

# Door Security + Safety

DHI'S PUBLICATION FOR DOOR SECURITY + SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

MAY 2020



## School Security + Safety

### INSIDE:

- + COVID-19 PLUSES AND MINUSES FOR THE DOOR AND HARDWARE INDUSTRY
- + HAZARD PLANNING HELP FROM NFPA
- + WHEN REAL LIFE CONFRONTS SECURITY IN THE CLASSROOM
- + JOURNEY TO A LOCKDOWN SOLUTION
- + SCHOOL SAFETY PROTOCOLS



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# YOU CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!



**JERRY HEPPEs SR., CAE**, is the CEO of DHI and the Door Security & Safety Foundation.

**I REMEMBER LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY THAT WE WERE FINISHING UP OUR WORK ON THE DHI MANAGEMENT SUMMIT, PREPARING FOR THE SPRING DHI TECHNICAL SCHOOL, AND LOOKING FORWARD TO A GREAT 2020 SUPPORTING THE INDUSTRY.**

Our registrations were on track and we were looking forward to two events that give the DHI staff a chance to be with you, our members. Then it hit - not all at once but kind of slow at first but it seemed to be building momentum. It was like you saw a light off in the distance and everyday it was getting closer and closer until one day it all changed! The country and the world will never be the same.

Interestingly, I can't recall what that day was and I have no interest going back and trying to put my finger on it. However, I do recall realizing this was big, very real and dangerous. Like every organization we went into warp speed mode trying to get ahead of the impact. We are closer but by no means are we ahead of the impact.

We are dealing simultaneously with the impact on staff, infrastructure, our programs, and the industry. For weeks, it has been a marathon and every decision weighs heavily on us because of its enormous impact.

Fortunately, with our new partners, SmithBucklin, the infrastructure was in place to work at home and the corporate office addressed the shift. In the past that would have fallen on our key staff to navigate. So we immediately turned our attention to the impact on our industry and our programs.

The top focus for the industry was twofold: to advocate for our industry to be "essential" in the opinion of the federal and state governments and to connect members with available resources from the federal government.

We succeeded in advancing the industry as "essential" with the states and on the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security

Agency (CISA) guidelines through the launch of a new advocacy program (see on our web site at [dhi.quorum.us](http://dhi.quorum.us)).

This provided members the opportunity to make a very critical and personal decision - to shut down, continue to operate, or some combination of the two. It was not our place to recommend a choice but only to do our part in providing resources to help members make a choice.

We surveyed members in late March to gauge how the crisis was affecting their businesses, and you can read the results in the article, "COVID-19 Pluses and Minuses for the Door and Hardware Industry," on page 10 of this issue of *Door Security + Safety*.

We also created a COVID-19 landing page at [www.dhi.org/COVIDSolutions](http://www.dhi.org/COVIDSolutions) that provides substantial resources to help members navigate the opportunities for relief. We held webinars on various government programs and created virtual technical education.

Our traditional programs have been postponed and rescheduled and we are adjusting budgets and strategies for making many programs available in new virtual formats.

I truly hope our industry and its employees can stay healthy through these very troubling times. If I could offer one piece of advice, it is this: We are all going to learn new and different ways to "do" business. As you navigate those strategies, create a log of ideas that will become a permanent part of society's future as well as the future of your companies.

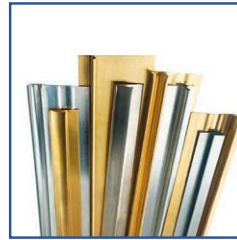
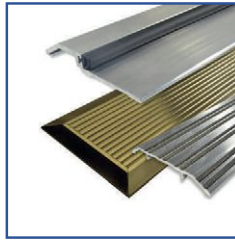
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## SAYED VASI JAFARI, AHC

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### BE A FACE OF DHI WE'D LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOU!

Volunteering to be a "Face" of DHI is a great way to expand your professional network. It allows *Door Security + Safety* readers to get to know you better and also gives you a chance to share your accomplishments and career highlights in our industry. Not ready to be a "Face" but know someone who is? Email Meghan Czaikoski at [mczaikoski@dhi.org](mailto:mczaikoski@dhi.org) with your nominee. We'll take care of the rest!

#### WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION?

Hardware division head of METALCO, KSA.

#### WHAT WERE YOUR CHILDHOOD AMBITIONS?

I aspired to be a civil servant for its social recognition and influence.

#### WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?

After completion of my B.S., I started my first job as construction site supervisor for six months.

#### WHAT LED YOU TO OUR INDUSTRY?

I was hired at entry level for estimation and project management for a door and hardware company. After a few months, I was involved in major projects and that started my complete interest in industry.

#### WHAT IS YOUR PROUDEST PROFESSIONAL MOMENT?

Attaining my AHC certification.

#### WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

As a team leader, staying motivated and striving for continuous improvement to achieve desired results.

#### WHAT'S YOUR GUILTY PLEASURE?

Social media and video games.

#### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK/MOVIE?

"The Flower Song" by Dr Zakir Hussein is my favorite book, but if I had to choose a favorite movie - the Fast and Furious series.

#### WHO DO YOU CONSIDER A MENTOR OR HERO?

My hero is my father, who taught me the value of life, honesty and trust, and how to handle failure and success. I am also grateful to my mentor, Abdullah Suwellam, for his endless support.

#### WHAT IS THE BEST ADVICE YOU EVER RECEIVED?

Have patience and good things come to you.

#### WHAT IS THE BEST ADVICE YOU NEVER RECEIVED?

Always see how you can add value, even if it's outside of your job description.

#### HOW HAS YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH DHI SUPPORTED YOUR CAREER?

DHI helped a lot in shaping my career. DHI educational programming provided me required industry knowledge, experience, skills and more exposure and recognition in the door and hardware industry.



# WE'RE NOT STOPPING AT NUMBER ONE.

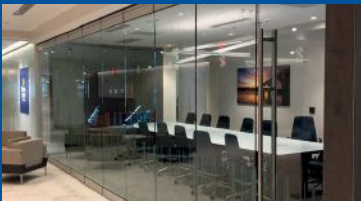
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# COVID-19 PLUSES AND MINUSES FOR THE DOOR AND HARDWARE INDUSTRY

*The COVID-19 crisis is affecting businesses across the board. The short-term pain is significant, but optimism for late 2020 and beyond is strong. Unexpected opportunities have also emerged.*

BY AL RICKARD, CAE

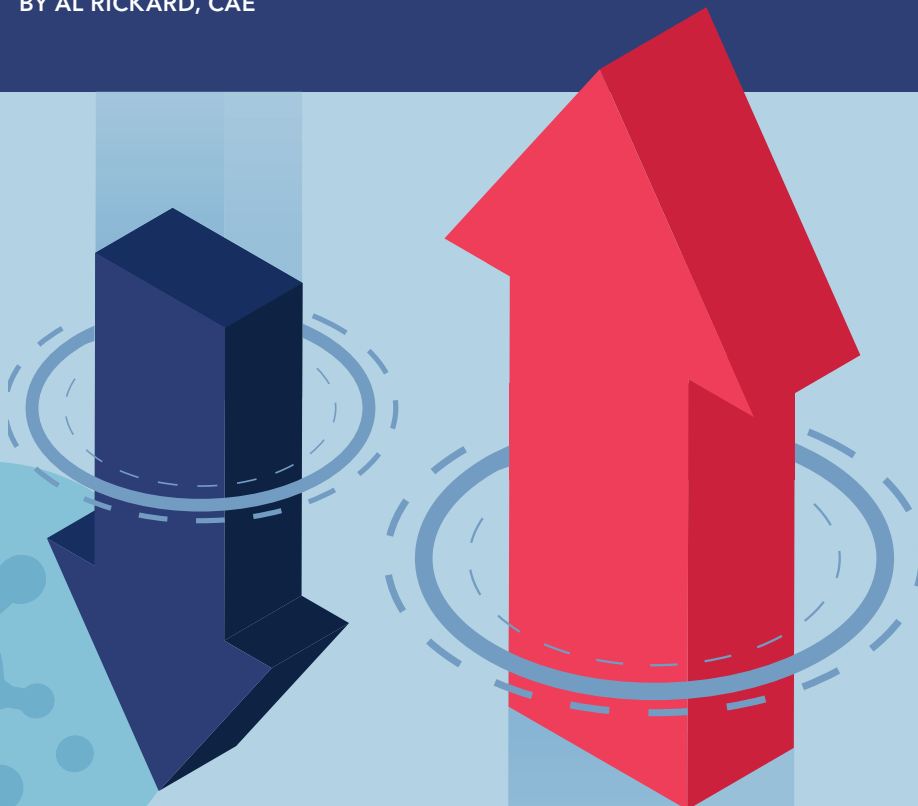
The COVID-19 pandemic has had a strong impact on every company and individual in the door and hardware industry. DHI CEO Jerry Heppes, Sr., CAE, calls this “truly unprecedented times.”

DHI acted quickly to update members about the crisis and engage with policymakers to ensure that door and hardware businesses were deemed essential in legislation that now governs which businesses are permitted to operate during the crisis.

“It is times like these that our association can become an incredible resource for information, strategy, insight and comradery,” says Jason Bennett, president of Trimco Hardware and a member of the DHI Board of Governors. “DHI has access to information from many sources which can be filtered, customized and provided to members. Keeping our members safe, being a resource for understanding various government programs, and advocating for our industry to be essential helps members make the best decisions for their companies.”

DHI created a COVID-19 web page at [www.dhi.org/COVIDSolutions](http://www.dhi.org/COVIDSolutions) that provides reference materials and links to help members make informed decisions. It is continually updated. DHI also conducted an industry survey in late March and gathered input from distributors, manufacturers, sales agents and others such as inspectors and locksmiths. Results are reported in this article.

This article reviews the impact of COVID-19 on the door and hardware industry, including results of the DHI survey.



There is also an email hotline at [covidsolutions@dhi.org](mailto:covidsolutions@dhi.org) where members can send COVID-19-related questions and/or concerns. See the sidebar, “DHI Posts Critical COVID-19 Resources,” on page 13.

## CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IMPACT

Many news reports in the DHI *Industry Watch* e-newsletter have chronicled the effect of COVID-19 on construction projects across North America.

Dodge Data and Analytics Chief Economist Richard Branch led a webinar on April 9, 2020 that reported updated Gross Domestic Product (GDP) projections, delivered results of a construction industry survey conducted in late March, and offered revised projections for construction starts in 2020 and 2021.

The Dodge GDP forecast for 2020 is -2.5% in Q1, -18.3 in Q2, +11.0 in Q3, and +2.4% in Q4, reported in annualized percent change figures.

He cited four factors impacting the construction industry:

1. Virus impact on workforce.
2. Local bans/pauses on construction activity
3. Economic impacts
4. Supply chain impacts

“March was a tale of two months,” Branch observed, noting the consistent early March activity followed by the late March downturn as the crisis kicked in. “Second quarter project starts will be down but in Q3 and Q4 and into 2021 they will normalize.”

Recent and projected construction starts in several key sectors of commercial buildings and institutions are reported in the Impact column on page 58 of this issue of *Door Security + Safety*.

Figure 1

Source: Dodge Data & Analytics.

### IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTORS

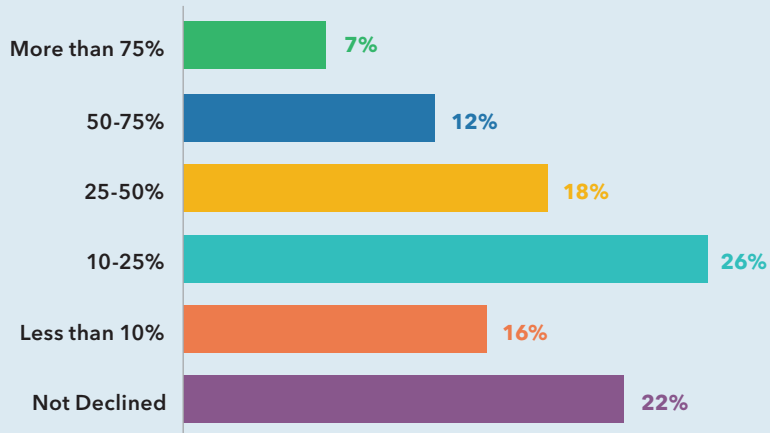
Contractors: How much impact do you think COVID-19 will have on your business in the following timeframes? Contractor responses 3/19-3/31

	Little to no	Moderate	High or very high
Currently	34%	27%	39%
In three months	12%	38%	47%
In six months	36%	26%	29%

Figure 2

Source: DHI

### BUSINESS IMPACT FROM COVID-19



Sixty-seven percent of contractors surveyed by Dodge in late March said their companies are experiencing delays due to COVID-19. Forty-eight percent report challenges in getting onsite workers and 38 percent have difficulty obtaining materials.

As Figure 1, “Impact of COVID-19 on Construction Contractors,” shows, high percentages of contractors see COVID-19 have some level of impact on their businesses now, three months from now, and six months from now.

### IMPACT ON DOORS AND HARDWARE

The industry survey DHI conducted in late March included input from distributors (48 percent of respondents), manufacturers (25 percent), sales agents (10 percent) and others such as inspectors and locksmiths (17 percent).

As Figure 2, “Business Impact From COVID-19” shows, between 15-21 percent of respondents saw no decline or less than a 10 percent decline. The largest group of respondents (28 percent) noted a 10-25 percent decline.



As shown in Figure 3, “Business Actions From COVID-19,” actions taken by customers to suspend business and/or institute new procedures for working on projects affected more than two-thirds of respondents. Seventy-six percent of respondents saw customers instituting new procedures for working on products and 69 percent noted their customers were suspending business, but not cancelling business. Notably, only 12 percent suspended projects because of the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19.

Survey respondents were asked to comment about the COVID-19 crisis and what it has meant for their business. Their comments and insights are reported below.

#### DISTRIBUTORS SHARE INSIGHTS

Approaching what is usually the busy summer season for new construction, the timing of this slowdown is another disrupting factor.

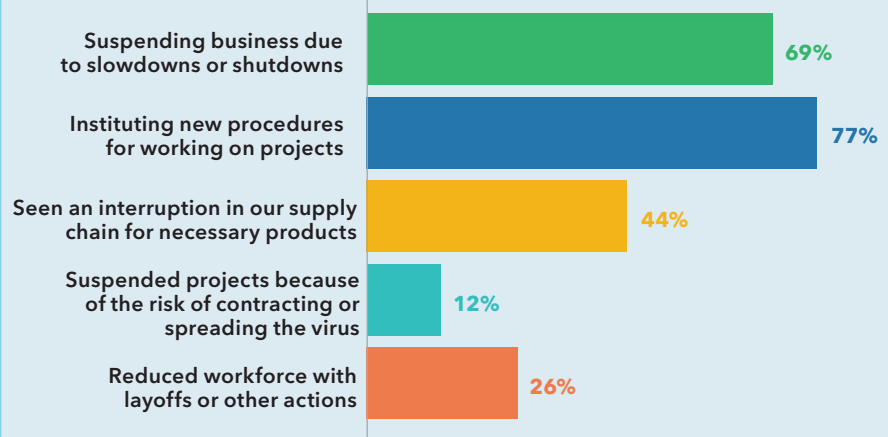
“As a distributor, we are caught in the middle of the cash cycle, so this will impact us greatly,” one respondent said. “Quoting has not slowed down, but orders have virtually stopped. Our backlog is healthy but our resources to keep our workforce whole are evaporating quickly. We are in survival mode until new construction resumes.”

