



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Members of the School Board  
Lori White, Superintendent of Schools  
Scott Lempe, Deputy Superintendent of Schools

**FROM:** Darrell C. Reyka, Director of Safety and Security

**DATE:** February 12, 2015

**SUBJECT:** School Board Workshop – Safety and Security

This information supplements the safety and security initiative timeline chart we have provided, summarizing select components of the district's security system plan. Security system plan details are exempt from the public records act per Florida Statute 119.071(3)(a).

### **VISITOR MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS**

- See the enclosed Visitor Management Guide for district-wide procedures.

### **SECURITY CAMERA INSTALLATIONS**

- Video security cameras support criminal and disciplinary investigations, aid in the search for lost students, deter vandalism and criminal mischief, and improve law enforcement response through rapid identification of alarm conditions. District guidelines ensure that cameras are placed only in common areas, avoiding areas where students and staff would have an expectation of privacy.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF JESSICA LUNSFORD ACT BACKGROUND CHECKS**

- Florida Statute requires that all vendors, contractors and subcontractors undergo an FDLE/FBI Level II background screening if they will be on school grounds when students are present, have direct contact with students or have access to school funds. Since its inception in 2010, we have processed 5,974 contractors/vendors in compliance with the Jessica Lunsford Act.

### **RADIO SYSTEMS**

- Two-way radios provide school personnel with an effective communication resource for day-to-day operations and rapid response to emergency situations. In addition to having UHF repeaters that increase reception reliability, each school also has at least one "public safety" radio capable of interoperable communications with 911 center personnel and emergency responders. District school buses are also equipped with radios capable of interoperable communications. Radio systems within newly constructed/renovated facilities are undergoing assessments to determine if "structural hardening" within these facilities significantly degrades public safety radio communications. We plan to address this issue through the use of bi-directional amplifiers (BDAs).

## **SITE EMERGENCY GUIDES**

- Easily accessible, clear and concise instructions are critical during an emergency situation. Each classroom and support facility throughout the district has been supplied with a flip-chart-format quick-reference emergency guide. These guides contain information such as local emergency contact numbers, response procedures in the event of an evacuation, bomb threat, armed intruder, severe weather, medical emergency, missing or abducted students and protective measures in the event of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear accident/attack/release.

## **PANIC BUTTON INSTALLATIONS**

- Panic buttons (bank holdup buttons), each with a dedicated security camera, have been strategically placed in all district schools and are monitored 24/7 by Safety & Security Department staff. The combination of a panic button, along with the immediate visual assessment capabilities provided by the camera, allow for an instantaneous evaluation of an alarm activation. This provides emergency responders with critical need-to-know information prior to their arrival at the scene.

## **EMERGENCY MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM**

- Through the use of an Emergency Mass Notification System, the Safety and Security Department is able to quickly send information to school administrators and other designated personnel via computer pop-up alerts, email and smartphone text message. Built-in flexibility allows these alerts to be sent to individual users, groups of users, or all users.

## **UPGRADE OF EMERGENCY MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM**

- The next upgrade will extend alerts to wall-mounted devices that provide audible and visual alarms, along with text-to-speech notification of emergencies for loud work/instructional areas such as kitchens, cafeterias, industrial labs, and gymnasiums.

## **RAPID ENTRY ACCESS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT**

- Law enforcement officers responding to an emergency on campus may encounter locked gates, doors, etc. that would prevent their immediate access to the area. Safety & Security staff have solved this problem by implementing a rapid-entry key system for law enforcement first responders. This project is active at three schools, and will expand to additional schools throughout the district as resources permit.

## **ENHANCED FENCING AND SINGLE POINT ENTRY**

- Managing student, visitor and local resident access to a school campus is a balancing act between ensuring student safety while avoiding the non-welcoming appearance often associated with a fenced-in commercial/industrial business. During school hours, fencing must keep students in safe areas while funneling visitors to the front office for a single point of entry. Single entry points ensure that school staff have the opportunity to screen all visitors before they gain access to students. After the school day is complete, campus fencing and gate designs allow local residents to have access to playgrounds and ball-fields, supporting a community use initiative.

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION CHAIRS**

- During an emergency, stairwells are a primary exit route for building occupants as well as an entry point for emergency responders. Emergency planning must consider that not all building occupants may have the ability to evacuate on their own. Persons who are mobility-limited or disabled may need to be physically

transported downstairs and out of the building during an emergency. Evacuation chairs, designed to provide this mobility assistance, have been placed in multi-story buildings throughout the district. User training on these chairs is in progress.

## **LEVEL 1 & 2 BACKGROUND SCREENING OF VOLUNTEERS**

- Sarasota County Schools welcomes volunteers in schools and is grateful for their support. In order to be approved to volunteer, interested individuals must apply at a school through the district's Volunteers Count registration system. This application process includes a Level I criminal background screening. A Level I screening is required for volunteer assignments in settings where the volunteer is continuously and directly supervised within sight or hearing by a school staff member. Individuals who will be volunteering as chaperones for overnight activities and some daytime activities must have a more thorough Level II criminal history investigation. A Level II background screening is required for volunteers who work with students in unsupervised settings and/or when the interaction with students is more of an interpersonal interaction. The Department of Safety & Security and Volunteer & Partnership Office processes more than 10,900 Level I volunteers annually and 1,571 Level II volunteers since 2013.

## **CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE WINDOW GLASS SECURITY FILM**

- Whether faced with a tornado, an explosion or an armed intruder, preventing or delaying threats to students and staff is a top priority. Security window film increases the strength of windows through the use of a thin, specially-formulated clear covering placed over existing glass. This covering acts to hold the glass in place (even if broken) and has proven to withstand extensive assaults. Security assessments include the criteria for identifying areas most in need of security window film.

## **STAFF TRAINING IN THE AREA OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, THE NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS), THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (DCF) GUIDELINES, AND A CONTINUED ENHANCEMENT OF DRILLS AND EXERCISES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS**

- Physical security initiatives through the use of fences, security cameras, electronic and manual door locks, and other "security systems" are important elements to a comprehensive safety and security program. However, the most essential element is well-trained staff. Every school staff member is a leader, mentor and protector in the eyes of students. An emergency situation should not cause staff to fail them. National Incident Management System (NIMS) initial and reoccurring training of designated staff is necessary to support students during an emergency and required for future eligibility of Federal Homeland and Domestic Security grants. Local law enforcement officials continue to provide the district with subject matter expertise in emergency management planning, threat assessments, and emergency response training.

## **FLORIDA SAFE SCHOOLS ASSESSMENT TOOL (FSSAT)**

- The Florida Department of Education has launched the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool (FSSAT) for conducting safety assessments in the 6,000 public and charter schools throughout the state. The FSSAT is completed by district staff and is designed to highlight the individual safety and security issues facing each school. Districts can also use FSSAT to store emergency plans, building blueprints, photos of campus facilities/grounds and staff contact information in a format that emergency responders can easily access during an incident.

## LIGHTNING ALERT NOTIFICATION SYSTEM ASSESSMENT FOR STADIUMS AND FIELDS

- Sarasota's location in southwest Florida frequently exposes it to severe weather, including lightning. District facilities and equipment have often been temporarily disabled due to lightning strikes. Fortunately lightning strikes in this area have only impacted replaceable objects. While lightning cannot be prevented, its approach can be tracked and alerts issued. This tracking and alerting capability is especially important for students, staff and visitors participating in outdoor activities at district stadiums and fields. Lightning detection alternatives for outdoor recreational facilities is a multipart system of accurate detection, early warning, and efficient notification/evacuation. Effective solutions are undergoing review by district staff.