are accounted for. Your Visitor Management System will help you determine if all visitors have been evacuated in the event of a fire or other emergency.
- ▶ Comply with all applicable state codes

- ▶ **Emergency Planning**
- ▶ Develop an Emergency Response Plan and provide training for the staff.
- ▶ Establish Emergency Procedures with standardized actions and directives for inclement weather, (tornado, earthquake, hurricane, flooding, etc.) medical issues, fire, building evacuations, shelter-in-place, lock-down, workplace violence, active shooter as well as a business continuity plan for after the incident. (OSHA, NFPA, FEMA, etc.)

- ▶ Ensure your Emergency Procedures comply with ADA Standards (physically handicapped, blind, deaf, special needs students, faculty, staff and visitors, etc.). Have designated individuals trained to assist.
- ▶ Conduct training for emergency procedures with the local FD, PD, EMS and other local officials. Provide floor plans for each building on the campus to each of these departments. Consider supplying building plans and layout of campus in a digital format for quicker access by more responders.

- ▶ Establish a Crisis Management Team with documentation. Determine who will make the decision to lock down the school and who makes the notifications to faculty, staff and parents.
- ▶ The Crisis Management Team will handle procedures during and after a crisis situation.

- ▶ Develop Mass Notification Procedures (see below).
- ▶ Provide two-way radios (or another alternative method for communication) for faculty and staff and establish a designated command center area or location.
- ▶ Ensure you are in compliance with all applicable OSHA regulations, Life Safety Codes and local/state fire codes.

- ▶ NFPA 1600 is needed for all-hazards planning.
- ▶ Provide FEMA training for administration and crisis team members.
- ▶ <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=is-100.sca>.

- ▶ Conduct fire, evacuation, lockdown, shelter-in-place, etc. drills.
- ▶ Consider using the standard response protocol, "I love u guys foundation."
- ▶ Develop crisis kits with all necessary supplies for an emergency situation.

- ▶ Collaborate with local law enforcement and other emergency responders to determine if interior door windows are to be covered and/or if shades are to be left open or pulled down in a lockdown situation.
- ▶ Develop a mutual aid agreement with other schools and businesses.

- ▶ **Mass Notification Procedures**
- ▶ Develop a Mass Notification Program, which includes e-mails, text messages, social media, public address system announcements as well as audible alarms.

- ▶ Ensure your Mass Notification Program complies with ADA Standards (physically handicapped, blind, deaf or special needs students, faculty, staff and visitors, etc.). Have designated individuals trained to assist.

- ▶ Ensure that your procedures meet NFPA Standards & Guidelines, which includes a communication program, an incident management system and with individuals people trained in ICS.

- ▶ **Training for Faculty and Staff**
- ▶ When hired, conduct classroom training on school policies and procedures and repeat annually at in-service training or as necessary.
- ▶ Develop a policy for faculty and staff about when to use a fire extinguisher. Discuss when to fight a fire or when to flee a fire. Train faculty and staff on how to use a fire extinguisher.

- ▶ Conduct First Aid, CPR/AED and Bloodborne Pathogens Training (29 CFR 1910. 151) and repeat re-certification as required.
- ▶ Conduct training on how to respond to medical issues, fire, inclement weather, building evacuations, shelter-in-place, lock-down, workplace violence, active shooter, etc. Teachers and staff will train students.

- ▶ Ask local, state and federal agencies to participate in your classroom, tabletop or incident training.
- ▶ Educate students, faculty and staff about bullying behavior.
- ▶ Inform students, faculty and staff that they should report and/or challenge anyone on the property that is not displaying an ID badge.

- ▶ Educate students, faculty and staff about “If You See Something, Say Something” and empower them to report suspicious behavior or behaviors of concern.

- ▶ Train faculty and staff in all school security policies and procedures and repeat training as needed or when a change is made. Faculty and staff must consistently follow and fairly enforce all security procedures. There must be clear disciplinary action for anyone not following established rules or procedures.

- ▶ **BE PROACTIVE and BE PREPARED!**

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