However, one distributor saw an increase in business, saying, “Our business has ramped up since the shutdown. We are bidding more projects, closing more work and releasing more materials into production full speed ahead, ironically

Figure 3

Source: DHI

#### BUSINESS ACTIONS FROM COVID-19



in the New York market. We are still fully staffed and distanced between offices and remotely.”

Other distributor comments included:

- Several bid opportunities have either cancelled or been delayed. We can only assume that the full financial impact has not been felt yet.
- Fear in the market is slowing down the number of projects bidding in the short term.
- Ninety percent projects are put on hold – no new projects in last two weeks.
- We find all “wish list” projects are on hold and people just aren't spending money unless they absolutely have to.

Another distributor said, “A large portion of our business is driven by the hospitality and entertainment industries, which have been decimated by this pandemic. We have incurred a significant loss of revenue as a result of projects being cancelled or indefinitely delayed. This affected our ability to maintain our current level of staffing and other initiatives that were in development.”

#### DISTRIBUTORS SEE DROP IN AFTERMARKET BUSINESS

While certain sectors of the market remain relatively strong, others have suffered.

“The construction business is still strong,” a distributor said. “Calls for aftermarket projects have slowed.”

Another observed, “It’s very early in the game, but we see a significant reduction in short-term shipments/billings due to jobsite disruptions. Also, our aftermarket incoming business has dropped off 33 percent or so.”

Distributors also depend on a reliable supply of products to serve their customers, and that has been affected in some cases.

“Contract work is hindered by material price increases and a lack of material,” a distributor commented.

“There is a lack of consistency in state/provincial governments' definitions of “essential services” that are leading to additional supply chain challenges,” another distributor explained.



### **DISTRIBUTORS GO REMOTE**

Several distributors reported increased levels of remote operations.

“We are trying to keep people healthy by working from home where possible and keeping them busy with quote follow up and an emphasis on receivables,” one said.

Another noted a challenge in this area: “We have had to work remotely, which is not a norm for our office. It is harder to keep track that everyone is on top of their projects and work. It is difficult for a manager to tell if his/her team has anxiety over these new work directives.”

“Office staff are working remotely and warehouse staff are working two shifts to limit contact,” another explained.

One distributor said the crisis “allowed us to further address the virtual office opportunity and work out some of the challenges that need to take place.”

### **MANUFACTURERS OPEN FOR BUSINESS**

“We are open for business,” one manufacturer said in the DHI survey. “Each day brings new challenges and changes.”

Another related, “We are in full manufacturing mode. Overtime has been cut. We have five at-risk employees working remotely from home. We had one major OEM account suspend shipments until further notice. I anticipate orders from our contract hardware and wholesale accounts will start to decline. How rapid a downturn I cannot predict at this time. I anticipate our accounts receivable will dramatically be extended to 90 days+ as some customers either cannot pay or will watch their cash flow.”

One manufacturer observed, “The cadence of work across the country is different. We shut down for three days to allow management to generate protocols and labor plans.”

Still, some had to lay off workers.

A manufacturer said, “We unfortunately had to lay off some of our workforce. We are able to keep the others employed through this. We are rotating schedules of office personnel to work from home one week at a time. That way we always have someone in the office for phone calls and other needed paperwork. We have talked with our manufacturing team on numerous occasions, stressing to them the importance of hand washing, social distancing, and protecting each other so we all stay healthy.”

### **CRISIS OPPORTUNITIES**

DHI survey respondents were also asked if the crisis created any new opportunities for their businesses due to changes in health care and security needs or other factors. Several reported positive stories.

### **DISTRIBUTORS FIND NEW BUSINESS**

“We are providing doors to the local hospital as they fit out quarantine areas,” a distributor said. “These have not been huge orders, but we have been able to provide the needed support to the hospitals as we are considered essential in Maryland.”

Another remarked, “We have been contacted by numerous facilities for sneeze guards. Using a borrowed light frame with glass with a speaker hole and letter slot we have been able to provide service in a new way.”

## **DHI POSTS CRITICAL COVID-19 RESOURCES**

DHI created a COVID-19 web page at [www.dhi.org/COVIDSolutions](http://www.dhi.org/COVIDSolutions) that provides reference materials and links to help members make informed decisions. It is continually updated. Some important resources include:

- + World Health Organization (WHO) and Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 websites
- + Key COVID-19 legislative updates from organizations such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Department of Labor, Small Business Administration, and more
- + Human resources advice from Affinity HR Group
- + Upcoming and on-demand webinars
- + Status of upcoming DHI events

# BENCHMARKING IN THE COVID-19 CRISIS



March 2020 was a month like we have never seen. We entered March riding the wave on an 11-year economic expansion that began in 2009. The biggest worry for many companies was finding workers to fill positions.

There are similarities between the financial crisis of 2008-2009 and the coronavirus pandemic of 2020 - a sudden jarring breakdown in the economy, followed by a massive response from policymakers to prevent a depression.

The challenging time we face right now is a strong reason for door and hardware distributors to participate in the annual DHI Financial Benchmarking Survey. What we learned from 2008/2009 was that even in challenging times some companies survive better than others. The present-day environment will be just as important to track those companies that persist compared to those that struggle.

The door and hardware industry will need reliable benchmarks for what happened in 2019 and how performance is impacted in 2020. Some will get through these difficult times better than others.

To participate in the annual DHI Financial Benchmarking Survey, Distributor Corporate Members can login at [DHI.org](http://DHI.org) and download the survey.

Other comments from distributors regarding health care facility work include:

- Hospitals are ordering frames, doors and hardware to set-up triage areas.
- In healthcare projects we have been asked to deliver product sooner than originally scheduled.
- In our area the hospitals have slowed and/or put on hold some of the upcoming renovations, while business at some of the outpatient clinics have increased.
- We have addressed some immediate health care facility needs and some work on temporary structures.
- Hospitals and medical facilities as well as other places are upgrading security.

A distributor explained, "Some government funds are being released as stimulus for rehabilitation or maintenance projects."

Another said, "We anticipate increased infrastructure spending to assist with economic recovery."

Heightened sensitivity to good health may mean other opportunities ahead. A distributor explained, "We are more aggressively promoting the use of antimicrobial hardware finishes. In the past, there was agreement from facility manager that it was a good thing. However, many objected to the additional costs. We hope objections will be less going forward."

Two manufacturers also weighed in on this topic, saying, "Customers are looking more at antimicrobial products," and, "Opportunities to specify copper alloy products will arise."

One distributor saw this positive development in the crisis: "One opportunity it created is the ability to strengthen the relationships with our customers."

## MANUFACTURERS SEE SOME BOOSTS

"We're working at a fast pace on a special opening for a mobile pop-up hospital," one manufacturer reported.

Another said, "Break-ins are on the rise, so we see growth in forced entry products."

Still another commented, "We see some new opportunities to leverage technology."

## LEADERSHIP AND UNITY A SILVER LINING

Some manufacturers see a silver lining with increased leadership and unity among their staffs.

"It's created an urgency," one manufacturer said. "We're seeing leaders at all levels step up. It's showing the values and character of our company in a positive and caring light."

Another reported, "We are fortunate to have a great team that has rallied around the crisis and quickly adapted to the challenges of COVID-19."

Still another commented, "There is an increased sense of unity among employees."

A distributor said, "Everyone in our business has stepped up is and doing their part to protect themselves and those around them. The challenge is like nothing any of us have ever seen and we must all do our part to minimize the spread of the virus."

## CONSTRUCTION A LEADING INDICATOR

In looking toward construction as a leading indicator, one door and hardware distributor said, "Understanding work site closures, project cancellations or indefinite delays will provide a vision downstream so we can prepare for a slowdown rather than have to react and lose efficiency in the scale of our response."



Interestingly, Dodge Data & Analytics reported that the number of non-residential building projects entering early planning stages in late March 2020 was off by about 25 percent compared to the same late March timeframe in 2019. While significant, this drop was perhaps less than expected given the shutdown of most of the economy during that 2020 window.

Branch offered five points for contractors to remember as the construction industry endures an unusual 2020 business cycle:

1. Be prepared for a painful Q2.
2. Quarterly patterns matter.
3. 2021 will be better than 2020.
4. 2022 will be better than 2021.
5. There are lots of projects in the pipeline. Be aggressive, be creative!

### BUSINESS LESSONS TO CONSIDER

John Mackay, managing partner at Mackay Research Group, a company that provides financial benchmarking for distributor companies and is a partner of DHI, observes, “In 2009 price cutting was rampant. When sales volume is soft, firms almost instinctively resort to reducing prices in an effort to ‘keep things going’ even if they are going poorly.”

But he explains that in a down market, cutting prices only makes things more challenging. “For every \$1 million in sales, a 1 percent gross margin reduction means a \$10,000 profit reduction,” he says.

Mackay notes the current crisis is not caused by a lack of demand as was the case in 2009. Rather, it is caused by a pandemic.

He also cautions, “Don’t lower the investment in inventory. You can’t sell what you don’t have. When demand does re-emerge, you need to have an adequate in-stock position.”

A distributor who responded to the DHI survey also said, “This reminds us in a big way the need to maintain a strong cash flow position even during the best of times.”

A sales agent commented in the DHI survey, “Factory shutdowns, even when temporary, have reminded me that we as a society and industry are accustomed to quick service and answers. Delays in response, or inaccessibility to technical support and technical information, can create dramatic interruption. Being used to quick service is both a blessing and a curse, for both provider and recipient.”

### DOORS AND HARDWARE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

A door and hardware distributor offered this positive message in the midst of the crisis:

“This is an opportunity to remind the industry and the world how important we are to slowing the spread of the virus. Among other things, our industry is here to provide

support in times of crisis. Labs are conducting their pharmaceutical tests behind the very doors the industry specified, manufactured, distributed, and installed. Properly functioning automatic operators are also essential in stemming the virus.”

Heppes noted, “The coming weeks and months will be challenging for DHI and the industry, but collectively we are all doing what we can to mitigate the crisis and take advantage of the economic rebound that we know is ahead.” +



**AL RICKARD, CAE,** is editor of Door Security + Safety magazine. Email: arickard@dhi.org.

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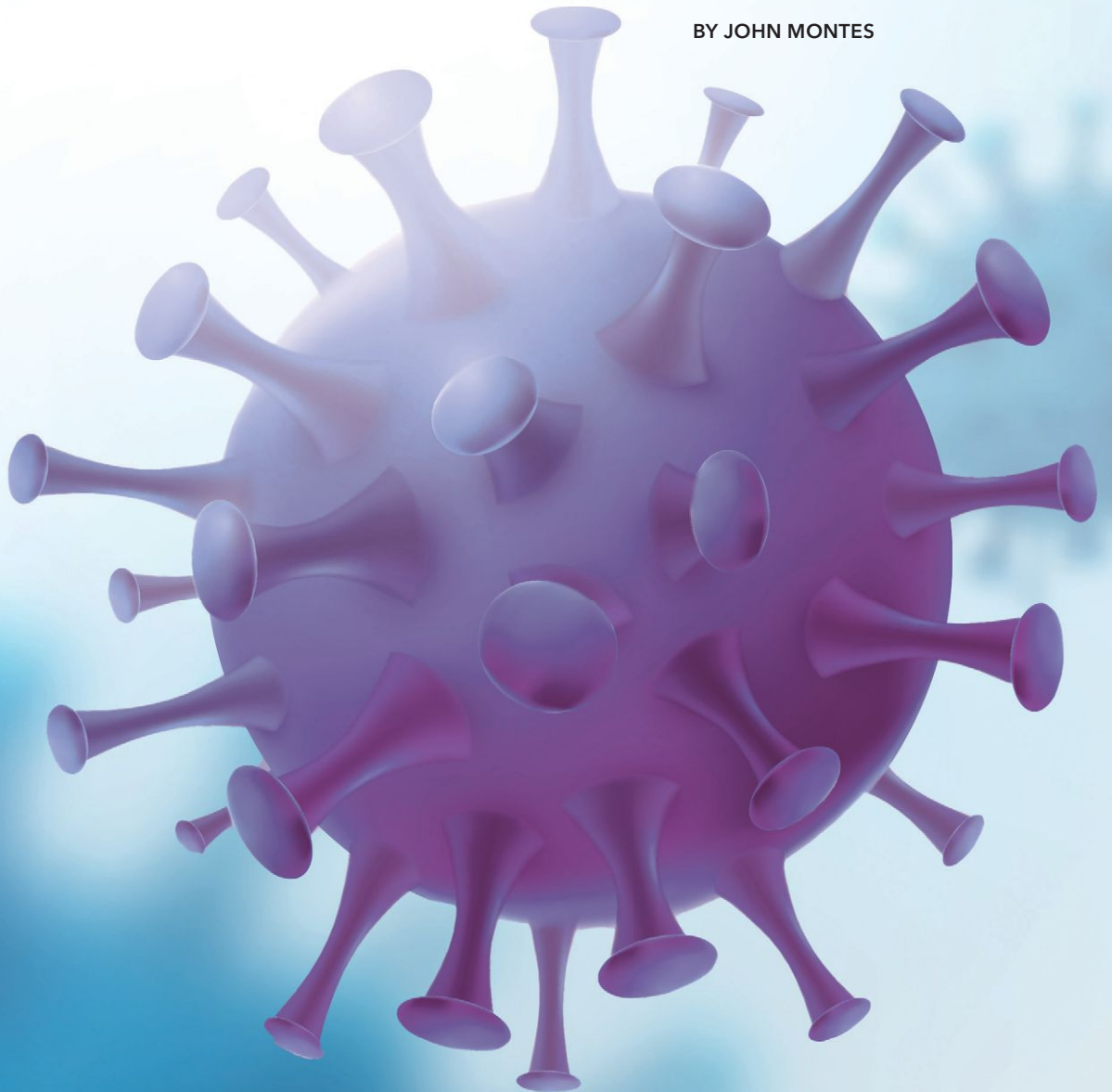
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# *Hazard Planning?*

## **NFPA Can Help**

BY JOHN MONTES





## *The COVID-19 pandemic reinforces the need for assessing risks and defining emergency preparedness strategies.*

**With the active spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) around the world, many businesses, schools, responder agencies and healthcare facilities are either dusting off their continuity of operations plans from the H1N1 outbreak in 2009, or just writing them from scratch.**

Would it surprise you to know that the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has codes and standards that drive much of the emergency preparedness requirements enacted by local, state and federal government agencies? For example, the NFPA 99 Health Care Facilities Code has an entire emergency management chapter.

The 2012 edition of the standard has been adopted by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) and the Joint Commission that accredits more than 22,000 U.S. health care organizations and programs.

NFPA 1600 Standard on Continuity, Emergency and Crisis Management is also incredibly useful in times of emergency because it sets a format in which entities can review their essential functions and plan for any upcoming events.


The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (the 9/11 Commission) recognized NFPA 1600 as the National Preparedness Standard® for the United States. The document is widely used by public, not-for-profit, non-governmental and private entities on a local, regional, national and global basis. NFPA 1600 has been adopted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as a voluntary consensus standard for emergency preparedness.

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted many to analyze business resiliency and emergency preparedness, but perhaps more importantly, the outbreak reminds us that all hazards must be considered when it comes to emergency management.

For example, NFPA 3000 (PS) Standard for an Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) Program provides specific and tailored information about ASHER incident preparedness, response, and recovery. However, the best practices within that groundbreaking standard can be applied broadly for an all-hazards protocol and easier recovery.

Here are some steps you can take today to address emergency preparedness.

