

School Safety

Keeping Kids Safe In The Classroom: What Parents Should Know (And Do) For Peace Of Mind

(NAPSA)—If any of the estimated 55 million American schoolchildren is one you care about, you may be glad to learn about plans in place to keep them safe.

Today's school leaders face unprecedented safety and security challenges, whether from unwelcome intruders or natural disasters. Such risks make it essential for schools to stay current on the latest advances in construction, technological tools and safety protocols.

Three Steps To Better Secure Your School Now

Many parents ask about school security measures to make sure classrooms are safe.

"Parents who are actively involved in their student's school security can improve their child's safety and success on campus," explained Patrick V. Fiel, Sr., head of PF Security Consulting LLC, who served as the former Executive Director of Security for Washington D.C. Public Schools and has extensive experience upgrading schools to meet today's security standards.

Following are three practices every school should and can do—regardless of available budget:

1. Plan and Prepare. Even the highest security technology is ineffective without proper training and preparation. Actions should be clearly defined, documented and practiced regularly. Staff and students should know exactly what to do and where to go in the case of emergency.

For example, in case of a lockdown:

- Lock down campus building and residence hall entries.
- Stay in the classroom or move to a safe area immediately.
- Quickly glance outside the room to direct any students or staff members in the hall into your room immediately.
- Lock your door.
- Lower or close any blinds.
- Place students against a wall where an intruder cannot see them if looking through a door sidelight.
- Turn out lights and computer monitors.
- Keep students and phones quiet.

Schools with open campuses have other challenges. Although a campuswide lockdown may not always be practical or even possible, individual buildings and classrooms can be secured.



For their own peace of mind, many parents like to learn about school security protocols.

2. Stay Focused on Proven and Reliable Practices. "Un-tested technologies such as makeshift door barrier tactics can block first responders from entering the classroom," said Fiel. "Having easy access to enter and exit the classroom will help to safely and efficiently save the lives of students and provide care to those who need immediate attention."

3. Develop a Lockdown Strategy. Allegion, known for pioneering safety and security solutions for schools and universities, has security consultants who suggest having tools in place to manage comings and goings at each doorway so it can lock down on demand immediately. Three proven lockdown technologies are:

- **Manual lockdown**—uses keys and classroom security functions to lock down a space. This is an economical option but relies on an individual having the right key at the right place.

- **Remote lockdown**—enables classroom lockdown by remote fob within proximity of a door. It can be a cost-effective alternative to a networked system.

- **Centralized lockdown**—this networked system, when integrated with access control software, can enable immediate school or campuswide lockdown.

In many cases, facilities may need modification to create more efficient security systems. This may involve installing new locks, such as those created by Allegion, that offer a classroom security function that enables lockdown safely from within the classroom; or even architectural modifications, such as the addition of new vestibules.

Learn More

For further information about how door hardware and security technologies support lockdown procedures, call (888) 758-9823 or visit www.allegion.com.