



...the educational prism through which students realize meaning and purpose in their lives...

TO: Members, Board of Education

FROM: Constance Collins, Superintendent of Schools
Therese M. O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations
Chris Jasculca, Communications Coordinator
Victoria Sharts, Principal – Julian Middle School
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RE: Video/Security Cameras – Brooks & Julian Middle Schools

DATE: December 1, 2009

Philosophy:

Oak Park District 97 plays an important role in the education of our children, the development of our staff, and the enrichment of our community. We believe our success in meeting the needs of those we serve is dependent upon our ability to continue providing our stakeholders with access to a safe, secure environment in which to learn, grow, connect and share.

Background:

Given our stated philosophy, and desiring to always be proactive in insuring a safe and secure environment, it is for the following reasons that we believe the installation of video/security cameras in our two middle schools will further enhance what has been and continues to be a safe and secure environment:

- Reinforce the lessons of the District's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program.
- Encourage and support sound decision-making choices by students thus minimizing instances of inappropriate behavior.
- Promote a positive climate in our middle schools.
- Fulfill the objectives of our Strategic Plan, including making the best use of technology in instruction and operations and ensuring the safety of students and staff not being compromised.
- Ensure a secure environment during non-school hours and when used by outside agencies.
- Increase the amount of time building administrators spend on instruction by reducing the amount of time they spend on investigating inappropriate student behavior activities.

Research:

In December 2008, the District worked with RETA Security to conduct an analysis of safety and security in the middle schools and generate a Physical Security Report (attached) for both buildings. Our goal was to have an expert who was familiar with school environments conduct an objective analysis of the issues impacting safety and security at Brooks and Julian by observing the activities of our middle school students during a two-day period. Among the recommendations contained in the report was to install video/security cameras at the main entrances and other strategic locations within both buildings.

In July, 2009, the Director of Buildings & Grounds attended a one-week intensive School Safety Seminar. During this seminar, he discovered we were the only school district among the 250 represented from across the United States who did not have video/security cameras in its middle schools. Attached is an Executive Summary from the seminar titled *Surveillance in Schools: Safety vs. Personal Safety – Security Cameras* that lists advantages and drawbacks of this resource. The prescribed advantages to having security cameras are:

- Peace of mind for students and staff.
- Reduction in property damages such as vandalism and theft.
- Better student behavior.

Identified drawbacks include:

- Initial cost to purchase and install security cameras and then, the ongoing cost to maintain.
- Effectiveness in preventing violence.
- Potential for profiling students.
- Overall impact on student/staff morale.

Recognizing that the Board of Education is always interested in how its neighboring school districts resolve similar problems, in reaching out to some of them, we have learned the following:

Evanston/Skokie School District 65 & Neighboring School Districts

Given that many of its 16 school buildings are 80 years or older and do not have secured entrances (entry into the building via the office and then after being permitted entry into the school building through a second door), an overarching concern for the District 65 Board of Education was immediate security and safety for its students, staff and community. Although the cost of renovating its existing buildings posed some financial challenges, the district felt the addition of video cameras was an important component in its security/safety strategy. This year, it piloted the introduction of the cameras in one of its middle schools, which had seen an increase in acts of inappropriate student behavior (student interactions in stairwells and hallways) and some illegal activities (thefts and interior/exterior vandalism). According to a member of the district's Board of Education and its director of buildings and grounds, the concept has been embraced by the middle school and overall Evanston/Skokie communities. As a result, the district is now expanding the use of video cameras into its two remaining middle schools and two K-8 magnet schools.

In addition to Evanston/Skokie District 65, a number of neighboring school districts were contacted to explore their use of video/security cameras. Of the 18 contacted (Berwyn 100, Woodridge, Darien, Cicero Unity, Brookfield 96, Butler 53, DesPlaines 62, Franklin Park, Bellwood-Roosevelt 88, Lincoln MS, Union Ridge 86, LaGrange 107, LaGrange 102, River Forest 90, and District 181), 17 had video/security cameras either minimally at entrances or comprehensively throughout strategic locations within the building.

Work Performed to Date:

The principals of Brooks and Julian Middle Schools conducted an informal survey among their staffs about this initiative. The results of this survey showed that there is overwhelmingly staff support for the installation of video/security cameras.

The Director of Buildings & Grounds walked the entirety of both Brooks and Julian Middle Schools to identify the desired locations (principally all entrances and public, common areas) and these floor plans are attached for your review.

The Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations also contacted its Property & Liability Insurance Company, Arthur J. Gallagher & Company, under the umbrella of our CLIC (Collective Liability Insurance Cooperative) to ascertain any decreased cost in insurance coverage if video/security cameras were to be installed. The representative indicated that there would be no "hard cost" savings in premiums but the District would incur "soft cost" savings due to our ability to remediate situations immediately through the availability of hard evidence that can be used by building administration to resolve these situations. In addition, there are the potential savings in legal costs if situations escalated to a higher level.

Specific to possible incurred costs, the Director of Buildings & Grounds has derived several formal quotations for installation of video/security cameras. Included in the 2009-10 budget was a line item, totaling \$90,000, within the Life/Safety budget. We also worked with our architectural firm to determine, through the outreach to ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education), that the installation of video/security cameras is an appropriate expenditure of Life/Safety monies. As reported at the November 10, 2009, currently there is a little over \$200,000 in the Life/Safety Fund as of June 30, 2009. Finally, in an attempt to strategically utilize our financial resources, we asked our contractor to install fiber in strategic locations in both middle schools in conjunction with the other work it performed this past summer so the cameras, which are Web-based, could be immediately connected.