1. Start by forming an internal team and conducting a business impact analysis for the different threats your organization might face. These may include pandemic outbreaks, ASHER, or natural disasters. Be sure to leverage staff experience and expertise, and include representation from across your organization. Sometimes the janitor is more valuable for planning purposes than a member of the management team.
2. Conduct a resource analysis and needs assessment overview. Factor in working with your external stakeholders and vendors because outside resources may experience their own impact and reduction of services. Consider your physical and technological capabilities. Will your facilities be secured? What security benchmarks do you have in place? What technology do you have access to or can you acquire to keep operations going, even if your systems are impacted by a threat?
3. Evaluate and prioritize your core functions and business processes. Can they be accomplished in a reduced or alternative manner to continue service? If needed, approach regulatory agencies now and start planning as if you were impacted. Request adjustments to laws and regulatory requirements that are reasonable to support your minimum operations. For example, some states might modify ambulance regulations to allow only one, instead of two, licensed EMS professionals in the ambulance during a proclaimed emergency. Bringing this to the attention of policy makers will help mitigate potential staffing shortages and allow ambulance services to surge their resource availability, when necessary.
4. Invest in mitigation strategies identified through the business impact analysis and the resource needs assessment. If you are looking at the safety and security of your facilities and discover that your door hardware is not up to current codes, while most likely perfectly normal because of the age of your buildings, consider upgrading that critical infrastructure so that it serves as a measure of safety for multiple threats. The same rationale applies to investing in technology so that staff can work remotely and access critical systems in a secure fashion.



**“  
Adopt an approach with goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timebound (SMART) to reduce overall strain on one person or one specific group within your organization.**

5. Get ahead of any crisis by planning ahead and putting your resiliency plan into action early. It is better to be cautious and proactive than cavalier and reactive. If you respond and regroup early in a crisis situation, you will be able to build and adjust as you go instead of reacting to every new situation.

The process of performing a business impact analysis, conducting a resource needs assessment, building smart objectives, establishing emergency response plans and defining your organization's recovery plans can be daunting anytime, let alone when there is a major emergency underway.

Coordination efforts cannot be accomplished in a vacuum or by a single individual. It is important for every entity – public or private – to have a solid emergency plan that is considerate not just of the entity but also of the community, stakeholders and/or the customers being served.

The greatest challenges that many entities face are bandwidth and well-intended over-reaction. As organizations hurry to meet changing needs, they often struggle to dedicate a resource or resources to the “what if” aspects of their operations. But remember, many hands make less work.

#### **CHECK YOUR SOURCES**

As a crisis escalates, you may be tempted to seek information from any source. While it is important to be assertive and proactive when activating your plans, it is also important to stick to them and not depart from baseline safety requirements.

For example, a facility was taking steps to leave all fire doors propped open. While it may make initial sense in order to reduce the possible spread of the COVID-19 virus on door handles, it is not recommended because of the fire safety and security concerns it creates.

A better practice is for people to use hips or elbows to push panic hardware, provide wipes to occupants so they can use them to grab surfaces and/or to put hand sanitizer stands near doorways.

#### **ASSEMBLE THE TEAM**

This underscores the need for a well-rounded functional team, including external stakeholders. A code enforcement official would quickly recommend an alternative option to keeping fire doors open.

Identify someone to be the lead, responsible for gathering all of the necessary information and organizing it into your emergency preparedness plans. Appoint planning teams that represent all facets and operations of the organization.

Remember – the people who keep an organization running or know its functions the best are often those who may not be at the top of the company hierarchy chart. Building facility managers or janitors have broad oversight of buildings and campuses and understand systems and often have the best handle on what needs to be considered as part of a life safety strategy.

When assembling your crisis response team, consider staff talents and experiences too. By identifying a cross-functional team, and appointing a lead with strong project management skills, your organization will be much more successful as you strive to identify resources, gather key input and implement strategy.

Adopt an approach with goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timebound (SMART) to reduce overall strain on one person or one specific group within your organization.

## ALL HANDS ON DECK

The foundation of NFPA 3000 is a “whole community approach. “Although this document was established in 2018 to help authorities deal with the growing surge of active shooter incidents and other mass casualty events, the planning, response and recovery guidance can be applied to all hazards.

NFPA 3000 emphasizes the importance of internal and external stakeholders working together long before the worst happens. Regardless of the emergency, be sure to invite emergency responders (police, fire and EMS) and members of the emergency management, public health, code enforcement, and community organizations to take part in your planning process.

When emergencies occur, schools can be a great location to gather resources and assemble people, and ultimately deploy a response team into the community.

Businesses may also be great staging areas because they often have the physical construction, security and capabilities that make them an excellent springboard for community action in the event of an emergency. For

example, an office building may have large parking lots and roads that lead to main thoroughfares, making it ideal for dispensing resources in the event of an emergency.

NFPA is here to help organizations as they look to build out plans that assess a variety of risks and define best practices for emergency preparedness. NFPA 99, NFPA 1600 and NFPA 3000 are great resources as you look to define your emergency preparedness protocol or to vet your current strategies.

Consult the NFPA 1600 checklist NFPA Emergency Preparedness Checklist or contact NFPA to learn more about a facility planning workshop that walks parties through the process of developing emergency plans. Resources are available at [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org). +



**JOHN MONTES** is an emergency services specialist at NFPA and staff liaison to the technical committees for EMS, Fire Service Occupational Safety and Health, Hazardous Materials Response, and Cross Functional Emergency Preparedness and Response. Email: [jmontes@nfpa.org](mailto:jmontes@nfpa.org).



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# When Real Life Confronts Security in the Classroom

*Safety codes and best practices in securing classrooms are specific and strict. But what happens when everyday student situations occur? An industry professional who was a teacher explains.*

BY ASHLEY LANGE



## The disparities that exist between delivering effective classroom instruction and complying with safety and security protocol are varied, scattered and numerous.

Aside from the usual classroom disruptions like loud, grinding pencil sharpeners, flickering fluorescent light bulbs and requests for a pass to the office, restroom and water fountain, the procedures implemented to secure and enhance the safety of schools oftentimes interrupt the ebb and flow that is the learning process.

One of the most difficult and delicate tasks of an educator is getting and

keeping the attention of students. This task is also so precarious, so incredibly vital, that teachers will temporarily and unintentionally forgo safety and security expectations in an effort to keep students focused, engaged, and productive.

By giving a glimpse into my past experiences as a teacher, I hope to offer insight that will foster a more open and effective dialogue between

AEC (Architecture, Engineering, and Construction) professionals and school district members.

Building projects intended to improve and secure the safety of the learning environment (whether new construction or retrofit) come with more than just a monetary price tag. A heavier burden is felt throughout the duration of the project, but I believe that burden can be alleviated. Perhaps the process can be equally rewarding as it is demanding.

### *Disruptions Abound*

During the past 10 years, I've taught middle and high school English



in various public schools in two different states. Though the discipline infrastructures were unique to each school, the one consistent expectation was for teachers to stand outside their classrooms in the hallway during breaks between classes. Once the bell signaled the start of class, whether I spotted a frantic speed-walking seventh grader down the hall or not, my classroom door was to be closed and locked with the door window (or, door lite) left uncovered.

In theory, these are simple expectations, but in practice, can actually hinder the flow of instruction. The disruptions caused by the entering, exiting and re-entering of students are numerous and unpredictable. Even with the most stringent rules to regulate such activity, the problem persists and negatively impacts more than just instruction.

### *Compliance is Complicated*

The following scenario is from actual experiences I had as a teacher. The names of students have been changed.

We are nine minutes into the period and despite the rule that states, “No restroom passes permitted within the first 10

minutes of class,” Katy returns from the bathroom with a boisterous knock and several hasty turns of the handle before remembering the door is locked.

Eduardo shouts a request for an office pass to replace the tissue box his runny nose has consumed, and James asks to get a drink of water but will sneak away to his gym locker where he left his work that’s due today.

A few students in back, seated near the window, complain the cold draft is insufferable and plead for the door to be propped open so heat from the hallway can circulate and warm the room. (I can hardly deny them this since the classroom heater has been down since 4 p.m. yesterday.)

I handle each mini-crisis and attempt to maintain what little instructional momentum remains. I have yet to show a video so I quickly connect my laptop to the projector as a volunteer hits the lights, closes the door and tapes the recycled sheet of paper over the door window. Doing so eliminates glare on the screen and makes for a better viewing experience.

A closed door cuts down on unwanted noise transmission, but of course,

there are still two students out of the room with passes who will reenter any second. I can’t afford another disruption, another knock that steals my kids’ attention and sidelines their focus. I need them engaged.

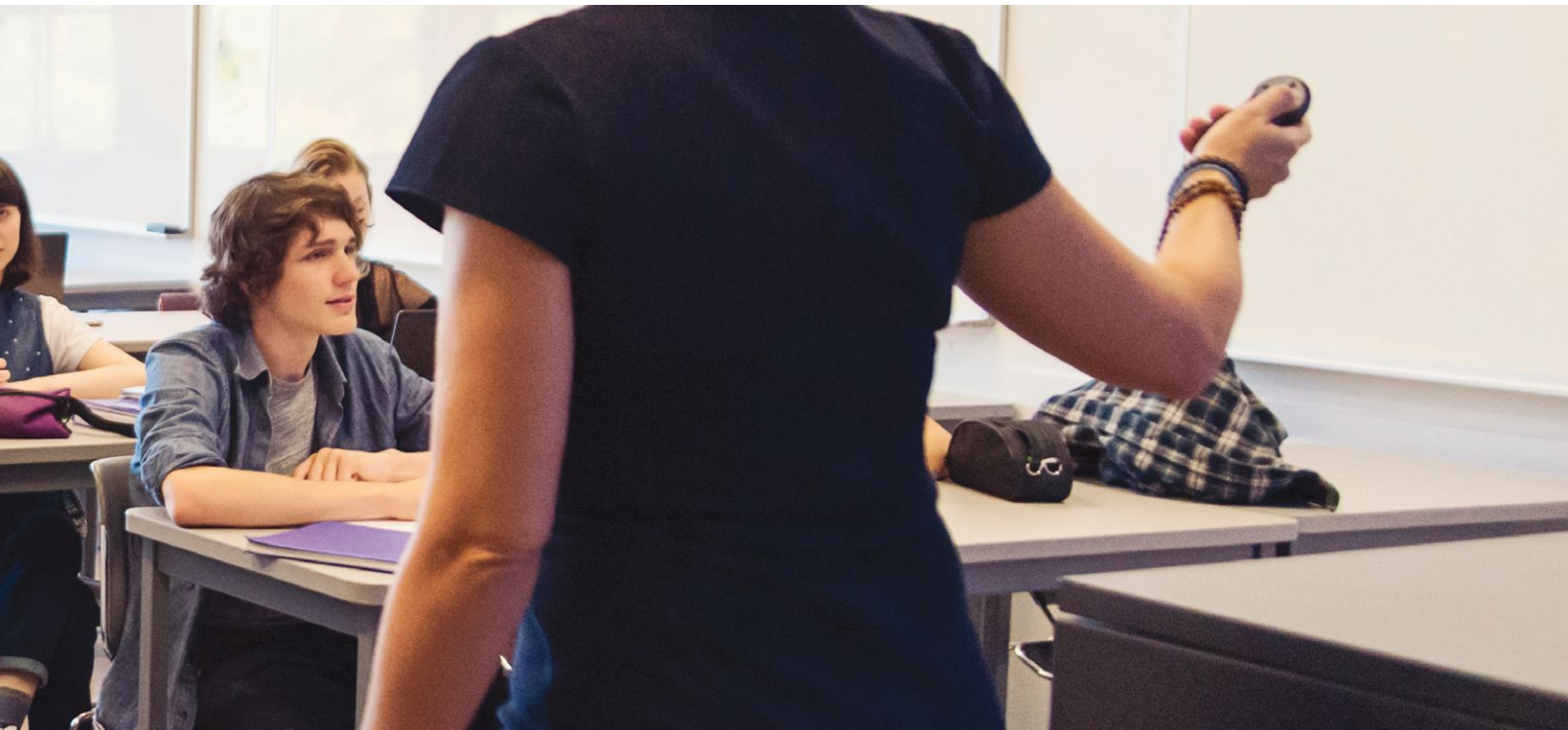
I unlock the door and prop it open with the nearby trashcan, which will allow the incoming to enter quietly without disruption. (This also satisfies the request of the kids chilling in the back.)

It works. The video concludes, class discussion ensues, work is collected, and the bell rings – that’s the end and the start of doing it all over again.

What was the imminent threat in this scenario? My teacher brain says the threat was losing my students to the deep abyss of distraction and accomplishing none of the lesson’s objectives.

For the sake of instructional time, I chose to bypass my own classroom rules and ignore safety protocol. Had there been consequences for my non-compliance, I probably would have accepted them as a warning and continued business as usual.





In hindsight, I can say I'd never compromise safety for the sake of anything, but in those few chaotic moments, what looks like non-compliance or an unwillingness to cooperate is actually just pure survival.

Safety and security protocol and the likelihood of an intruder attack are not topics highlighted at every weekly staff meeting. Weekly meeting agendas are composed of reminders of the plethora of expectations set forth by the district and the state – tasks educators must complete in order to track accountability in areas such as assessment, discipline, parent contact, curriculum and fulfilling our own professional development requirements, to name a few.

In public education, exceptions to rules and procedures stem from situations with variables that cannot possibly be factored into the standard or the everyday norm. All that is to say if a teacher's classroom door is wide open and unlocked, you can bet there are such variables at play.

### *System Errors*

It's interesting, but not surprising, that efforts to comply with procedures

can be thwarted by the system itself. Take, for instance, a request as simple as re-keying a single lock on a door in a school building. This requires a lengthy, paperwork-heavy process that, once in the approval stage, hinges on the availability and allocation of funds within the district.

A behavior specialist at an elementary school in Florida shares this specific frustration. "Our school has not been re-keyed, and it won't be re-keyed until the district initiates it. When a student becomes violent, I respond immediately by sprinting to the classroom. Once there, I have to quickly unlock the door before any intervention can begin, but there are seven – yes, seven – master keys that a person must carry to access any room on campus. I rush to a room but waste precious seconds fumbling multiple keys."

Due to lack of funding and political issues influencing district decision-making, the school principal and staff cannot make any final decisions, and suggestions must be submitted to the district. If I were the teacher with the violent student in this situation, I might think about leaving my door unlocked.

Consider, then, projects much larger than re-keying a single door. An entire campus security retrofit, for example, is an extremely intricate, multi-dimensional task with numerous time-consuming approvals and authorizations before construction can even commence.

Just presenting such a project to a school board will incite confusion and frustration that will eventually trickle down and seep into the cooperative foundation sought by the architects, engineers and construction workers who will eventually complete the project. Is there a way to ease this confusion and frustration? Are there ways we can encourage and ensure cooperative collaboration?

### *Solutions to Complex Needs*

In the summer of 2019, one of our engineers and I visited a couple local schools. With the barrage of products being offered and marketed to the school security and safety space, we certainly were not unaware of the possible need in our own school communities.

After touring the schools and talking with administration, we learned



the largest discrepancy between the schools' safety and security philosophies lay in their stance on the controversial covering of classroom door windows.

One district adheres to local law enforcement advice against any type of covering that partially or completely blocks the view into a classroom. Doing so can impede first responders trying to determine if the room is occupied, and if it is, whether occupants are safe or in need of emergency care. Even in lockdown situations, the view from the hallway into the classroom remains unobstructed.

