



Duchesne County School District Security Systems Overview



Duchesne County School District (DCSD) officials continue to upgrade security measures in preparation for the return to school in August. Some preparations will be common for all buildings and other preparations will be tailored to the unique school dynamics of each specific school.

There are two tactical strategy areas of school safety: hardening tactics and soft tactics. Hardening tactics deal primarily with altering the structure. Soft tactics include helping every student make a positive connection at school with peers and adults, assisting students to get involved in school, and encouraging our community to speak up when potential threats are observed. DCSD will employ both tactics in order to find a worthy balance between security, and a positive, happy learning environment for kids.

Limiting access to intruders and unsafe persons continues to be a high priority as leaders look to strengthen campuses. Because the district has recently built new schools and facilities; many safety measures were already planned and implemented during the time of construction. Several of the older structures are now under construction for improvements or under advisement for improvement.

Regarding access to schools and door security, all schools and facilities have card key technology and hard key security lock systems. At each of the schools, all non-main entrance doors are to be locked and secured. The main entrance doors at most schools are unlocked during school hours with a funnel system made up of a glass partition blocking entrance to the main areas of the school which funnels students/visitors to a buzz-in area or through the main office before giving access to the main hallways/commons areas of the school.

Roosevelt Junior High School has been approved to undergo this “funnel” construction this fall while Duchesne High School’s most recent phase of construction will include the funnel strategy at the main entrance as well. Other schools are under advisement for this funnel construction or a total office reconfiguration which would allow for the funnel construction or buzz-in strategies to be employed.

Other entrance safety features are being studied at this time. These additional measures will be utilized as deemed appropriate for each individual school to meet their unique needs.

Along with structural measures, district officials have based their safety and security planning around three procedural categories: before a crisis, during a crisis, and after a crisis.

Before A Crisis

DCSD leaders have established an efficient, strong relationship built on mutual respect with local law enforcement. Law enforcement leaders not only meet on a regular basis with district administrators, but often present/train at administrative trainings, faculty trainings, and bus driver trainings. A Roosevelt Police Department officer is employed by the district as the School Resource Officer in Roosevelt, while Duchesne County Sheriff's Office deputies cover the remaining schools throughout the county.

With the help of local law enforcement, district leaders will train new and current principals. These administrators will train faculty and staff members. Each school administrator has established a safety plan for his/her school with related procedures, depending on the level of threat to security. Fire, evacuation, and safety drills, with their accompanying paths of evacuation and relocation sites, are practiced throughout the school year.

“Lockdown” and “Alert” drills are also practiced regularly. “Lockdown” status would indicate immediate danger and would entail removing all people from the halls, locking all doors, moving students to the “hide and shelter” areas of the classroom, and calling 911. “Alert” status would indicate remote danger and involves the locking of exterior doors, the discontinuation of outside activities, classroom doors are locked, but instruction continues until further direction is received.

Emergency response manuals, with emergency phone numbers and specific procedural guidelines are reviewed annually with staff members and students. These manuals can be found in each classroom and administrative office.

A technological safety and security platform has been established with school, parents, law enforcement, and the community-at-large through text message, email, and social media links and pages. All needed information will be communicated through these sources.

During A Crisis

Working together with local law enforcement, district leaders and school principals will establish an Incident Command Center and, depending on the threat or crisis, will begin to execute plans for reaching a safe outcome. These plans include preparing and releasing truthful information through our established technology platform. These messages, if necessary, will also contain information regarding the parent-student reconnect details.

After A Crisis

Continued truthful information from school and police officials is to be shared through the district's established technology platform. This includes, if applicable, "return to school" information, and a point person designated as a direct contact to the most impacted families. School and community counseling as well as other resources will be available to students and staff. A debriefing to understand the "why" and "lessons learned" will take place.

Most recently, the district's technology team has been working to complete a district-wide effort of the installation of Audio Enhancement units in schools and classrooms. These units give the teacher the ability to record themselves teaching, complete with video and audio, for training purposes. The enhancement unit also serves as a notification device to the motherboard in the main office. If an intruder enters the room or an incident where the administrator is needed, the teacher can push the emergency button on the enhancement lanyard and a notification is immediately sent. Administrators have camera access which can also be shared with law enforcement.

With this IP-based (remote from anywhere) program, principals have access to not only the numerous hallway and exterior cameras, but also the classroom cameras and audio as well. If needed, access to these cameras can also be shared with law enforcement.

Strategically placed lock-down buttons have been installed in some schools so that when pushed, all doors will close. Each door will be locked and secured, and the card key reader will be rendered disengaged.

Summary

The purpose of Duchesne County School District is to help each student learn and prepare for happy, successful lives. We recognize that providing a safe learning environment is paramount to accomplishing this purpose. Going forward, DCSD will continue to implement safety measures and security strategies that help protect our students and staff while still allowing for a positive learning environment.

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