Recommendation:

The Administration is recommending the installation of video/security cameras in its two middle schools in the strategic locations identified by both principals insuring appropriate privacy for students and staff. If the Board is supportive of this recommendation, attached is a draft letter to be sent out districtwide informing the community of the District's intention to do this, the why, the how, and the request for commentary.

Additionally, in the Executive Summary from the School Safety Seminar attended by the Director of Buildings & Grounds, a caution was given: ***If a school decides to implement video surveillance cameras, officials should be sure to create a policy for use before purchasing and installing the equipment to eliminate any confusion.*** We are exploring through Neola, as well as colleagues who have access to PRESS, if such a policy exists to model ours against the same.

Dr. Collins will have prepared and will present a PowerPoint presentation on December 1, 2009 detailing the contents of this memorandum and all participants, in its construction, will be present to respond to questions and concerns.

Attachments

Axis 216 FD 0240-004 44 QTY



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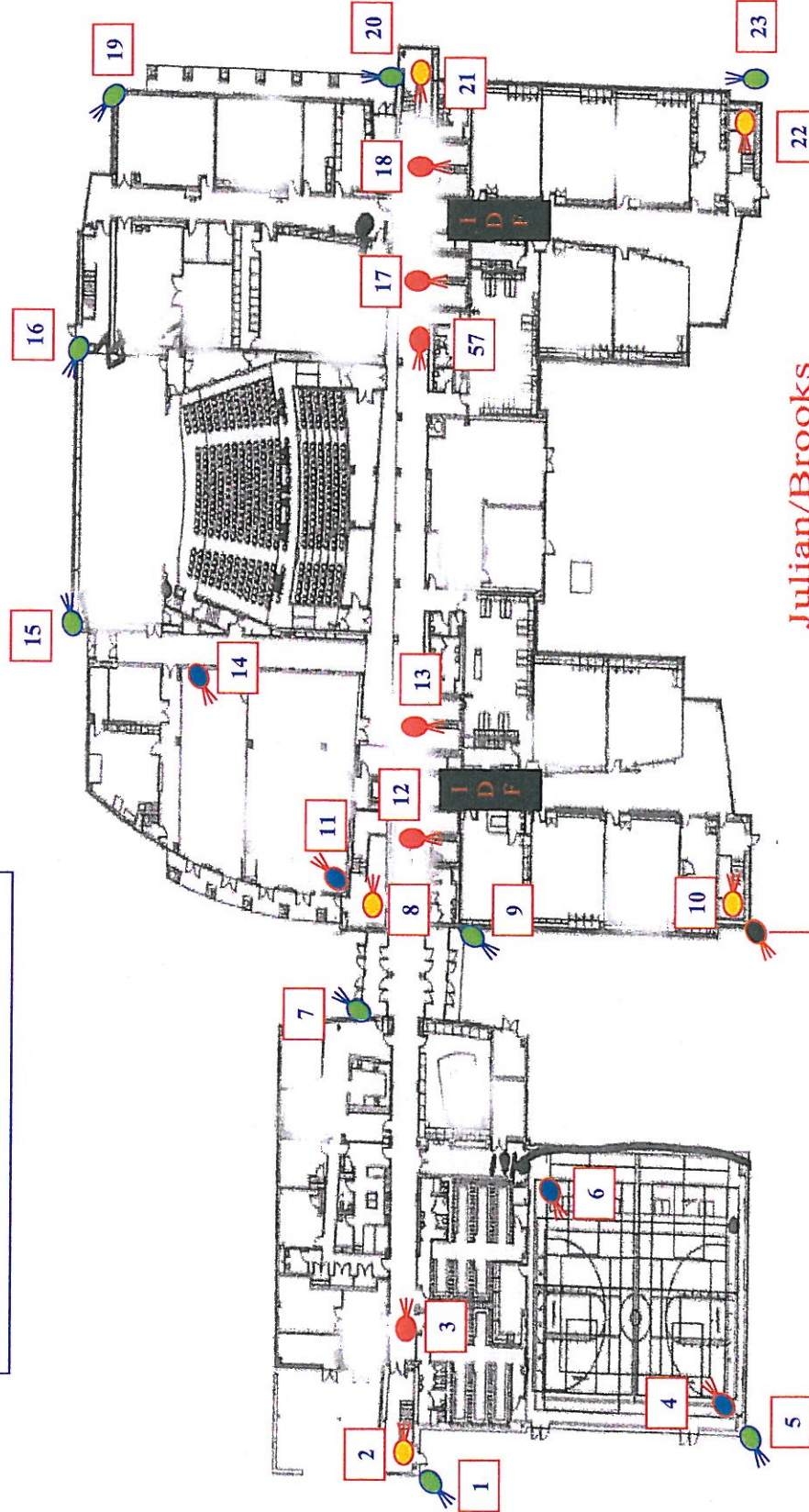
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10 QTY for Brooks