The other district, just two miles north, had been searching specifically for something useful in blocking the view into classrooms in a lockdown situation. The Abbotsford School District superintendent shared with us solutions they had already tried, such as retractable blinds (and of course, the DIY recycled piece of paper and tape).

At the center of Abbotsford's safety and security directive is the belief that if an intruder cannot see into the room to determine the presence of possible victims, the intruder will quickly move on rather than spend time, and ammunition, trying to gain access. Quite a different perspective compared to its neighboring district.

Since Abbotsford still needed a solution, the engineer and I kept the conversation going with

the superintendent and head of maintenance. After some brainstorming and prototype testing, the district obtained approval to have a window cover stored on every classroom door, readily available in case of an emergency lockdown.

Maintenance Supervisor Mason Rachu believes for the Abbotsford School District, "This is exactly what we were looking for. It's practical and adds an additional level of security to our building. It's nice that it provides another dry-erase surface for teachers to use too."

I will definitely second that ... a teacher can never have too many whiteboards.

### *Reach Out Get Involved*

The experience with Abbotsford School District is one that should happen more often in the industry, and one that will become an integral part of the school security and safety outreach plan I am spearheading. The urgency of this initiative is only going to intensify, and much like my responsibility as a teacher, contributing to this conversation is crucial in my current role.

Had I not invited myself into the hallways of those schools, I would not have gained a full and authentic understanding of the issues the schools were facing. I also would not have confirmed what I already believe to be true – that approaching a problem with

an open mind, encouraging input from several perspectives, and keeping the common goal at the forefront greatly increases the likelihood for success.

### *Want to Get Involved?*

If you or the company you work for are unsure where to begin, feel free to contact me directly and I can guide you through the initial steps. You can also reach out to organizations such as the Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS), which is dedicated to the mission of better securing our schools and creating safer learning environments.

As industry professionals, we can initiate and maintain an open dialogue with school district decision-makers and others in the AEC field and have a serious positive impact on the journey to safer learning environments.

Together, we can alleviate confusion and frustration and see the process for what it really is – safeguarding and securing our most valuable asset, our children.



#### **ASHLEY LANGE**

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Handwritten notes and drawings on a bulletin board, including a drawing of a bird and a drawing of a person's face.

Handwritten notes and papers on a desk, including a pink note and a white note.

An electronic lock with the lockdown feature initiated.

# OUR SCHOOLS' JOURNEY TO A LOCKDOWN SOLUTION

How an industry professional and parent made a difference.

BY HAL KELTON AHC/CDC, CFDAI, CDT, RCI

In August 2018, my oldest child was entering middle school. I reached out to the principal and volunteered to help evaluate their current school security/lockdown measures and see what assistance I could provide.

Just months earlier there were two horrific school shootings – at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida and at Santa Fe High School in Santa Fe, Texas. I couldn't fathom this happening at my children's schools.

Everyone was looking for ways to prevent these tragedies in their neighborhoods. As a member of the commercial doors, frames and hardware industry, I felt an obligation to better connect with our customers and our communities.

How can our combined expertise and our highly tested and proven products not meet our community's needs? How

can someone run through a school opening door after door, wreaking terror on our children, faculty and staff at will?

In the aftermath of these tragedies, how could we let our guard down as an industry to allow devices called "door barricades?" How could products that do not comply with building and fire codes and requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act even be considered viable options to prevent these tragedies? Somehow it happened.

## MEETING WITH THE STAKEHOLDERS

As luck would have it, our school district was just beginning to look at all the school locks to see what

additional steps it could take to improve security. Both the middle school principal and the district director of facilities invited me to meet with them. We discussed the current evaluation they had underway.

The two schools in the district are very different. The middle school was built in 1998 to accommodate the growing suburbs in my area of California. The elementary school with a rich history dating back to 1904 has had numerous remodels as well as door and hardware upgrades.

In recent years, the district had updated almost all classroom and campus locksets to cylindrical locks with the classroom inside cylinder lockdown function (BHMA Function F88) or to an exit device with keyed dogging (BHMA Function 09) – no fire doors.

The district's most recent teacher feedback indicated they were not sure whether they were locking or unlocking the cylindrical locks when attempting this from inside the classroom.



Ronnie Rehn with Smo-Key Key Service installs a red button lockdown device incorporated into the endcap of a panic device that is easy to find and engage.

## TESTING KEYPAD LOCKS

I received demo products from three prominent lock and accessory manufacturers for the schools to start testing. Stand-alone, battery-operated keypad locks were the first to arrive. These locks were designed as a school lockdown product with numerous access control features and functions not available in a traditional mechanical lockset.

For example, multiple doors could be locked down with the push of a single key fob. Re-setting from lockdown mode could also be accomplished with the key fob. Access codes, as well as an administration override code, were all programmed with the keypad. Installation was quite simple.

Since we stayed with a cylindrical lockset and with the same manufacturer as the original locks, the existing key cylinders and keys were reused and only a few more holes were required for the cabling and through-bolts. The programming was typical for these types of locks and the user training was minimal. Initial input from the teachers was positive and they were anxious to start their testing.

## TESTING PANIC LOCKDOWN BUTTONS

The next two products to test were strictly mechanical in design, with simplicity, speed and reliability as the main focus.

The first, a panic hardware lockdown button, addressed a better way to secure the classrooms and corridors that already had panic devices installed. California school designs often incorporate classrooms with exterior doors, generally held open during the day when the weather is agreeable.

Many teachers had handwritten directions on their doors – an arrow to show which way to turn the key – but they were not always confident they were locking their door. Invariably, they would open the door to double check that the lever was secure from the outside (the outside of a locked room is referred to by the Department of Homeland Security K-12 School Security Survey as the “Danger Zone”).

Other teachers kept their doors locked while utilizing a \$4 magnetic door strike cover to prevent the door from latching and allowing entry from the locked side. However, these doors opened out and the only way to remove the magnet in an emergency was to open the door and retrieve it from the

Danger Zone, hopefully also checking that the outside lever was in fact secure.

I commended the district on all that had been done to update their school locking solutions over the years. I made a point of discussing the building and fire codes that mandate free egress from these rooms as we began strategizing new locking solutions.

We adjourned that meeting with a plan for me to reach out to some manufacturers willing to provide demo units for the district to evaluate in classroom settings. We would focus these installations on budget-conscious solutions, both electromechanical and mechanical. The classrooms selected were those assigned to faculty who were on the schools’ safety committees.

Installing a mechanical lockdown device.



Virtually all panic hardware on campus had been upgraded with the incorporated keyed dogging feature. This allows faculty and staff to leave the exterior levers secure, while dogging the devices down and leaving the hardware unlocked, if they choose to, throughout the day. In an emergency, the teacher, administrator, or staff member would use their key to undog the panic hardware, enabling them to lock the door without opening it.

While this functionality is quite common in the educational market and served this occupancy well, it still requires a key to perform, something a substitute teacher is not always provided with and students never have. The panic hardware lockdown button we tested was a great way to make the locking function quicker

and available to anyone, with little to no training required.

While the key is still required to dog/unlock the panic hardware, a simple push of the red button on the endcap of the panic hardware undogs and locks the door instantly, without the need of a key or special tool. Installation was relatively simple for the district's experienced locksmith.

#### **TESTING CODE-COMPLIANT RETROFIT LOCKING DEVICES**

The last locking solution to be tested was an add-on retrofit locking bolt that works in conjunction with the existing cylindrical locks. This unique product is easy to integrate into multiple campuses that may have a number of lock manufacturers and key systems already in place.

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The mechanical lockdown device after installation.



the lock and its functionality to the teacher as students were lining up to re-enter the classroom, all of them quite intrigued by what had been done to their door.

Without missing a beat, the teacher repeated my impromptu training session with the kids and told each of them to push the button and see how it works as they returned to their desks. Thirty-two seconds later, there were 33 people on campus who knew how to lockdown their classroom in seconds. With a dozen or so new locking devices installed on two campuses, testing was officially underway.

I was given the opportunity to present the district's testing objective to administrators, faculty and staff at both schools. It was important that everyone was aware of the new locks on campus. I also listened to their concerns and explained why these locking devices were being tested. We reviewed the various non code-compliant barricade devices and why they should not be used.

### A DECISION IS MADE

A few months later I heard back from the school district. They made a decision to use the strictly mechanical lockdown functions, using a "red-button lockdown" solution. The red-button lockdown solution was a recommended practice promoted by the Department of Homeland Security in the infancy of its School Security Guide. It has been adopted by commercial lock manufacturers in their newest school-focused security hardware offerings.

Now that the district had direction, it was a perfect time to reach out to the local fire chief and deputy fire chief to present the lockdown plans and function to them. The chiefs had only a few concerns and it was great to have them onsite so we could demonstrate the lockdown procedures firsthand and get their approval.

Finally, we had to develop a budget and get school board input and approval. I was invited to a school board meeting to present our test findings and to discuss the importance of implementing this district-wide security upgrade and justify the benefits and costs. With a unanimous "yes" vote, it was time to implement the changes.

### ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Then it was back to faculty meetings for a formal presentation of the approved lockdown-hardware solutions and an opportunity for faculty to get a close look at the process for securing their doors. As an exercise, I asked everyone in the meetings how long they thought it would take to secure their classroom or work area.

Let's think about this for a minute. How many seconds will it take for you to get to your door, retrieve the key and lock the door? Do you have to open your door to double-check that it's locked? If the door is held open, is it accomplished with a door wedge or a kickdown hold-open device? How much more time will it take to remove these obstacles and secure your door?

These are critical seconds that can literally be the difference between life and death. We learned from the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School that we cannot overlook the importance of keeping a lock-down solution simple and quick to perform. The largest loss of life that horrific day was in two first-grade classrooms. The doors were unlocked, and by coincidence, one had a substitute teacher.

The consensus of the teachers was that it took 60 to 90 seconds to secure an opening with the security methods they had in place at the time. Those precious seconds could be mitigated with proper commercial door and hardware products and applications.

A simple push of the large, red button extends the stainless steel deadbolt in the lockdown device. Because the lockdown device also attaches to the cylindrical lock's lever, turning the inside lever of the lockset retracts both the latchbolt of the lock and the deadbolt of the lockdown device, allowing free egress with a single operation at all times. Exterior override for administration or first responders is provided with the use of a rim cylinder.

Like our first two products the installation was quite simple. Two through bolts, a rim cylinder hole, and finally two pilot holes on the inside were accomplished in short order.

As it happened, school recess ended right as the district's locksmith finished installing one of the devices. I took the opportunity to describe



According to an FBI study of active shooter incidents between 2000 and 2013, 70 percent were over within 5 minutes, the balance in less than 2 minutes. It has also been found that in most cases, being behind a locked door is the safest place to be but it would be naive to assume a locked door is all you need to stay safe.

### NO MORE DIY HOLD-OPENS

As the new locking solution was being procured, it was time to go after those darn kick-down and wedge hold-opens. They were convenient but probably not quick to release in an emergency.

I referenced a few nearby classrooms that had hold-open closer arms and suggested that this was the way to move forward, albeit with a heavier duty version. Now anyone could swing the door closed quickly from the held-open position, combined with the intuitive red-button lockdown on either the panic hardware or rim lock. We were all confident that full lockdown could be accomplished within a few seconds.

I left faculty, staff and administrators with the task of reviewing their lockdown procedures in anticipation of the upcoming active shooter training they had scheduled.

In our meeting, we discovered that faculty had different ways and reasons for how they secure their particular classrooms throughout the day. It was imperative that the set of procedures they decided on as a group were consistent, easy to repeat, code compliant, quick to implement without special knowledge, tools or keys, and were universally adopted as part of their "Security and Emergency Plan."

A little more than a year later installation is underway on both campuses. The district has adopted and implemented a standard lockdown procedure. It has gone through multiple emergency and lockdown training sessions with students and first responders. This district is clearly continuing in the right direction.

### WE ALL HAVE A ROLE

I challenge everyone who reads this article to reach out to a school district to offer your expertise, encourage analysis of what they have, and help determine what improvements they may need.

More importantly, teach them about basic life safety regulations and what unproven and untested devices they should avoid at all costs.

Your door industry expertise will rarely be tested as much as when you have to take a holistic look at a school campus, how it functions, the uniqueness of the faculty, staff and administration, flow of traffic throughout the school and classrooms as well as the budgeting and approval process for making such improvements.

And if you don't think you can make a difference, I submit to you my example of how a simple email and gesture to help can turn into a great collaboration. +



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# Integrating Locks With School Safety Protocols

BY GUY GRACE



**I am often asked by other school safety professionals about where they should start when building their security programs.**

My first answer back to them is, “Did you conduct a risk assessment of your school facilities?”

Comprehensive security plans, and the policies and procedures created to implement them, form the foundation of school safety and security. Without proper policies and procedures in place, it is impossible to successfully use security technology and other security measures, regardless of how advanced they may be.

The chairman of the Partner Alliance for Safer Schools provides guidance on school safety and security policies and procedures and how door locks and hardware are essential components in these plans.

Effective policies and procedures alone can mitigate risks, and there are often no costs associated with implementing them. When I analyze emergency operations plans in my district and other districts it is clear that locks are a big part of mitigating risks.

Let's review some basic protocols used by many schools in the country and how important locks are.

### **1. Lockdown**

A lockdown usually involves locking and closing doors, moving students out of sight and requiring students to remain quiet within the room. Lockdowns should continue to be included in

any options-based approach to active assailant training, which provide students and staff with a range of alternative strategies to save lives and the permission to use them, considering variables such as the nature of the threat, time of day, and locations of students.

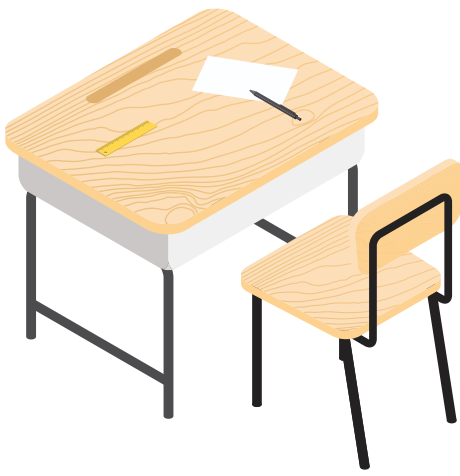
Like other safety drills (e.g., fire or tornado), it is important that the ages and developmental levels of students and the physical layout of the school campus (e.g., ease of access to outside doors and proximity of places to hide other than classrooms) are considered when communicating to students and staff concerning lockdown. The ability to lock a door is paramount in this protocol. It is also important to unify lock systems with lockdown processes. For example, fire doors and strobe lights could be tied into the lockdown.

### **2. Secured Perimeter (Lockout)**

A secured perimeter addresses threats outside the building, often initiated when there are emergency situations taking place in neighborhoods nearby, such as a crime in progress, police activity or a dangerous animal in the area. This protocol is used often in our schools across the country. It is easy to see how important locks could be in this situation.

### **3. Shelter in Place**

Shelter in place is initiated in situations that may require staff and students to shelter in their classrooms or work areas. It is more restrictive than a secured perimeter, as staff and students are not allowed to move within the building. Unlike in a lockdown, however, staff and students can remain at desks or workspaces. Shelter in place is generally initiated when it is possible that an area emergency may escalate and having students and staff sheltered behind locked doors may be critical to safety and order. I have seen my schools have to use this protocol on occasion. The key to safety is that the staff and students are sheltered behind lock doors.



#### 4. Room Clear

A room clear procedure is initiated by a teacher or supervising adult to send students away from a potential threat, such as a student acting out in a violent manner. It is also used when the teacher must remain in the dangerous situation but can send students to a designated safe area.

Sadly, in my role I have seen this protocol used often. To be honest, one of the most critical items that helps us de-escalate these situations is the ability to contain the person(s) who are acting out. That is facilitated by good door hardware and a firm hand.

#### 5. Evacuation

Providing school occupants with a clear path to evacuate a building is just as important as door locks. Proper signage is important, and exit doors must be in working order. Ensuring that rooms, hallways, and exit doors are not blocked is literally a matter of life and death in an emergency evacuation, as numerous building fires and other emergencies have demonstrated over many years. School administrators must also conduct periodic evacuation drills so that teachers, students, and other school personnel know how to evacuate in an organized manner without causing panic.

#### Good Practices

It is also a good practice for a school district to have mechanical door lock and key control policies and procedures inside and on the exterior of the school consistent with the following:

- Classifying entrances as either primary, secondary or tertiary.
- Securing entrances into the school by blanking out (or deactivating) keyed locks of doors that are not necessary for ingress (secondary or tertiary).
- If an access control system is in place, placing key locks on these doors for a backup (primary).
- Maintaining an exterior master key system (preferably removable core type) separate from the interior door system. In the event a key is lost, only exterior doors need to be rekeyed in order to secure the building. Using removable cores facilitates a quick and less expensive method of rekeying.

- Establishing an exterior master key for an entire district or for each individual building.
- Ensuring that all classrooms, gymnasiums, cafeterias, media centers, etc., have full access by all staff to allow access through locked doors in an emergency.
- Keeping several sets of master keys available to be handed out to tactical units during an incident.

#### Evolution Makes Safety Better

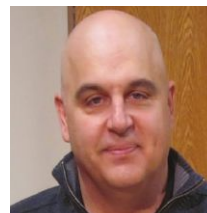
One of the most exciting security industry innovations is that lock manufacturers are now making older mechanical locks compatible with electronic solutions such as standalone and wireless access control locks.

Many schools across the country have interconnected classrooms, partitions and large spaces with multiple entrances that present challenges to secure during an attack. Most districts have these challenges. One of the biggest fears for teachers that have interconnected classrooms is what happens if the adjacent classroom did not lock the door. These technologies help ensure all doors get locked.

When putting these technologies in place, the end user should consider these points:

- Locks should have a visual indicator. From the interior of the room, the condition of the lock (locked or unlocked) is visible to room occupants.
- Staff in these classrooms should be provided with wireless fobs that lock the door. The solutions I chose in my district use their own proprietary wireless gateways. However, I had these lock systems unified with existing wireless fobs. As a result, if the school already has a lockdown and mass notification system, these fobs should be tied into the system to initiate the lockdown and lock the doors.

As a school safety professional I am very thankful for the door lock and hardware industry and its continued innovation in providing quality safety and security hardware and solutions. +



**GUY GRACE** is chairman of the Partner Alliance for Safer Schools and director of security and emergency planning for Littleton Public Schools in Littleton, Colorado. Email: ggrace@lps.k12.co.us.

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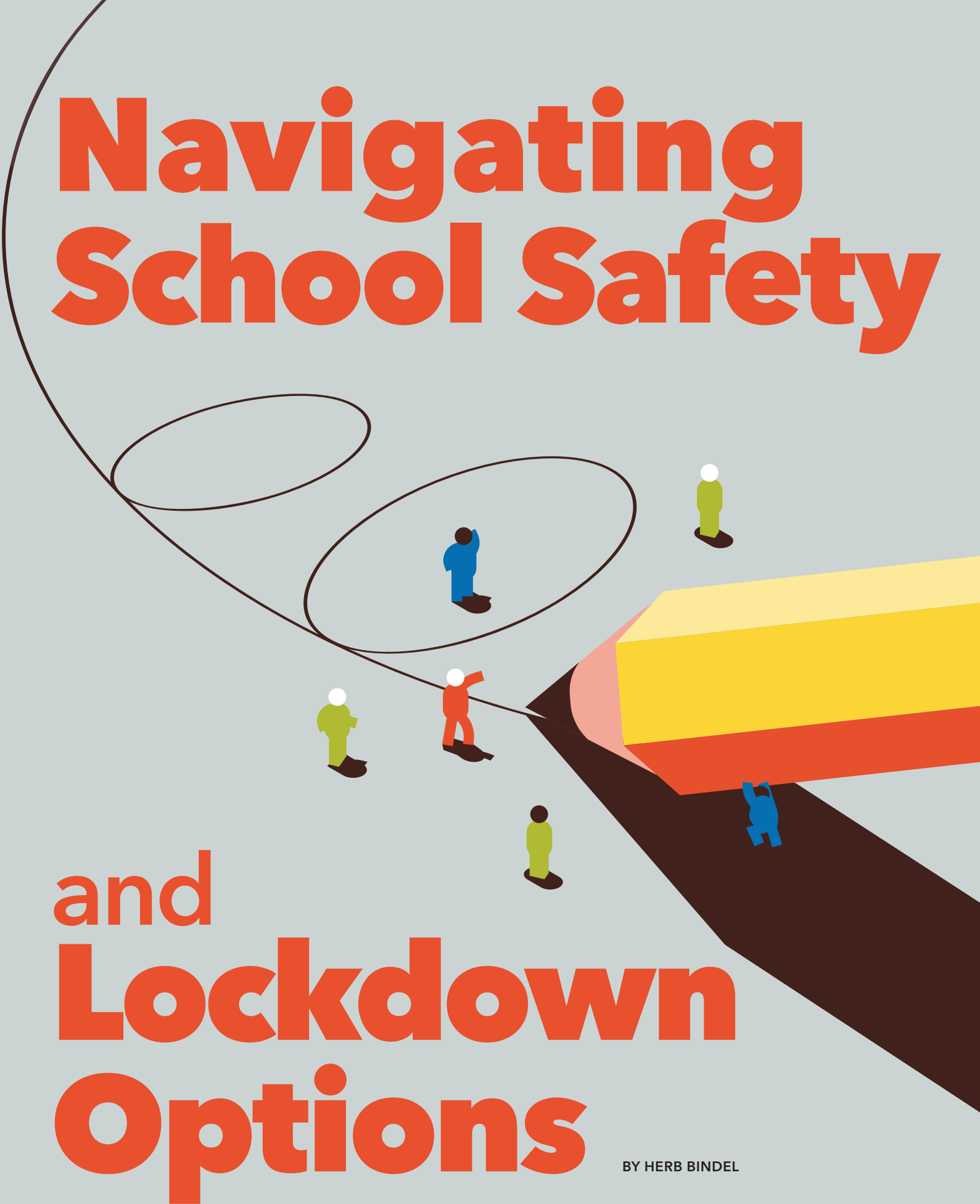


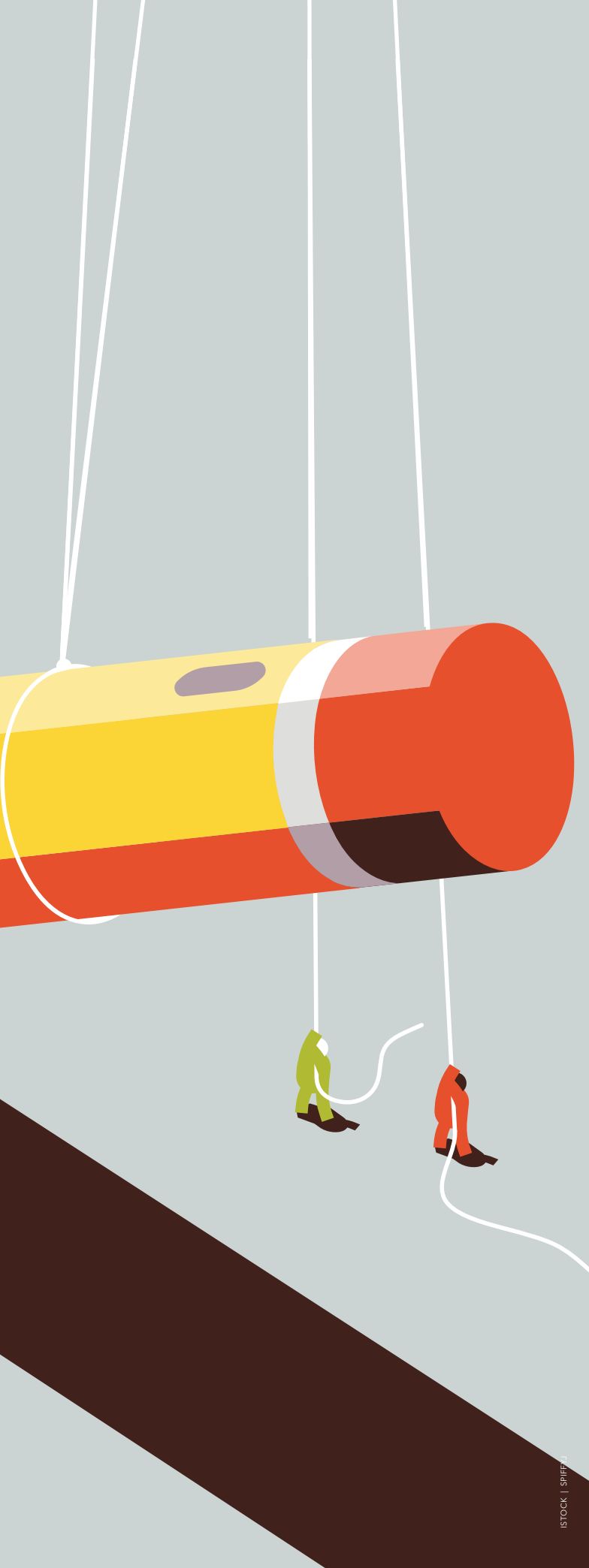
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# Navigating School Safety

## and Lockdown Options

BY HERB BINDEL





Every day, schools face the potential for a wide array of violent incidents. That is why administrators, parents and the public are focused on school safety and lockdown options.

**To stay current in the industry and provide customers and end-users with the latest in safety and security solutions, door and hardware professionals recognize the importance of offering electronic access control (EAC) systems.**

When electronic access control was first introduced, it was overwhelmingly complicated. The good news is, as technology has improved, EAC systems are easier to understand and present to the architectural community and facility decision-makers.

There are a variety of electronic access control systems with lockdown capabilities on the market, along with many possible non-code compliant classroom barricade devices. It can be overwhelming for door hardware consultants and decision-makers to determine the best choice that meets the building code for life safety while also making schools more secure.

“To consult effectively as a door and hardware professional, you need to be comfortable with the system,” explains Nick Ealy, technical sales specialist, access control, for Hager Companies. “The more you use it, the more you understand it and the more comfortable you get. That goes for all access control, security and lockdown systems on the market.”

This is why the first step is always to educate the end-user on different approaches to enable a lockdown process – and how they affect safe egress. Take, for example, these three approaches.



Batavia Elementary School in Batavia, Ohio.

- 1. Unrestricted Lockdown:** A button on a wall or desk can be designed to initiate the lockdown process as soon as it is pressed. The advantage is that anyone – from principal to parent – that sees a threat can begin the lockdown process by merely pushing that button.

This scenario could also be a disadvantage, as an intruder could also initiate the lockdown process by pressing the button. It is important to understand that while this type of lockdown could prevent emergency personnel from entering the building, it would not stop people from egressing.

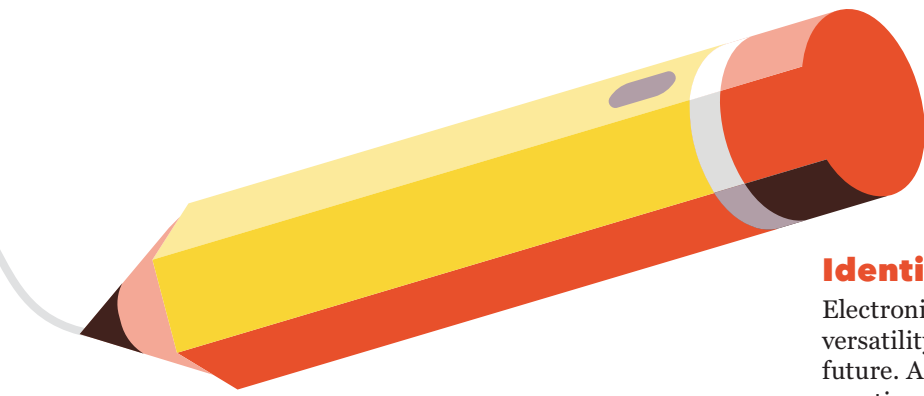
- 2. Authorized Lockdown:** Only those with an authorized credential can initiate lockdown. Often this is the principal, the security team and other designated personnel. Each person has a specialized credential, such as a fob, that they present to any online access points that creates a pre-determined stream of events (as set up in the software) to initiate lockdown.
- 3. Software-Enabled Lockdown:** The software is programmed to trigger a lockdown. Even the most basic electronic access control system has this feature. Still, there are ways to enhance performance, either with add-ons or integration with third-party software.

## Lockdown Approaches

Every school district is widely different, from the student population to building layouts. This means each has its own unique set of perceived threats and security needs. In our experience, a school typically approaches lockdown in one of three ways:

- 1. Doors Always Locked.** Some schools are choosing to keep their classroom doors locked at all times. Procedurally, this is simple because everyone knows the doors are always locked. If using mechanical locks, it is important the school maintains security of its keys and control over the master key system. With electronic access control, an offline product can cost-effectively achieve the same results.
- 2. Classroom Intruder Locks.** This lock function is available with mechanical and electronic access control. It works by allowing the teacher to lock the door from the inside of the room. Many school districts like this lockdown option because the teacher can lock the door from the classroom without having to step into the hallway. These locks also give the teacher the ability to leave the door unlocked the majority of the time, which makes the building feel more open for students.





### Identifying the Best Option

Electronic access control gives a school facility the greatest versatility for safety and security needs, now and in the future. As the safety and security expert, the leading question to finding the best solution may be, “What does lockdown look like for you?”

“One action could be as simple as locking down the perimeter of the school, which blocks active credentials from entry unless they have lockdown override,” Ealy suggests. “Another approach could be closing all doors with magnetic hold opens, which will section off the school and reduce the ability for someone to move from one part of the school to another. It depends on what actions the school wants to see when a lockdown is initiated.”

John Acton of Mitchell Sales & Associates agrees. “In choosing the right variables for lockdown, it’s important to note that schools all have different needs. Additionally, the

**3. An Integrated Approach.** With this electronic access control option, the locks are integrated with other security features to trigger a lockdown. For example, video cameras that detect the flash of a gunshot or audio sensors that detect the sound of a gunshot can trigger an automated action to lockdown the school. In this example, the approach could involve an immediate perimeter lockdown while adding a delay of 30 to 45 seconds before the system locks down interior doors, which gives people time to react.

These are just a few of the many options available.