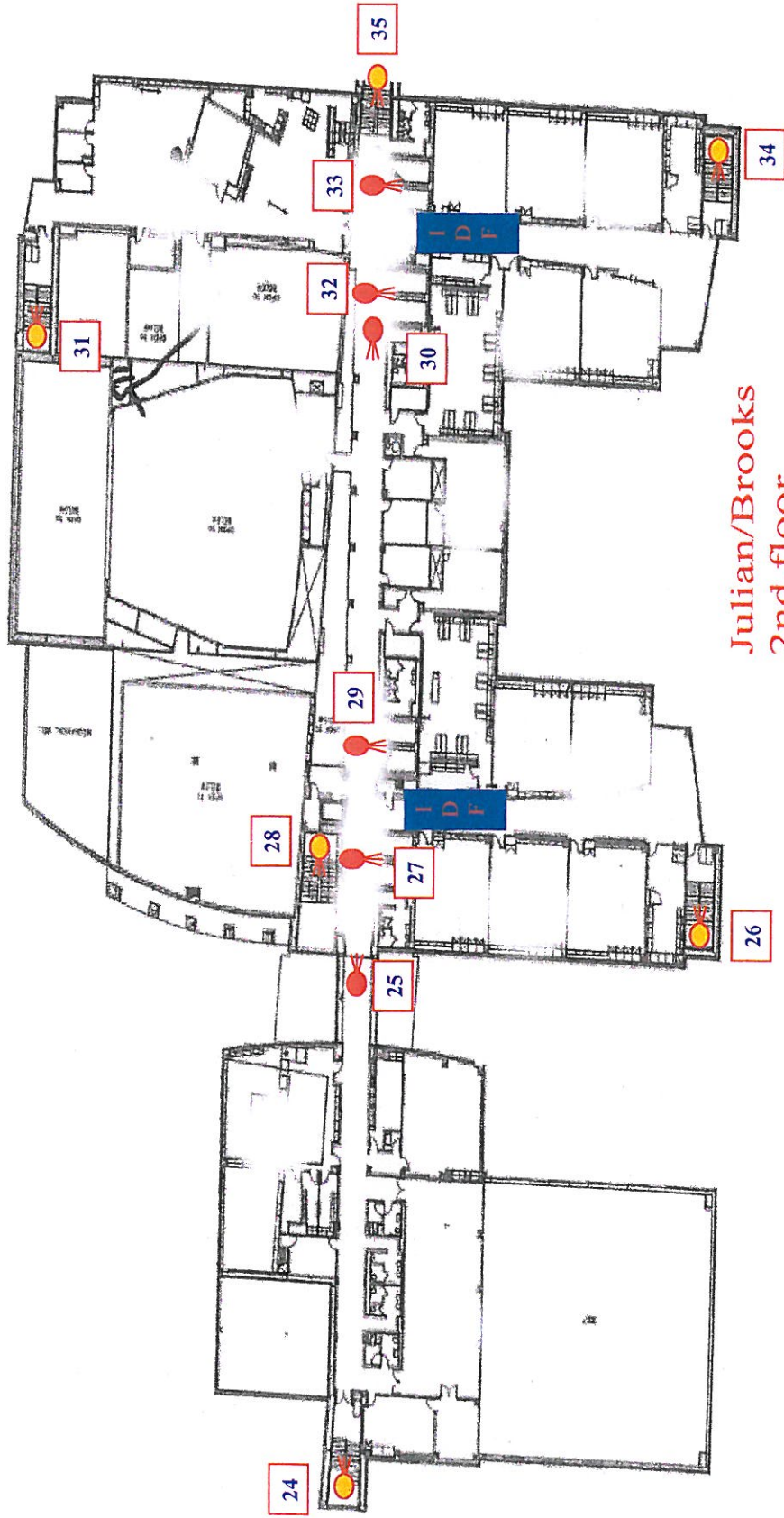
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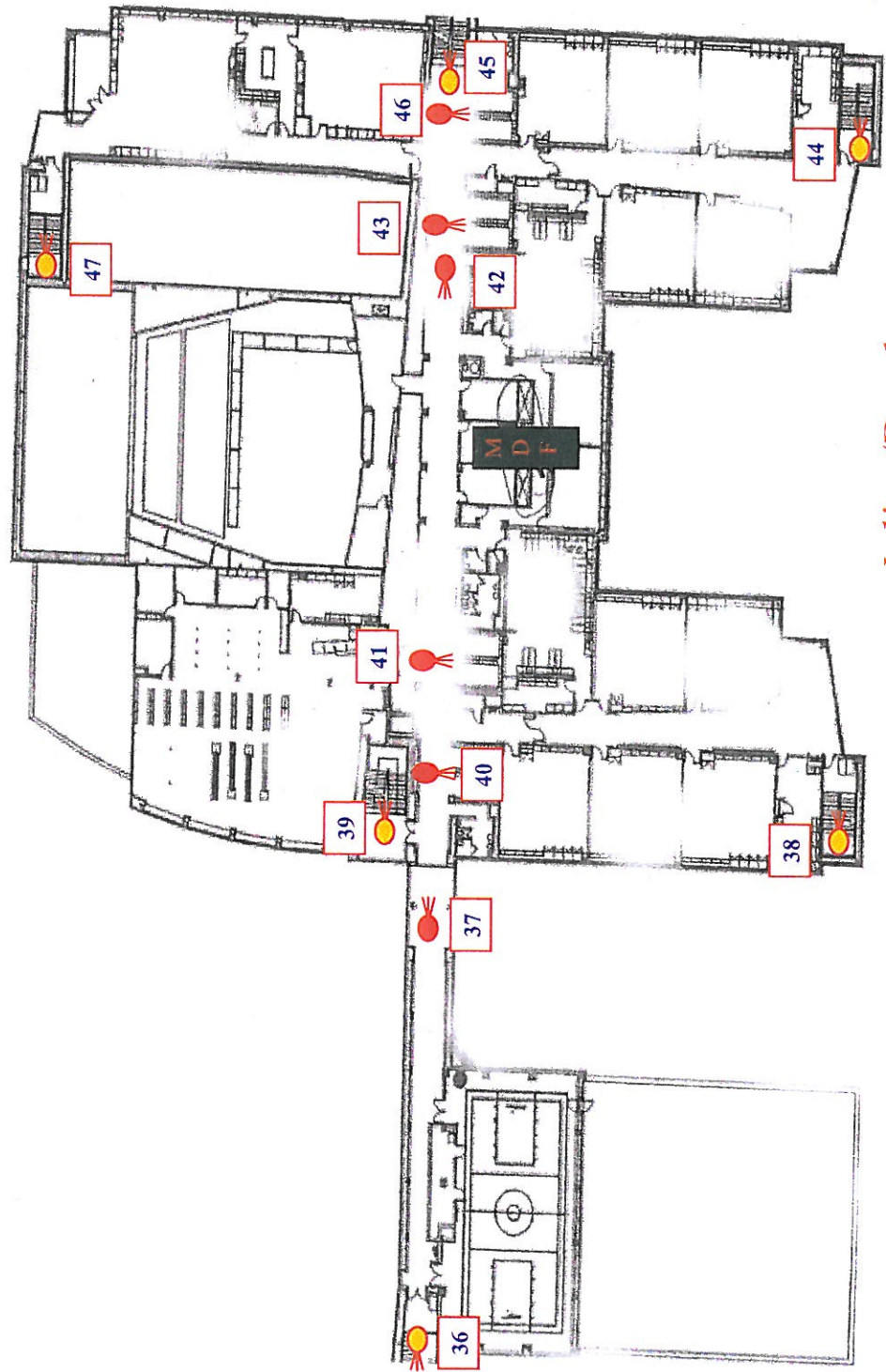
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Brooks Only