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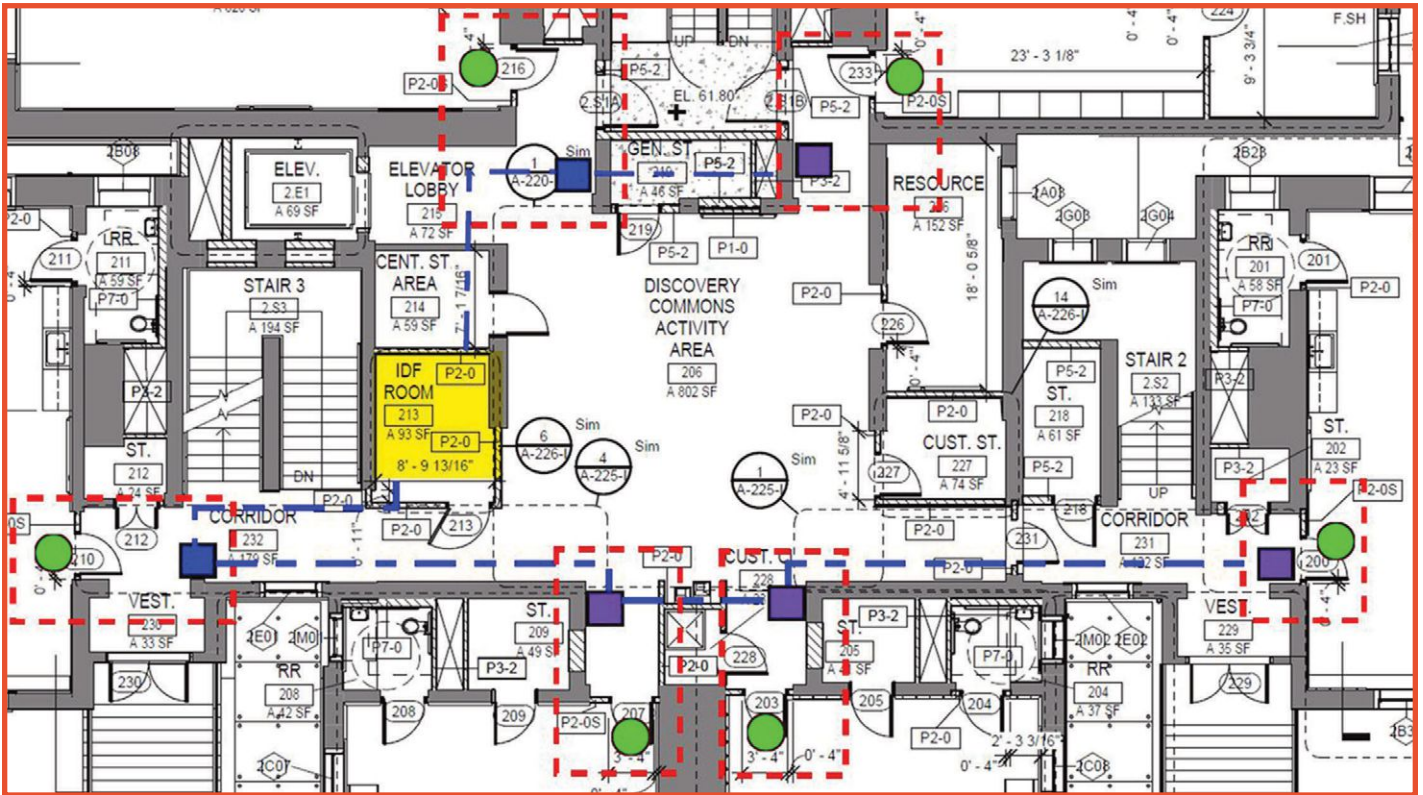
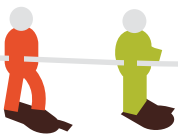
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Locks and wireless communication points are plotted to develop coordination between the distribution, integration, and construction management teams. The system's architecture is created to coexist with existing building spaces, with room for future expansion.

administrators have differing opinions on how to enact a physical lockdown and when precisely to do it. The key is to help them walk through all of the decisions logically so they can determine what that looks like for them.”

A distributor in Texas takes the approach of selling the full electronic access control software package to each of their clients, including modules that may not be immediately used. “This works well for them because the schools want assurances that as their needs change, they can implement nearly any new lockdown protocol without upgrading the software,” Ealy explains.

Mike Stefani of Integrity Architectural Solutions notes that most of the school district end-users they consult with are smaller with 10 or fewer buildings. However, they are in a high-growth area and will be expanding in the next three to five years.

“If these schools don’t have access control yet, we start by educating them on the basics and focusing on locking down the exteriors,” Stefani says. “We’ve seen that once they become comfortable with the basics of electronic access control, and when they get more funding to expand security, they turn to us for their needs.”

Because of the rapid advancement of technology, nearly any lockdown scenario is possible. That means if a client wants

a complex series of events to happen to enable lockdown, it can probably happen.

Stefani has a project that currently involves 3,000 locks. The client expressed the importance of having the system correspond with the bell schedule. The locksets on the classroom doors unlock when the period ends and automatically lock again when a new period begins.

“When a school is willing to analyze their current structure and identify their potential security flaws, they will also gain an understanding of the level of security they need to keep their kids and staff safe,” says Ealy.

Door and hardware professionals have the opportunity to educate the channel, from the architect to the general contractor and end-user. Starting the conversation early in the new build or retrofit process is essential. +



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Armoured One's Training team provides a Level II interactive training specialized for the cafeteria at Baldwinsville's Palmer Elementary School

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**TAKING ACTION TO**  
**ENHANCE SCHOOL SAFETY**

**44**  
**SECURE AT THE**  
**SCHENCK SCHOOL**

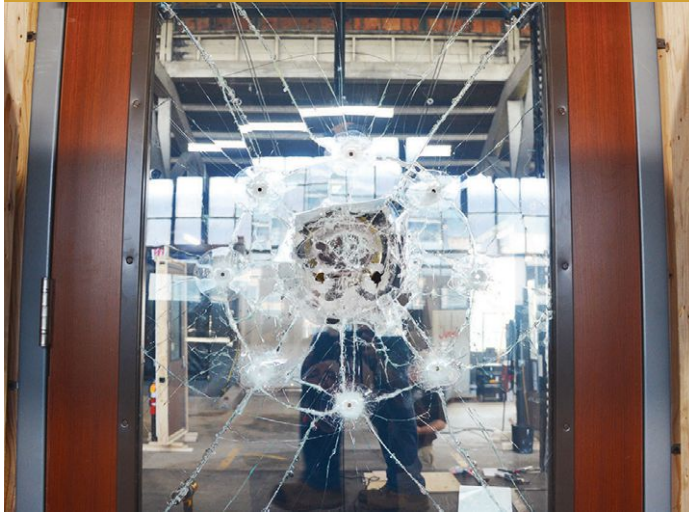


BY TOM CZYZ

## Taking Action to Enhance School Safety

*How one school superintendent acted to improve safety and security in his district through training and shooter attack resistant glass and film.*

In 2012, Matthew McDonald was the deputy superintendent for Baldwinsville Central Schools in Baldwinsville, New York. He remembers vividly watching the events unfold at Sandy Hook Elementary where an attacker killed 20 small children and six staff members in just under three minutes.



Armoured One's Shooter Attack Certified Glass in a Masonite Aspiro™ Series Attack Resistant Door System after being shot and attacked.

His first instinct was to hop on a plane to Connecticut to help. However, he quickly realized it was more important to show his community that he was committed to their safety.

McDonald knew that the same type of incident that happened at Sandy Hook could happen anywhere.

"All I could think about were the children and staff and how scared they were in that community," he says.

Just a few years later, McDonald became the superintendent of the school district and implemented the first major steps towards better safety and security in his schools.

Active shooter incidents in the United States have continued to be a challenging issue for leaders across many industries. The highest number of active shooter incidents in the history of this country occurred in 2018. While declining slightly in 2019, they continue to threaten the security of the general public.

According to an ongoing study by the Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the Naval Postgraduate School, there were 110 school shooting incidents in 2019 - that's just in the education sector. In the past decade, it has become increasingly important for leaders to consider their options in protecting their employees, patients, and students.

## GETTING STARTED

McDonald knew his community was no different than many others. Drugs, people with mental health issues, violence, weapons - they all existed outside the walls of his schools. He knew he had to help protect nearly 6,000 students plus the faculty and staff.

"After Sandy Hook, people were very scared," McDonald recalls. "And the biggest question was, 'What are we doing in Baldwinsville?' So I started communicating with my community. It's very important to me that my students and staff come to school in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning. I put together a committee and as a part of that committee I reached out to Armoured One to see what they could do to help us."

Armoured One's mission is to provide solutions to leaders of educational institutions, medical facilities, and businesses that will help slow down or prevent an active shooter incident

in their buildings. Their goal is to save lives and give law enforcement more time to respond to an incident and apprehend the attacker.

McDonald met Armoured One Co-Founder and CEO Tom Czyz in 2016. Czyz is a former homicide detective and SWAT operator, father of six and husband to a teacher. When Sandy Hook happened, Czyz could not fathom the idea of his children not returning home from school because they had been murdered in their school. So, he started Armoured One to enact change and save lives.

## INITIAL INVESTMENT

McDonald's first course of action was to hire Armoured One to complete security assessments for each of his eight school buildings. Subject matter experts in physical security and active shooter incidents look at every vulnerability of a building.

They complete a comprehensive report on how leadership can make improvements to increase the safety and security of its buildings. These assessments are based on in-depth perspectives from active shooter subject matter experts from both local and federal agencies.

Soon after the assessments, McDonald reached out to Armoured One for active shooter training for his faculty and staff. He knew getting everyone on board would be a challenge.

"It's very scary and I knew there were some faculty members that were very impacted by Sandy Hook and Columbine and it's not easy when you talk about somebody coming in and shooting children or shooting staff," McDonald admits. "But I was able to build that trust and that relationship with my staff because they trusted me and they know that I have their safety at heart."

With training, the chance of surviving an active shooter incident increases significantly, especially considering that the majority of incidents have been carried out by current or former students or employees.

Armoured One's training focuses on the Run-Hide-Barricade-Fight model and explores how employees can mentally prepare and react when an incident occurs in their building.

## TAKING IT FURTHER

While he was happy with the assessments and training, McDonald knew there was more he could do to protect his students. He worked with Czyz and his team to fit some of his buildings with shooter attack resistant glass and film. The decision to invest in infrastructure was an easy one for McDonald.



Armoured One's training team provides specialized breakouts for the classroom at Baldwinsville's Palmer Elementary School

"What I communicate to the taxpayers is that you can't put a price tag on safety because God forbid something happens in Baldwinsville like it did at Sandy Hook, you can't take that back," McDonald explains, "I have made a commitment to our kids, our staff and our community to start to secure our buildings and provide the training and professional development necessary to protect all of us."

McDonald had Armoured One Shooter Attack Glass installed in a number of his buildings to ensure that if an attack happened, the attackers would be slowed down and casualties would be limited if not eliminated.

### PARTNERING TO DELIVER SOLUTIONS

Armoured One partnered with Avery Dennison to develop shooter attack resistant glass and film products. Third-party tested, both the glass and film are bomb blast tested and shooter attack certified. The UL Observed Shooter Attack testing simulates real life attacks to ensure that the product is both bullet and attack resistant.

Armoured One also partnered with Masonite Architectural to develop a Shooter Attack Resistant life opening – the door itself, the jamb, frame, lock, window and sidelight. This security door product can be customized and used in any building type.

The Armoured One UL Observed Shooter Attack Glass is ideal for larger, capital construction projects or renovations. Armoured One's UL Observed Shooter Attack Film can be retrofitted to preexisting glass in windows and doors to provide a layer of protection while taking into consideration

the costs. The 23MIL film is applied to pre-existing glass using patented adhesive technology.

### THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR SCHOOLS

McDonald knew that making changes in his community would empower his faculty and staff and save the lives of his students. While it required an investment, McDonald understood that taking the time to understand the community's concerns about safety and security in its schools would enable him to make impactful decisions.

"Our staff were very nervous at first but they have embraced it, they are confident, and they want more," McDonald explains. "Not only within our schools - they feel confident walking through the mall or anywhere where there are people. They are getting an education in school safety as well as safety in their lives."

McDonald will continue to work with the Armoured One team on additional training and upgrades to his buildings, both by implementing changes based on the assessments and by adding additional glass and film. +



**TOM CZYZ** is founder and CEO of Armoured One. Email: ceo@armouredone.com.



To secure The Schenck School's main door, A3 Communications installed a Hanwha Techwin X-Series IP surveillance camera with two megapixel resolution to better capture exterior activity.



Using preexisting door trim and hardware, A3 Communications updated the school's security solution by installing new low voltage cable, passive infrared request to exit devices, door contacts and HID card readers to 16 entry points. Now, cardholders simply swipe their personalized credential to gain entry.

BY MIKE BLACK

# Secure at The Schenck School

*Campus safety upgrade brings peace of mind.*

**The Schenck School, in Atlanta, Georgia, is one of the oldest elementary schools in the country that successfully remediates students with dyslexia through its unique, focused and accelerated approach that allows students to return to traditional schools.**

The school also offers community outreach programs such as tutoring, teacher training, parent workshops and an adult dyslexia reading program. It is also working on a new digital initiative with Made By Dyslexia, a global non-profit supported by Sir Richard Branson and Microsoft that provides free

resources to help viewers worldwide understand, value and support dyslexia.

School administrators knew that to continue being one of the premier institutions for dyslexic learners in the United States, the school needed to provide peace of mind to parents, staff and students that the campus would be safe and secure.

They knew an update to their current security infrastructure was necessary but did not have the expertise on staff to identify the best solution.

The school engaged Invictus Consulting to evaluate its security system and conduct a security audit and risk assessment.

Sergeant B.C. Williams, school resource officer, easily reviews various points of the school's campus through the S2 Security NetVR video management system

Dan Stephens, president of Invictus Consulting, says, "My engineers develop a comprehensive plan to mitigate threats and make recommendations for system upgrades that provide intelligent communications, procedures for lockdown scenarios and mass notification in the event of an incident. We then recommend a knowledgeable systems integrator that can design and install an integrated security solution to meet the defined needs of the client."

Following the consultant's assessment, school administrators dedicated funding to replace outdated access control and analog CCTV cameras campus wide and Invictus opened the project for competitive bids. The objective was to select a solutions provider that could seamlessly install the updated system, train the staff on its usage, and provide support after the project was completed.

After bid evaluation, the school awarded the project to A3 Communications, Inc., a division of The Cook & Boardman Group, a systems integrator.

A3 was tasked with securing 16 entry points throughout the school with surveillance, access control and composite cabling to support the new technology. The final solution included an S2 Security NetBox System Controller, S2 Security NetVR video management system with 16TB of storage, HID EasyLobby Visitor Management software with a driver's license reader and badge printer, HID card readers, 35 Hanwha Techwin IP surveillance cameras, Altronix and



Power Sonic power supplies and Panduit Category 6A structured cabling (which included a 25-year warranty).

Following installation, the A3 project management team provided school staff with in-depth, hands-on training to ensure that approved staff could operate and manage the new system without additional assistance. The A3 Atlanta-based operations division also provides 24/7 support as needed.

"The decision to upgrade our security system and safety procedures represented a significant investment and commitment to the safety of our community," notes Louise Hodapp, director of finance at The Schenck School. "With the ability to monitor all visitors and students, our administrators, faculty and staff

can focus on our primary goal of education and parents can be assured that students are safe and connected throughout the school day."

A3 Communications worked alongside Invictus Consulting to make sure The Schenck School's staff understood the technical elements they provided and the reasoning behind the elements selected. +



**MIKE BLACK** is a senior account manager for A3 Communications, a division of The Cook & Boardman Group. Email: [mblack@a3communications.com](mailto:mblack@a3communications.com)

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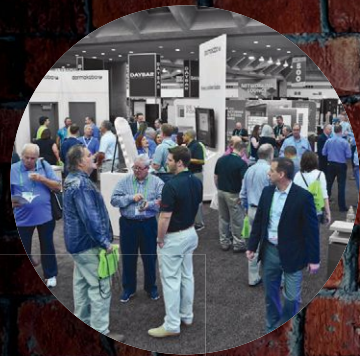
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“ To see the product, put your hands on it and talk to the people that help design, sell and promote it — there is no dollar amount you can put on that”

- Bill Robinson, Simpson Door Hardware



“ What keeps me coming is the ability to put names with faces, see what is going on in the industry through the education program and see what market trends are happening.”