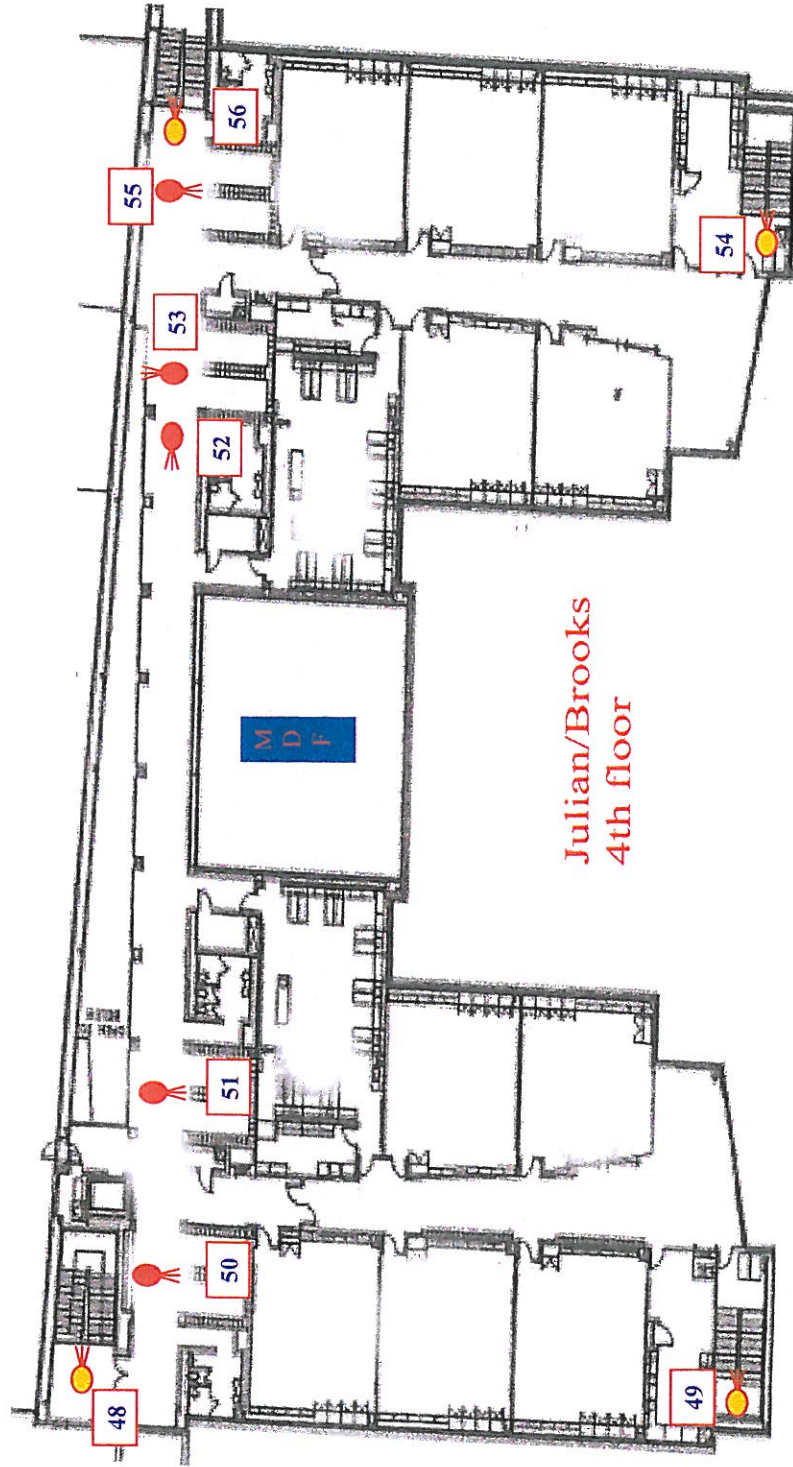
58



Julian/Brooks
2nd floor



Julian/Brooks
3rd floor



Physical Security Report

Percy Julian & Gwendolyn Brooks Middle Schools

December 2008

RETA Security, Inc.
Lemont, IL 60439
www.retasecurity.com



Introduction

RETA Security's analysis of the assessment findings identified the following three areas to be of highest priority:

1. Access Control – Visitor management procedures (such as sign-in/out procedures and identification method – sticker at Gwendolyn Brooks, badge on a clip at Percy Julian) are only partially effective. Some staff members display identification (ID) badges and most students display IDs. Teachers are permitted “24/7” access to the buildings. Propping devices (such as wood wedges) were near some exterior doors during the assessment visits.
2. Communications – The existing Rauland intercom systems have limited exterior PA capabilities (front areas only). Many rooms are equipped with PA speaker volume controls (see the attached photograph). Call buttons in several rooms were missing plastic push buttons (i.e. Gwendolyn Brooks Gym and Gym Office) and several volume controls were turned off during the assessment visits. Some rooms (such as the Kitchen Office (E103) and Nurse's Office (A108)) could not be correctly identified at the Main Office. Most classrooms and offices are equipped with telephone contact number lists, but emergency numbers are not clearly identified. Even though each school possesses 10-12 two-way radios, Physical Education (PE) teachers and staff responsible for exterior student movement do not always carry them. Staff members responsible for off-site activities primarily rely on personal cellular phones.
3. Delay – Classroom and gathering area doors can be locked in the event of a lock down, but cannot be locked from the inside. Substitute teachers are not equipped with classroom keys. Windows in and around some classroom and office doors are not reinforced to prevent forced entry (see the attached photograph).

The remainder of this report provides additional detail on the scope and findings of this assessment. This report also includes resources (see the attachments) and photographs taken with a digital camera during the assessment.

Scope

RETA Security conducted the physical security reviews through staff interviews and through visual observation. Reviews focused on areas related to the protection of students, staff, and visitors. Some issues were captured through the use of a digital camera (see the attached photographs).

This assessment also incorporated proprietary checklists detailing the presence and relative effectiveness of the following physical security elements:

- Deterrence – discouraging unauthorized actions
- Detection – recognizing unauthorized actions

- Delay – slowing unauthorized actions
- Response – reacting to unauthorized actions

As intended, the assessment identified both strengths and weaknesses of the existing security program. The goal of this report is to address and overcome weaknesses.

Findings

Analysis of the assessment results identified a number of weaknesses in the current security program. Descriptions of those weaknesses and corresponding recommendations for improvements follow.

DETERRENCE

Signs

There are virtually no security signs posted at the Middle Schools. No exterior doors had posted security signs, several exterior doors did not have numbers, and no exterior doors were numbered on the inside during the assessment visits.

Recommendations

- ❑ Post signs at campus entries (such as parking lots) that prohibit trespassing and contraband (such as weapons and drugs) on school property – see the attached sign brochure.
- ❑ Post signs on all exterior doors, inside and outside, that state each door's usage (such as main entrance, alternate entrance, and emergency exit) – see the attached sign brochure.
- ❑ Ensure that all exterior doors are numbered, both inside and outside.

Landscaping

Some foliage on each school property does not allow clear sight lines but does allow concealment.

Recommendations

- ❑ Trim all shrubbery to a maximum height of 24 inches or replace with miniature shrubs.
- ❑ Remove all tree limbs to a minimum height of six feet.

Lighting

The schools have limited exterior, "security" lighting. The south part of the Percy Julian parking lot (near the alley), for example, has inadequate lighting.

Recommendations

- ❑ Make necessary improvements or adjustments to ensure that the building entrances, walkways, and parking areas are well lit.
- ❑ Inspect lighting on a regular basis.

DETECTION

Duress

The existing Rauland intercom systems have a duress (panic) feature and many rooms have a volume control (see the attached photograph). Call buttons in several rooms were missing plastic push buttons (i.e. Gwendolyn Brooks Gym and Gym Office) and several volume controls were turned off during the assessment visits. Some rooms (such as the Kitchen Office (E103) and Nurse's Office (A108)) could not be correctly identified at the Main Office.

Recommendations

- ❑ Ensure that all interior rooms are equipped with functional call buttons and take measures to prevent the volume controls from being turned off.
- ❑ Routinely test communication systems between classrooms/offices and the Main Office to ensure immediate communications and easily identifiable room numbers at all times, including before and after class time.
- ❑ Consider installing a panic device at each entrance desk.

Access Control

Visitor management procedures (such as sign-in/out procedures and identification method – sticker at Gwendolyn Brooks, badge on a clip at Percy Julian) are only partially effective. Some staff members display identification (ID) badges and most students display IDs. Teachers are permitted “24/7” access to the buildings. Propping devices (such as wood wedges) were near some exterior doors during the assessment visits.

Recommendations

- ❑ Implement a “credential exchange” procedure that requires all visitors to produce photograph ID, be signed in by an authorized staff member, and be authorized before building access is permitted. The authorized staff member should give the visitor a badge that hangs on a colored lanyard around the neck and hold the photograph ID until another exchange can be made upon signing out at the conclusion of the visit.

- ❑ Require all adults, including staff, visitors, and contractors, to wear ID badges on a colored lanyard (one color for visitors and a separate & distinct color for staff) around the neck.
- ❑ Restrict staff building access to certain and reasonable times of day and/or days of week.
- ❑ Ensure all exterior doors are kept closed and locked as part of a documented “closed campus” policy.

Assessment

The Middle Schools do not have video surveillance systems.

Recommendation

- ❑ Install video surveillance systems that include, at minimum, cameras at the main entrances and frequent incident areas. The systems should also include remote monitoring capabilities, and digital recording devices (DVRs) to record visitor access and egress for forensic purposes.

Communications

The existing Rauland intercom systems have limited exterior PA capabilities (front areas only). Many rooms are equipped with PA speaker volume controls (see the attached photograph). Call buttons in several rooms were missing plastic push buttons (i.e. Gwendolyn Brooks Gym and Gym Office) and several volume controls were turned off during the assessment visits. Some rooms (such as the Kitchen Office (E103) and Nurse’s Office (A108)) could not be correctly identified at the Main Office. Most classrooms and offices are equipped with telephone contact number lists, but emergency numbers are not clearly identified. Even though each school possesses 10-12 two-way radios, Physical Education (PE) teachers and staff responsible for exterior student movement do not always carry them. Staff members responsible for off-site activities primarily rely on personal cellular phones.

Recommendations

- ❑ Improve and/or add onto the existing intercom/PA system to ensure room identification accuracy, as well as comprehensive access and coverage (including exterior).
- ❑ Remove or restrict PA volume controls to prevent the possibility of missing emergency announcements.
- ❑ Ensure that all classrooms and offices are equipped with emergency dialing instructions (such as “911,” the Main Office extension, and an after hours custodial cell phone number) at every telephone, and consider programming useful features (such as “speed dial”).

- ❑ Administrators, custodians, and all staff that monitor outside activities should be required to carry two-way radios for immediate emergency notification purposes.
- ❑ Provide functional, cellular communication devices for staff members that monitor off-site activities.

DELAY

Facility

Even though the main entrances have locked vestibules for visitor authorization purposes, visitors are “buzzed in” to the Main Offices without having to state a purpose for being in the building. Propping devices (such as wood wedges) were near some exterior doors during the assessment visits.

Recommendations

- ❑ Consider equipping main entrance vestibules with intercom communications so that the Main Office staff can inquire as to a visitor’s purpose before granting access.
- ❑ Document a practice that instructs custodial/maintenance staff to inspect exterior doorways at least twice each day for door props. Propping devices that are discovered should be reported, recorded and removed.

Classrooms, Offices and Gathering Areas

Classroom and gathering area doors can be locked in the event of a lock down, but cannot be locked from the inside. Substitute teachers are not equipped with classroom keys. Windows in and around some classroom and office doors are not reinforced to prevent forced entry (see the attached photograph).

Recommendations

- ❑ Consider replacing existing interior classroom door hardware with mechanisms that have inside locking capability.
- ❑ Develop key control procedures (such as a credential exchange that involves car keys for a room key) that allow for the distribution of classroom keys to substitute teachers.
- ❑ Consider installing window glazing (such as laminated glass or laminate window film) to protect tempered glass and prevent forced access to classrooms and offices.

Unmonitored Rooms

Numerous rooms (such as D307, Stage Areas, and Departmental Offices) were not secured during the assessment visit, allowing access to unmonitored areas, personal belongings, and potentially dangerous items. Some of the Music Practice Rooms have interior locking capabilities. In addition, some staff

members had left keys in unmonitored, public areas during the assessment visits (see the attached photograph).

Recommendations

- ❑ All unmonitored rooms should be kept closed and locked.
- ❑ Consider replacing locking mechanisms on the Music Practice Rooms with those that do not have interior locking capabilities to prevent unauthorized locking.
- ❑ Periodically instruct all staff about basic safety and security practices.

RESPONSE

Each Middle School employs a School Resource Officer (SRO). In the absence of the SRO, school administrators and staff members are responsible to carry out first responder duties. Each school currently has only one Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).

Recommendation

- ❑ All first responders should be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), First Aid, and the use of AEDs.
- ❑ All first responders should be equipped with response tools and supplies (such as two-way communication devices and First Aid supplies).
- ❑ Consider adding additional AEDs to be placed on each level.
- ❑ Download and post "Suspicious Mail or Package" posters (www.usps.com/communications/news/security/suspiciousmail.htm) in areas where mail is sorted.

MISCELLANEOUS

Post the Illinois Sex Offender registry (www.isp.state.il.us/sor/) on the Oak Park District 97 website for staff access and awareness purposes.

Utilize the attached "Outside Organization Addendum" to improve extracurricular activity safety and security.

Surveillance in Schools: Safety vs. Personal Privacy

Security Cameras

**Project
Home**

**Security
Cameras**

**Metal
Detectors**

**Locker
Searches**

**Internet
Tracking**

Introduction

In recent years, violent episodes in schools in Arkansas, Colorado, California, Kentucky, Mississippi and other states have led educators and legislators to make "Safe Schools" a priority. Like many issues in education, suggestions on how to make a school "safe" have proceeded simultaneously on many different tracks. Teaching students strategies they can use to combat emotionally explosive situations through initiatives such as character education and peer mediation is one track that is currently used to help make schools safer. Another method that many schools are pursuing is stationing a full-time security officer (or officers) in the building. One of the most controversial methods involves surveillance of students through video cameras.

What are Security Cameras?

School video surveillance systems consist of cameras placed in areas where they can monitor activity as it takes place. These cameras may include features like pan, tilt, and zoom; may be placed in outdoor or indoor locations; and may include infrared recording options (technical discussions from Green, 1999, Video camera table of contents). Most cameras are used with recording systems, either VCR's or digital recorders. Using a digital recorder is the preferred option for easy storage, easy recall, and easy viewing over different monitors (discussion of strengths and weaknesses of different recording mediums from Green, 1999, Video recording table of contents).

One of the most popular video surveillance tools for schools is the SecureView system, manufactured by View Systems Inc., Englewood, CO. The system transmits images from cameras to a digital hard drive storage system. Output can be seen on a monitor that displays four frames of video (each takes up a quarter of the screen), or on desktop computer monitors, which are networked to receive video feeds from the cameras. The system allows users to quickly view a recorded video based on search criteria (Adams, 2001).