- Ashley Ott, DH Pace Company





# DOORS PROVIDED FOR EGRESS PURPOSES



**LORI GREENE, DAHC/CDC, FDAI, FDHI, CCPR,** is the manager of codes and resources for Allegion. She can be reached at [Lori.Greene@allegion.com](mailto:Lori.Greene@allegion.com) or [iDigHardware.com](http://iDigHardware.com).

**IF A DOOR IS PART OF A REQUIRED MEANS OF EGRESS, IT MUST COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ADOPTED BUILDING CODE AND FIRE CODE. IF A DOOR IS NOT PART OF AN EGRESS ROUTE DEFINED BY A FACILITY'S LIFE SAFETY PLANS, DOES THE OPENING STILL HAVE TO COMPLY WITH THE CODE REQUIREMENTS?**

When discussing the code requirements for doors, it is not uncommon for someone to justify a non-code-compliant application by suggesting that the door is not part of a means of egress and therefore does not have to comply with the adopted building code or fire code. Recently, a question arose regarding a bank of eight doors serving a school lobby. "Is it acceptable to install the panic hardware required by code on the four required exits and install deadbolts on the other four doors?"

You have probably heard of the Duck Test that suggests that something can be identified by its habitual characteristics: If it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then duck. This test can be applied to doors as well, and there is information in the International Building Code (IBC) and the International Fire Code (IFC) to support this interpretation.

## NUMBER OF EXITS

Requirements for the number of exits are found in Chapter 10 of the IBC and IFC, in a section with the fitting title, "Number of Exits and Exit Access Doorways." The required number of exits is determined by the calculated occupant load along with other factors like the common path of egress travel distance. The use of the space can also affect the number of exits. For example, boiler, incinerator, furnace and refrigeration machinery rooms over a certain size are required to have two exits, even though the occupant load of these rooms is typically very low.

For most locations, at least two exits are required where the design occupant load or the common path of egress travel distance exceeds a specified value. These values are listed in a table that is included in this section of the IBC and IFC. For many use groups, the second exit is required when the design occupant load exceeds 49 people, but for some use groups, the second exit is required when the occupant load exceeds three, 10, 20 or 29 people. The common path of travel and the presence of a sprinkler system also affect the number of exits, so it is important to reference the code for specifics.

When the design occupant load is 501 to 1,000 people - three exits are required, and when the occupant load is more than 1,000 people, the IBC requires four exits. Egress doors must be of sufficient width to accommodate the number of occupants, which is based on a calculation where the number of occupants is multiplied by an egress capacity factor. This helps to determine the required clear width of the egress doors.

## EXTRA DOORS

Based on the previously referenced section, the IBC and IFC would require between one and four exits or exit access doorways for an occupant load of one to 1,001 people. However, it is very common to see additional egress doors over and above the minimum required by code, often provided for convenience or aesthetics. Common sense dictates that these "extra doors" should be code-compliant because, in an emergency, a building occupant would head for the



nearest door or the door they used to enter the space. It is unlikely that they would stop to consider which doors were code-compliant exits and which doors serve another purpose.

The common-sense approach is consistent with the IBC and IFC requirements. Regarding doors, gates and turnstiles, these codes state:

Means of egress doors shall meet the requirements of this section ... Doors provided for egress purposes in numbers greater than required by this code shall meet the requirements of this section.

The IBC and IFC Commentary editions help to clarify this further:

A door that is intended to be used for egress purposes, even though that door may not be required by the code, is also required to meet the requirements of this section. An example may be an assembly occupancy where four doors would be required to meet the required capacity of the occupant load. But assume the designer elects to provide six doors for aesthetic reasons or occupant convenience. All six doors must comply with the requirements of this section.

The key here is that the IBC and IFC requirements apply not only to doors that are required for egress, but also to doors provided for egress purposes – even if the quantity of doors exceeds the required number of exits. Going back to the school example – if there is a bank of eight doors, it is safe to assume that all eight are intended to be used for egress – that all of the doors are provided for egress purposes. In that case, all eight doors would have to comply with the requirements of the adopted codes, including installation of the panic hardware that is required by the IBC and IFC. Installing deadbolts on the “extra” doors would not be code-compliant.

In a situation where some doors are provided for egress and others are not intended to be used for egress, it would be up to the code official to decide whether there is a clear difference between the egress doors and the doors that are not provided for egress purposes.

For example, an assembly space might have exterior doors that are not used for egress but will be opened for events – weather permitting – to allow circulation between the indoor and outdoor space.

In order to avoid having panic hardware on these doors in addition to the egress doors, the code official may require a compromise to ensure an acceptable level of life safety. A different design could be used for each of the two types of doors, so the egress doors are obvious. In some facilities, doors that are not part of the means of egress may require signage stating, “Not an Exit.”

When you encounter this situation, I would recommend using an adapted version of the Duck Test. Does it look like a door and swing like a door? Then the building occupants (and the code official) will probably think it’s a door, and it should operate like a door.

Make sure doors required for egress and those provided for egress purposes are code-compliant, to provide the highest level of life safety.

Note: NFPA 101 – Life Safety Code (LSC) includes language addressing doors that are “required” to serve as an exit. Interpretations of the LSC and state code modifications may vary from the IBC and IFC requirements. +



# CUSTOMER SERVICE IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL DISTANCING



**JASON BADER** is the principal of The Distribution Team. He is a holistic distribution advisor who is passionate about helping business owners solve challenges, generate wealth and achieve personal goals. He speaks at several industry events each year, providing executive coaching services to private clients and sharing thoughts in industry publications. Phone: 503-282-2333. Email: [jason@distributionteam.com](mailto:jason@distributionteam.com). Website: [www.thedistributionteam.com](http://www.thedistributionteam.com).

**STRANGE TIMES IN THE WORLD TODAY. I KNOW, UNDERSTATEMENT OF THE YEAR. LIKE MANY OF YOU, I AM STILL AMAZED AT THE DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS AS THE COVID-19 VIRUS SPREAD. I FIND MYSELF REFLECTING ON TRADITIONAL BUSINESS NORMS AND HOW 2020 REALLY STARTED OFF WELL FOR MANY OF US. THEN IT HIT.**

What started out as a few waves hitting the shore morphed into breakers crashing along the coast. I am not sure when the tidal wave will truly hit or what that will look like for us, but fear of the unknown has never produced meaningful results.

Like many of you, I have been challenged in the way I serve my clients. With clients that I coach, the phone calls remain very similar. The event-based and destination clients are another story. We are trying to get creative with web-based programs, but the deliverable is not optimal.

### ALONE BUT RESILIENT

I miss the groups. I miss the faces in the audience. I miss the human interaction. But most of all, this isolation messes with my ability to serve. For those in my profession, and I know that I am not alone, this inability to serve can begin to challenge my self-worth and my contribution to society. This is the time to dig deep and push beyond the struggle.

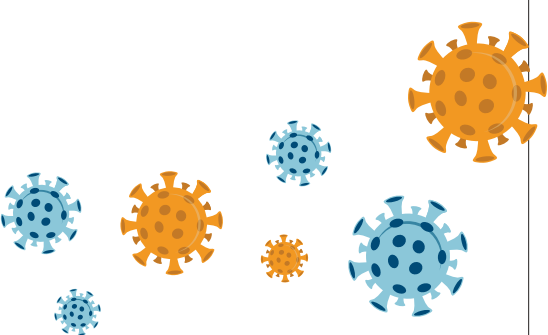
As distributors, our fundamental purpose is to serve both up and down the supply chain. As business owners, we have a moral obligation to serve our employees; but I will leave that topic to the millions of opinions on social media.

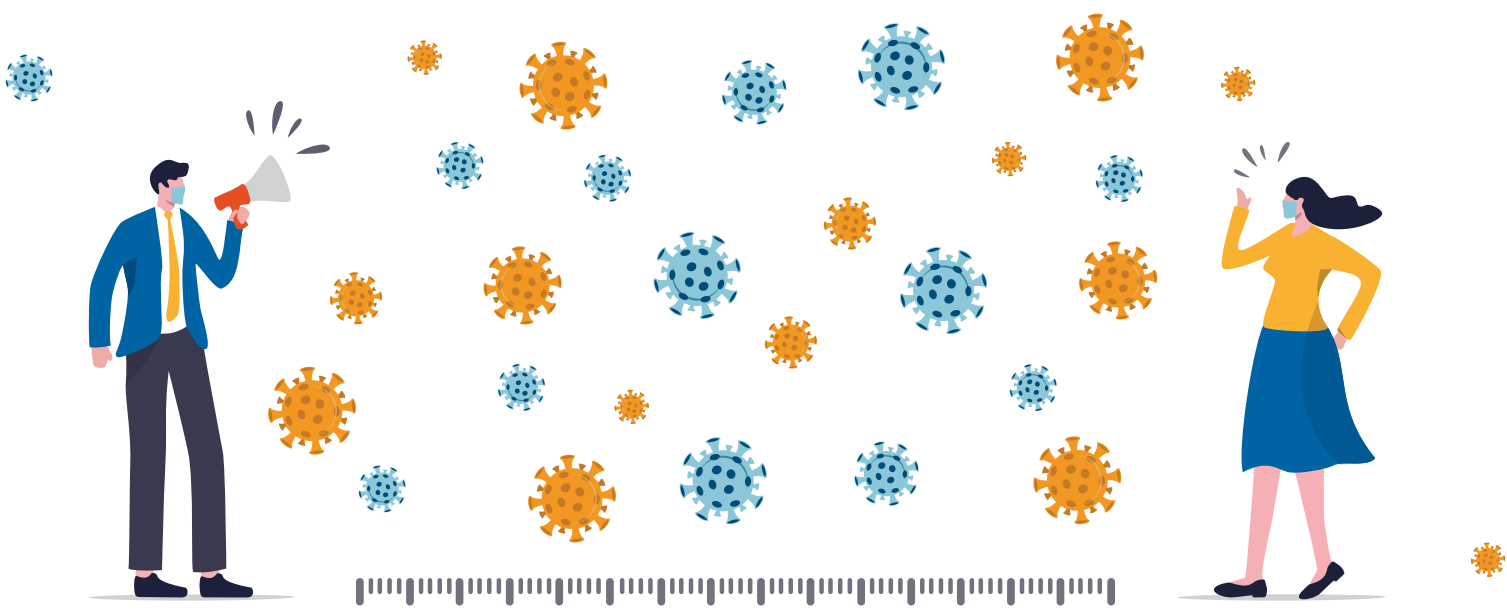
The value proposition of the wholesale distributor is to make the supply chain function more efficiently and effectively. Our goal is to make it easier for goods to flow so that meaningful work can be accomplished by our end user customers. Just as my ability to serve has been disrupted, this pandemic has challenged the very purpose of our organizations. Wholesale distributors simply cannot function in the same manner they could two weeks ago. The rules have changed, and we must adapt at an unprecedented rate. Fortunately, we are a resilient lot.

Last week, I had the opportunity to facilitate a call with a group of young operations managers in the plumbing supply business. With everything going on in the world, we decided to forgo our planned topic and take the temperature of the meeting participants. How has their business been affected? What are the contractors doing? Are certain business segments deemed essential?

By the way, defining essential businesses has become a moving target. If it's your business, doesn't it feel pretty darn "essential?"

I was encouraged to hear several companies were experiencing better than expected sales volume. I am not sure





that it wasn't due to panic buying, but hoarding toilets is a far cry from hoarding toilet paper. Contractors may have been concerned with not being able to perform routine maintenance or emergency repairs if the wholesaler shut down.

### HOW DO WE SERVE?

The real meat of the discussion moved to the logistics of order fulfillment. How do we best serve the needs of the essential business customer and still practice the physical distance recommended by healthcare professionals?

In this vertical market, there is a heavy reliance on over-the-counter transactions by service technicians. From a safety standpoint, we can't let people come into the showroom any longer. So how do we serve?

### GETTING CREATIVE

One creative company has been relying on their technology solutions to help maintain these vital transactions. They are becoming heavily dependent on both their e-commerce solution and their highly trained staff. Early investments in both will really pay dividends in a time of crisis. Skilled inside sales people, familiar with customer applications, are helping inject a glimmer of normalcy into a disrupted work environment.

In order to keep both sides safe, this company has created messaging protocols with customers when they arrive at the store. When the customer

arrives, they message the distributor that they are ready for pickup. Once notified, the distributor opens the door, places the customer order outside the building. Once the material handlers are safely back in the building, the customer is free to pick up the order. It seems very impersonal, but that is our current reality. Hugs and high-fives will have to wait.

Delivery, via company-owned vehicles, has long been the mainstay of construction-related distribution. How do we practice safe distancing habits while maintaining this staple service offering?

It really isn't that hard if we are willing to start with basic protocols. When I was a driver for my family contractor supply business, there were several opportunities to exercise my guns versus my gums. I would pull up to the site, ask the superintendent where to unload and proceed to get my sweat on. This still happens today. We just need to apply a little technology to move past the pieces where distancing is compromised.

Companies who have invested in fleet monitoring can notify a contractor when a delivery has reached their site. For frequently visited sites, drivers and customers can designate drop-off zones.

In the absence of fleet monitoring systems, delivery drivers can call customers when they arrive on site and receive specific drop off information. This requires more diligence on the side of the customer service representative to provide contact information, but it would hardly be a burden.

One of the bigger challenges may occur when an order has been shipped directly from the manufacturer to the jobsite customer. In this scenario, we are relying on a third party to follow a protocol that may not be what they are contracted to perform. Since this third party has little skin in the game, they may not wish to adhere to the distancing. If a project is shut down, either voluntarily or not, what happens to that order?

In these uncertain times, it would be prudent to avoid drop ship orders unless specific contingencies are outlined ahead of the shipment. While it may add some transactional cost, distributors may want to better control order fulfillment through their own delivery mechanisms.

As I said at the beginning, we are in very strange times. There is no process manual or standard operating procedure for the challenges we are encountering today. This does not give us a pass or an opportunity to shirk our service responsibilities. Rather, it gives us an opportunity to reach back to our creative roots where we solved problems on the fly and performed as though our next meal depended on it.

Many of the solutions I am suggesting require trust between supply chain partners. Perhaps this is a good time to remind ourselves of common goals versus individual treasure. We will all get through this, regardless of the outcome.

Stay vigilant to the true purpose of distribution and I look forward to meeting you on the other side. +



# EMPLOYEE ACCOUNTABILITY DRIVES COMPANY SUCCESS



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**IN BUSINESSES INCLUDING SUBCONTRACTORS, ARCHITECTS, GENERAL CONTRACTORS, AND BUILDING PRODUCT MANUFACTURERS, WE OFTEN FIND THERE ARE NO ANNUAL COMPANY TOP PRIORITIES.**

Employees make their own assumptions about what is important to the success of the company. That means no one is on the same page and employee accountability is lacking.

Does your company have annual top priorities? If not, do you think your company would benefit from formally establishing them?

Without qualification, having company top priorities will improve the performance of your company in sales and profits. It gets everyone on the same page.

## EMPLOYEE ACCOUNTABILITY

Does your company hold employees accountable for the success of the company by establishing employee action plans (objectives) that are specific, measurable and time framed?