Another similar system is Sensormatics, which combines different types of cameras with monitors, video servers, and multiplexers to offer schools the same recording, storage, and playback functionality (SecuritySupplyHouse.com).

Benefits

At this time there are no unbiased studies of the benefits and drawbacks of the use of video surveillance systems in schools. Naturally, proponents of using these systems emphasize the benefits, while opponents discuss the drawbacks. Benefits to using cameras depend on the individual school and the problems it faces. Experts recommend following a procedure that first determines the problem, then decides how surveillance equipment can be used to address the problem (School security...) (Green, 1999, Chapter 1, A systematic approach).

One of the advantages that proponents of video surveillance claim is peace of mind for students and staff (Green, 1999, Why video cameras?). "Security experts and administrators who use the cameras say students and teachers seem to appreciate the increased sense of security" (Hafner, ¶ 9). Naturally this is one of the most important features of a system that schools use in response to recent highly-publicized incidents of violence in the schools. Green argues that although cameras are passive, information about their presence will make its way through the community. Students and staff feel safer knowing that potential perpetrators will be scared off by the presence of cameras before committing an offense.

Another advantage that can be measured is a reduction in property damages such as vandalism and theft (Ballenas...) ("The witness"...). "Far too often the administration can only react to vandalism with time-consuming, seldom successful and often fruitless attempts to identify the perpetrators" (Ballenas..., ¶ 3). "The costs [of theft] are monetary (no money for replacement) and inconvenience (educational opportunity loss for our students)" (Ballenas..., ¶ 4). Video surveillance systems provide a solution for these issues. "Cameras certainly multiply security's eyes, helping the administration to apprehend and discipline students caught on camera" (Sauvain, 2002, ¶ 3). Cameras also provide security in hidden areas of schools that are physically difficult to monitor (Schneider, 2001).

Finally, schools using video surveillance claim better behavior because of monitoring. "Sometimes just the idea in kids' minds that there's a camera recording them keeps them from causing trouble or being difficult" (Gross, as quoted in Baxter, 2003, ¶ 14). "Word gets out (about the cameras and searches) and I think it's had an effect that way" (Pfeffer, quoted in Oakes, 2000, ¶ 8). Some schools view cameras as having a dual purpose. "All of

Bullitt County's buses are being equipped with cameras to randomly monitor student behavior and driver performance" (Baxter, 2003, picture caption). Since stored video records provide tangible evidence, school officials may find employee performance evaluations easier to do using video surveillance tools than face-to-face. The use of video records as evidence and as a means of identification may also be a reason students may be less inclined to cause trouble (Adams, 2001) (Schneider, 2001). "The solid documentation that a video recording provides can be invaluable in situations involving liability claims" (Green, 1999, Why video cameras?).

Drawbacks

Opponents to using video surveillance systems in schools emphasize several major drawbacks that need to be considered when studying the implementation of this kind of system. Cost is an obvious consideration. The equipment, testing, and installation of a system in a single school could cost \$30,000 or more (Green, 1999, Why not video cameras?) (Sauvain, 2002) (Hafner, ¶ 10). Further, the school will have to provide money in future budgets for maintaining and upgrading the equipment (Schneider, 2001).

Equally important is the question of effectiveness. "'Will it let an administrator know who did what? Sure,' said William Behre, an assistant professor at the College of New Jersey's Department of Special Education. 'Will it stop violence in any significant way? I don't think so.' He also noted that Columbine High School used surveillance cameras" (Oakes, 2000, ¶ 7). Behre was a researcher in a University of Michigan study that studied violence in Midwestern schools and how the school administration responded. Opponents to cameras claim that as passive control devices, they won't be as effective in preventing violence as an adult would be.

Another disturbing thought is that adults with access to the surveillance system will use it for profiling purposes. "What assurances can be made that a student will not be unfairly targeted for surveillance because of their race, sexual orientation, gender, appearance, or religious beliefs" (Sanfilippo, 2002, ¶ 10)? Students have the concern they will be individually tracked by school administration (Security cameras...). In *The Four Problems With Public Video Surveillance*, the American Civil Liberties Union urges "a consensus on limits for the capability of public CCTV systems" and "legally enforceable rules for the operation of such systems" (The four problems, Section 3 subheadings).

Finally, there is the question of how a surveillance system affects student morale. "When schools turn to technology as a 'quick fix,' there is a high risk of reinforcing a climate of fear and distrust, undermining the social

ecology of the school, instead of actually having an impact on the identified problem" (Schneider, 2001, ¶ 33). "What's wrong with the school? Have they lost the trust in their own students to a point that they have to spy on their lives" (Security cameras..., Con column, ¶ 2)? "There's no indication that there's a need for this kind of prison-style security. The message it sends to students is 'We don't trust you, and everybody is a suspect'" (Golden, as quoted in ACLU protests..., ¶ 6). "The more restrictions schools impose on students, the more alienated students are likely to feel, and the less involved in the learning process" (ACLU urges..., ¶ 5). "The cameras are teaching that government can and will invade your private space" (Willis, as quoted in Virginia school..., ¶ 11). "Heavy-handed school search policies foster distrust between students and administrators. An encounter pursuant to an expansive school search policy is likely to impress upon a student that he or she is inherently untrustworthy or that people who have authority may wield it without regard to individual liberties" (McIntyre, as quoted in Reutter, ¶ 5).