If not, the owner or president of the company is the only one being held accountable and that is no way to run a company. Everyone from the top to the bottom of the organization should be accountable for results.

## ACTION PLANS

Does your company have employee action plans (objectives) supporting the company top priorities (goals)?

If not, do you think your company would benefit by formally establishing employee action plans that support the company's top priorities?

Here are two more important questions to think about:

- 1) Is employee accountability in your company a strength or a weakness?
- 2) Are your employees empowered to do their jobs?

Employee empowerment is a hot topic today and certainly is important in today's business environment, but without accountability within the organization, the owner or president ends up being the only one held accountable.

This is not the right way to run a business and hopefully you agree.

Superior performers want to be empowered to do their jobs and do not want the boss looking over their shoulders.

The poorer performers do not want to be accountable and do not want the boss looking over their shoulders either.

Employee empowerment without accountability can be a real problem. Make sure your company has stated annual goals and employee objectives supporting those goals.

Does your company establish annual goals that are communicated to all employees?

Does your company have employee objectives that support the company's annual goals? If so, are your employee objectives specific, measurable and time framed?

Are the employee objectives in writing and are they incorporated into the performance appraisal process as well as into the compensation plans?

If the response to many of these questions is "no," your company needs to change. Our consulting firm works with dozens of distributors and subcontractors to help them change and realize accountability for both management and staff in making the company succeed.

We always recommend a one-page top priority plan to ensure employee accountability and drive great results. It really works. +

# SPREADING THE WORD



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In the last five years, I have published more than 100 posts about classroom security on [iDigHardware.com](http://iDigHardware.com), with about a dozen of these articles published in industry publications. I've invested a lot of time researching and writing about the applicable code requirements and the recommended methods for securing a classroom and making sure the information was out where it could be found and shared.

Based on the 45-50,000 visits to my site each month and the emails and website comments I receive, I know that a lot of people are getting the message. I also post links to this information on the site's Facebook page, LinkedIn and Twitter, as well as our corporate intranet.

I recently conducted a webinar on classroom security and used social media along with blog posts and emails to inform [iDigHardware](http://iDigHardware.com) readers, and more than 1,000 signed up to attend.

Although thousands of people see these articles and blog posts, there have been several times when I wanted to amplify a piece to inform (and hopefully influence) an outside audience. Depending on what was happening at the time - a prospective bill in a state legislature, parent response to a recent school shooting or an important vote affecting a model code - I needed to connect with state legislators, parents and teachers, school administrators, code officials and others.

Social media provides a multitude of ways to reach people within my network and beyond. Facebook advertising allows me to target Facebook users within a specific demographic, with interests like school security, building and fire codes, accessibility and other related categories. This advertising is very inexpensive, as are Google ads that are displayed based on keywords used in a search. +

Other amplification methods don't cost anything except time. The complete articles that I post on LinkedIn are typically read by more than 1,000 people and are often shared with the social networks of my connections.

Discussion groups frequented by the target audiences are another good place to post links and information, and when there is an opportunity to hand someone a printed article, which works well too.

In addition to sharing the resources that I create myself, I use social media to share other content that aligns with my message - like the Door Security & Safety Foundation (DSSF) Opening the Door to School Safety Campaign. Have you visited [LockDontBlock.org](http://LockDontBlock.org) yet? It's a great collection of classroom security resources from DSSF.

The tools are in place ... spread the word! +



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Life Safety Hardware Consultants, Ltd.

### INDIVIDUAL (\$1,000+)

Anderson, Darrin W.  
Dupuis, David R., AHC, FDAI, FDHI  
Hager, Ralph J.  
Hallgren, Mark S., AHC, FDHI  
Heppes, Gerald S., CAE  
LeGrand, Mark S.  
Maas, Robert D., FDHI  
Petersen, Tim, FDHI, LEED AP  
Shah, Ankit K.  
Smith, Foster, FDAI  
Theby, Matthew  
Wacik, Laura A., AHC, FDAI, FDHI  
Walsh, Martin J.

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H & G/Schultz Door  
Mulhaupt's, Inc.  
OKEE Industries, Inc.  
Walters & Wolf Interiors  
William S. Trimble Co., Inc.

### SALES AGENCIES/ CONSULTANTS (\$1,000)

D.L. Neuner Co., Inc.

### INDIVIDUAL (\$500)

Couch, Ron, AHC, CFDAI  
Gaddis, Mark F.  
Liddell, Rick, FDHI  
Pulliam, Jason  
Strauss, Charles J.  
Tartre, James R., CDC, FDHI  
White, James T., DAOC, CFDAI, FDHI

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National Guard Products, Inc.

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Donald A Loss Associates

### INDIVIDUAL (\$250)

Beckham, David R., AHC, FDAI  
Hooker, Russell, DHT, AOC, DHC, CFDAI  
Royer, Richard T., AHC, EHC  
Swanson, Jonathan C., DHT, AHC  
Sylvester, David M., PSP

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### DISTRIBUTOR (\$500)

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Lindgren Building Supply

### INDIVIDUAL (\$100)

Barnhard, Richard J., DAHC/CDC, FDHI  
Boardman, Raymond K., AHC  
Boatman, Anthony A., DAHC/EHC, CFDAI  
Callahan, Stacey M.  
Farley, Eric  
Frazier, G. Paul, AHC  
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Lipsey, Joel H.  
Molina, Chuck J., CCD  
Saltmarsh, David, FDAI

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DHI North Carolina Chapter  
DHI Old Dominion Chapter  
DHI Ontario Chapter  
DHI Rocky Mountain Chapter

Contributors Listing as of April 6, 2020

# SPECIAL COVID-19 EDITION

BY MARK J. BERGER, FDHI

This column comes at an extraordinary time. I'm typing from the home office in New York City. As this is being written, we are still witnessing the horrific rise in coronavirus cases. I pray you and your loved ones are safe and untouched by this global tragedy.

Traffic and overcrowding are things of the past, as are so many of the daily things we took for granted. We've made it a habit of trying not to identify retailers or the public spaces with violations with our Real Opening photos. Our goals for this column have always been to

educate by showing visual examples of everyday hazards, highlight interesting door locking solutions and lighten things up every now and then with unique doors and interesting signage.

This month we'll make a few changes as well. We'll highlight a walk through my neighborhood in Greenwich Village and how different retailers are communicating via their door signs. Usually our photographs are taken from within an establishment. This time we'll show you the pull or exterior sides.



## A MESSAGE SAYS IT ALL

Cinema Village has been in New York City longer than me. I've seen lots of great films here, especially quirky ones. The last one we saw was "The Kind Words," a quirky Israeli film (subtitled), which we thoroughly enjoyed. It's not on Netflix, but you can rent and stream it through some other services. I think we are all in need of some kind words as cabin fever starts to set in.

## B CVS

A practical approach. They actually engage the lock on the door after letting people in or out

## C BROOKLYN BAGEL

A true New Yorker cannot survive without their bagel fix. This is one of many still serving us. Frankly, I'm not sure why Brooklyn had to invade Manhattan, but we are glad that they are open and practicing "Safe Space".

## D LE PAIN

This is a pretty common approach among chains with multiple locations. As restaurants can no longer seat customers, having fewer locations makes sense.



## E LIFE THYME

We expected nothing less from our local organic and health food paradise. They have broken into two shifts, with a good cleaning in between.



D

## F NEW MUSEUM

While it looks like the museum is closed and needs extra security, the crowd control steel barriers are actually there for another purpose; to control the line for the Bowery Mission and the free meals they provide.

## G NUTELLA

The very definition of cool doors with an entrance shaped like a Nutella jar. This recent addition to the neighborhood has chosen to stay closed and post an uplifting message. They closed as the initial restrictions were announced, with a hope they would be brief. Sadly, we are all waiting for the day they (and our neighborhood) can reopen.



G

# Projected Drops in 2020 Building Starts Due to COVID-19

Dodge Data & Analytics conducts extensive research into construction market trends and has analyzed the impact of COVID-19 on building starts across many sectors. Most of the impact occurs during the second quarter of 2020.

“Second quarter project starts will be down, but in Q3 and Q4 they will normalize,” says Dodge Chief Economist Richard

Branch. Also, while most sectors show a 2020 decrease, the health care sector shows an increase in building starts due to increased demand for these facilities.

These charts compare Dodge directional trends data from 2019 with Dodge projections for 2020.

SECTOR	2019	2020
Education	-2%	-2%
Healthcare	-11%	+5%
Hotels and Motels	-8%	-31%
Office	+10%	-13%
Retail	-8%	-33%
Warehouses	+15%	-1%





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# BUILDING A CULTURE OF SCHOOL SAFETY



**MICHELE GAY, M.ED.**, is founder and executive director of Safe and Sound Schools, an organization she created after losing her daughter Josephine Grace on December 14, 2012 in the Sandy Hook School tragedy. Safe and Sound Schools includes Sandy Hook parents, educators, and community members and its mission is: To better protect our schools. To provide safe schools, secure schools, for our children and educators. And to help others do the same in their communities. Email: [michelegay@safeandsoundschools.org](mailto:michelegay@safeandsoundschools.org). Website: [www.safeandsoundschools.org](http://www.safeandsoundschools.org).



## SCHOOL SECURITY WEBINAR

DSSF recently delivered a webinar with Safe and Sound Schools called "Door Security & Safety: Continuing the Conversation." This roundtable discussion with experts, parents, and school leaders offered insights, best practices, and key resources to help us all successfully work together to solve security and safety issues in our schools.

To view the webinar, visit [www.doorsecuritysafety.org](http://www.doorsecuritysafety.org) and click on "Advocacy."

### WHAT A DIFFERENCE A FEW WEEKS CAN MAKE.

**I HOPE ALL OF YOU ARE SAFE AS WE ENDURE A LONG PERIOD OF SOCIAL DISTANCING THAT HAS DRAMATICALLY AFFECTED SCHOOLS, BUSINESSES, AND OUR ENTIRE SOCIETY.**

The entire COVID-19 crisis has reinforced for me how critical it is to have fact-based education and community conversation - the message that Safe and Sound Schools delivers to many audiences.

Administrators, teachers, school resource officers, building managers, security officers, counselors, school psychologists, parents, and students, are critical to this communication about school safety. People in the community, including policymakers, first responders, and experts like you in the door and hardware industry are also important.

Just because we are physically separated for a time doesn't mean the need to talk about school safety stops.

Consider this an opportunity to reflect on how schools can continue to focus on the safety their physical buildings provide now that the national conversation about safety has expanded into new areas.

The pressure facing administrators and other leaders to make the best safety decisions with tight budgets will only increase.

A few months ago, Safe and Sound Schools proudly partnered with Door Security + Safety Foundation (DSSF) to conduct a webinar called "Door Security and Safety: Continuing the Conversation" that included experts such as John Montes of the National Fire Protection Association, Guy Grace

of the Partner Alliance for Safer Schools, Joelle Reidy, president of the parent-teacher organization at a middle school, and Laura Frye Weaver DHT, DAHC, DHC, CSI, CDT, CCS, CFDAI, of DSSF and DHI. (See the bottom of this page for a link to view it.)

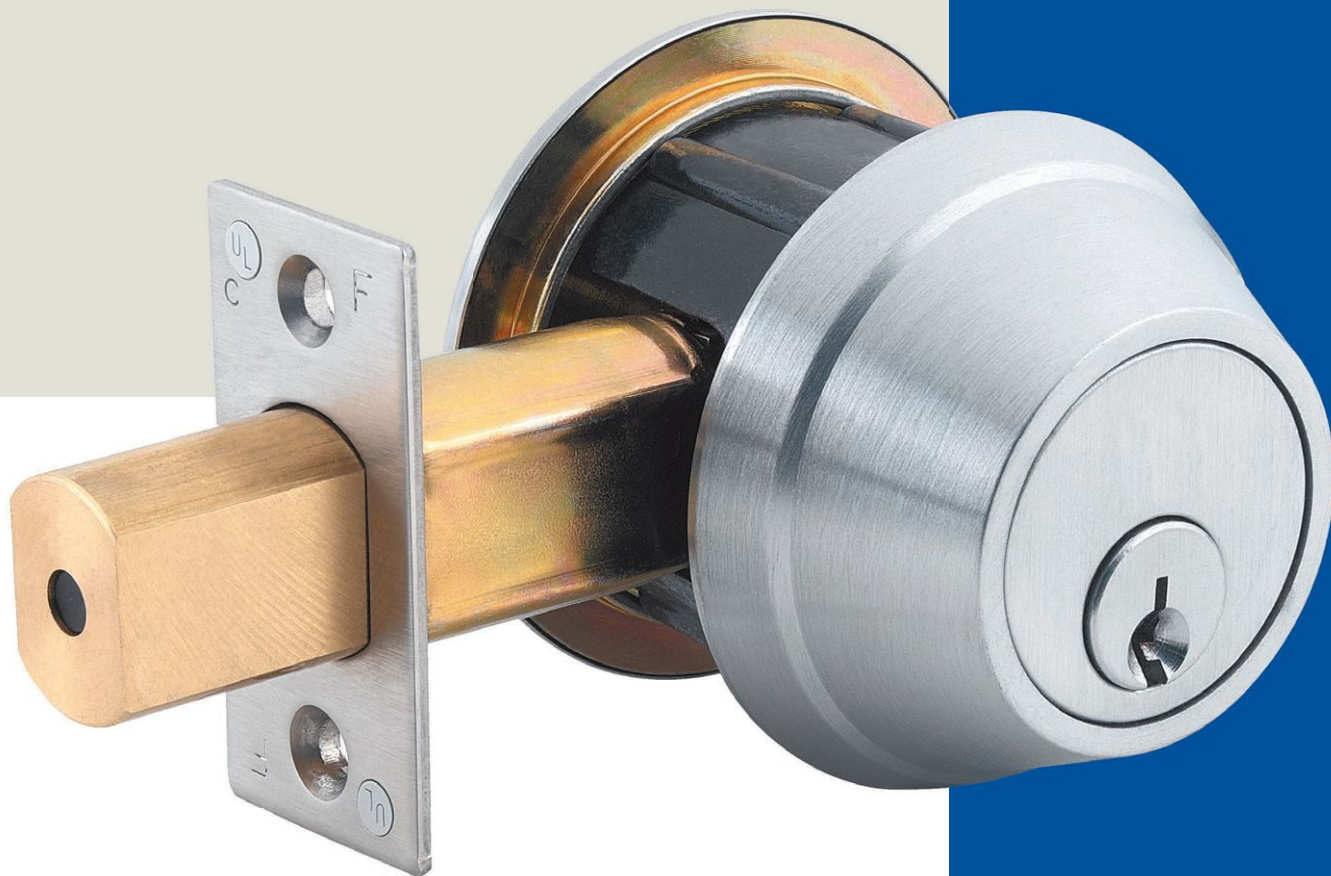
In that webinar, we talked about how doors and door hardware have taken a prominent place in school safety planning discussions. We also talked about what it takes to instill a safety culture in our schools and communities.

Appropriate education and training and giving people options and pathways to safety is vital. Teaching safety-based behavior is critical. We're getting there, and the COVID-19 crisis - as horrible as it is - will hopefully accelerate safety awareness everywhere. It's one of the reasons we are a partner with DSSF, because we have similar values for how we achieve this goal. Door security and safety professionals have a unique skill and viewpoint that is necessary for our schools and communities.

When everyone connected with schools learns and communicates with each other about shared solutions and speaks with a single voice, we can improve safety.

Meanwhile, DSSF and Safe and Sound Schools are working on future programs to support your efforts. Stay tuned! +

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