Legal Questions

Since laws concerning privacy issues, civil rights, and/or video surveillance vary widely, any school contemplating an electronic surveillance program should be sure to check with its school attorney prior to implementing the program. However, there are some general rules that seem applicable to most situations. Cameras cannot be used in areas of the school where staff or students have a "reasonable expectation of privacy" (Green, 1999, Legal aspects...). This would include private offices in addition to the obvious locations of restrooms and locker rooms. Conversely, cameras *can* be used in places where staff or students *lack* a reasonable expectation of privacy (Surveillance technology..., 2001). Examples include common areas like hallways, cafeterias, libraries, and parking lots. Recording audio conversations is seen to be a greater Fourth Amendment violation than video recordings at this time. "Whether the Fourth Amendment is implicated depends initially on whether the asserted search or seizure - for example, the electronic surveillance - infringes on a *"reasonable expectation of privacy"*" (Jenero & Mapes-Riordan, 1992, page 75, ¶ 2, italics are not original).

Since there are few case studies regarding the use of video surveillance in schools, a short examination of some of the existing business court cases may prove helpful. These don't apply exactly to a school situation, since most cases show the results of employee (as opposed to student) monitoring. There is no federal law that governs video surveillance, but several courts have ruled that employees have the right to be free of "surreptitious electronic surveillance" (9th circuit..., 2001, ¶ 1); employees have the "fundamental right to be free from surveillance" (Workplace

privacy..., Section B-2 ¶ 3); and employees have a "reasonable expectation of privacy against disclosed, soundless video surveillance while toiling in open and undifferentiated work areas" (Workplace privacy..., Section B-2 ¶ 3). In *Technological Surveillance in the Workplace*, a paper written for a Colorado law firm, the author points out that just as surveillance of students in schools can result in low morale, so too can surveillance of employees. "Employee monitoring may be counterproductive by resulting in lower morale, increased job stress, and perhaps even lower production" (Johnson, 1995, Conclusion, ¶ 1).

Schools should also consider what kinds of activities cameras in "public" areas observe students engaging in. "The likelihood that the Fourth Amendment's protections will come into play increases in direct proportion to the extent to which the employer's surveillance infringes on an employee's *personal* conversations or activities inside or outside the workplace. As the surveillance moves away from strictly work-related matters of legitimate interest to the employer, it necessarily moves into areas in which the employee has a heightened expectation of privacy" (Jenero & Mapes-Riordan, 1992, page 79, ¶ 4).

Recommendation

If a school is considering deploying a video surveillance system, officials should consider the following questions:

1. What specific security threats and concerns is the school attempting to address by using a particular type of security equipment?
2. How will this equipment help address these threats and how will the school actually use it on a day-to-day basis?
3. If the school is able to purchase the equipment, how will it be maintained, repaired and upgraded?
4. What might be the possible (or unintended) consequences of these security technologies? (School security...) (Schneider, 2001)

In addition, school officials should employ a cost-benefit analysis to compare investment in a video surveillance system with other alternatives to address the above questions, as well as addressing other school needs based on priorities. If the school decides to implement video surveillance cameras, officials should be sure to create a policy for use before purchasing and installing the equipment to eliminate any future confusion. A Connecticut school board found itself with installed cameras but an inadequate policy (Damon) when one member of the board questioned using the cameras 24

hours a day, 7 days a week. It was her understanding the cameras would only be turned on when school administration was not present. Now that the cameras are in constant use, she is concerned about violating student privacy. "I feel bad we didn't think about it like Margaret has [before we put the cameras in],' said board vice chairman Vincent Saviano. 'It's hard to write a policy on it when we're not clear on what the applications of the cameras are going to be.'" (Damon, ¶ 6).

Since each situation is different, it is recommended that school officials, parents, students, teachers, and community members carefully consider the above questions and the possible consequences. These systems can be useful in achieving limited objectives that are well defined and understood by all stakeholders in all stages of the planning, implementation, and assessment processes. Video surveillance can be used in conjunction with other methods of surveillance, including metal detectors, locker searches, and Internet/e-mail tracking. However, each of these other surveillance methods brings its own set of benefits and drawbacks, and schools trying to incorporate more than one method may find the situation too complicated to be effective. Although there are some strong arguments against the use of video surveillance in schools, a school that has a problem the system is effective in addressing (i.e. need to reduce property damage), a policy that clearly indicates to all stakeholders the purpose of the system, and data illustrating how the implementation of the system is the best use of available resources would do well to incorporate a video surveillance system at their school.

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Course - EPS 313

CTER program at UIUC

Course Instructor - Nicholas Burbules



Dear Parents and Guardians,

District 97 schools play an important role in the education of our children, the development of our staff and the enrichment of our community. While we are incredibly proud of our facilities, we realize the value of investing in their upkeep and improvement.

With this in mind, we submitted a recommendation to the Board of Education on December 1, 2009 for the installation of interior and exterior security cameras in both of our middle schools. You can access the presentation we made to the Board by visiting (insert address to the PDF when it is available).

These Web-based cameras, which will be accessible by building personnel and local police, will be placed in strategic locations outside the building, as well as high-traffic common areas inside such as the cafeteria, hallways and stairwells. Their purpose is to enhance safety and security for our students, staff and guests, assist in the protection of school property, and aid administrators in their efforts to provide a distinctive environment in which to teach, learn and achieve. They will also reinforce the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program that has been implemented district wide during the past two years, and provides a proactive systematic approach for accomplishing social, emotional and academic success.

On December 15, 2009, we will be seeking the Board's formal approval to install cameras in both of our middle schools. If the approval is granted, the cameras will be in place and operational by (insert date). Following the installation, we will assess their impact and make an informed decision about expanding their use into the elementary schools.

We invite you to submit your comments and questions regarding this initiative to D97feedback@op97.org. Please send us your feedback by December 7, 2009 so we will have it in advance of the Board meeting on December 15. Thank you for your continued support of the district and enduring commitment to education.

Working on behalf of the children,

Dr. Constance Collins, Superintendent