BEST PRACTICES:
SCHOOL AND CAMPUS SECURITY

WHAT'S INSIDE:

School security professionals must translate guidance and actions between law enforcement, teachers, and administrators to get traction. **Page 2**

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LANGUAGE LESSONS

School security professionals must translate guidance and actions between law enforcement, teachers, and administrators to get traction.

Guy Bliesner helped found the statewide Idaho Office of School Safety and Security, and he serves Office of the State Board of Education as a school safety and security analyst. In any given year, Bliesner completes around 100 full threat and vulnerability assessments at Idaho school facilities. His background includes teaching and coaching at the high school level and working as the health, safety, and security director at an Idaho school district for seven years.

Security Management caught up with Bliesner to ask about how he has seen school safety and security change over the years. The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.

As a state-level administrator that has a high level of interaction with schools and districts, what are some of the challenges you face?

School safety and security is a unique discipline because schools have so many different functions. Sometimes they are venues, daycare centers, HAZMAT facilities, or manufacturing facilities, and always an educational facility. Sometimes they are all of these things in the same 12-hour period.

I'm an educator first, but I've learned to speak cop as a second language. A lot of my day is translating cop-to-teacher and teacher-to-cop. Police see schools as big brick buildings. Teachers see them as groups of kids. Administrators see them as organizational processes to accomplish things. All of these views are valid, but none of them are complete.

If you want to protect the people in schools, you have to be able to see them from all of these perspectives. That's why I describe school safety as a platypus, it's understanding all of these different things and how they interrelate.

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What is a major change you have seen in how schools need to approach safety and security?

The biggest thing is an understanding of the importance of climate and culture. These are critical components in our ability to educate our children, but they were never a major part of school security. Now we recognize they are the single most important factor.

Eighty-three percent of school shooters are our own kids, and a good portion of those are suicides. So if we can get upstream of the threat, practicing the BTAM (behavior, threat, analysis, and management) process, we can diffuse a situation before it gets to a dangerous point. Understanding and acting on behavioral cues is by far the best way to prevent major incidents—way more effective than cameras or locks on doors.

What is an example of a cultural norm that has changed during your tenure?

When I took my first classroom, my principal gave me a key and said go forth and teach the quadratic equation and don't come see me until you run into conduct you absolutely can't handle. Good teaching was seen as being able to handle your classroom. That can't be our attitude anymore. Good teaching is being able to identify deviance from baseline behavior and notifying administrators, and that's a big hurdle to overcome.

And getting back to speaking teacher-to-cop, I had a heated debate with an SRO (school resource officer) about the Run. Hide. Fight. protocol. Most school systems teach this as part of their emergency management now. We use the term Move. Secure. Defend. The language is very intentional, but the SRO was adamant that "fight" was an imperative term. What he didn't understand is that to educators the word "fight" is anathema. But defending, like a mama bear defends her cubs, resonates with a second grade teacher. Words matter.

What is something that you implemented in Idaho that you think would carry over well to other places?

When I started teaching, I was given a massive emergency management plan in a binder, and it had a process for every

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You may also need to protect departments inside your facility. Research labs, record offices, server rooms and more must be off-limits to those who have no business there, and this hardware prevents unauthorized tailgate entry. The Tailgate Detection System is compatible with most access control technologies, is easy to retrofit, and has an integrated door prop alarm for extra security.

Other components can be combined to enhance a restricted access system, such as:

- Panic hardware
- Access control
- Door prop alarms, which will alert staff to a door that has been deliberately propped open

Panic Hardware
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Access Control
A good access control system will permit, via keypad or card reader, authorized people to enter the building or a secured room.

Door Prop Alarms
These are a low cost, desirable solution to more expensive systems that can be defeated. They alert staff to a door that has been deliberately propped open to permit unauthorized entry. Additionally, a propped open door can waste energy,

and a door prop alarm can help save that energy by alerting staff to the open door.

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kind of emergency from asteroids to zombies. There was one in every classroom, and they went right on the shelf, never to be looked at it again.

You must simplify. You want an initial emergency protocol that gets you to a safe position so you can make that next level of decisions. It has to be deployable, maintainable, and trainable. We got ours down to four procedures, and the only reason it's four is because we couldn't find a way to shorten it to three.

Our four are: one, reverse evacuation: get them in, get them accounted for, and then get ready for the next instruction. Second is evacuation: get them out, get them accounted for, and then get ready for the next instruction. Lockdown is the hammer of Thor: you go dark and you don't move until someone with a key opens your door and tells you it's safe to move.

And then you need an intermediary state. We call ours "hall check," and again, language is intentional. We don't want to call it a soft lockdown or intermediate lockdown, or anything that could be confused with lockdown, which is our extreme state. So we call it hall check, and it's a heightened level of security with limited movement and other precautions, but instruction continues. Once you call a lockdown, that's it for instruction that day, and perhaps for the rest of the week.

Is there a threat that schools can better address?

I think we have a good understanding of how to address emergencies when they occur during normal, everyday operation. Event security is different. Whether it's a sporting event or your building is hosting the state forensic tournament or band or choral festival. I don't think we have addressed these situations as well as normal operations. We haven't had many incidents at them, so they haven't gotten as much attention, but I think it's coming.

None of the things we're talking about are easy. It takes a lot of effort to work to avoid a crisis and to be prepared for one to minimize its impact. These special events add another layer of complexity. How do you go to an overworked administrator and say, now you need to create a plan for this and figure out how to drill it? We note it in our threat and vulnerability assessments, but there is only so much you can do. Society, including schools, will always have and choose to accept some vulnerabilities.

SALT LAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE INCREASES CAMPUS COVERAGE WITH AXIS MODULAR AND MULTIDIRECTIONAL CAMERAS

SLCC replaced aging analog cameras with Axis technology, greatly increasing campus coverage with far fewer cameras and licensing fees.

Mission

Salt Lake Community College (SLCC), which serves more than 60,000 students across 11 campuses, is Utah's largest two-year college. It offers technical and vocational certification programs that take students directly into the workforce as well as into associate degree programs that can be credited towards a 4-year school's bachelor-degree program. While public safety has always been a priority for the college, providing that critical protection for students and faculty was becoming more challenging as its aging analog cameras began to fail.

What's more, system management fees were starting to skyrocket. Rather than replace cameras piecemeal, they wanted to migrate to a more advanced public safety solution, one that could also assist with proctoring testing centers and supervising nursing student practicums. In addition to better image resolution and broader coverage of their campuses, the college wanted a system that supported 2-way audio communication in some areas, and a more streamlined video management for archiving and reviewing footage.

Solution

The college turned to Stone Security, an Axis Communications partner, for guidance. The system integrators recommended upgrading to AXIS P33 Series network cameras and replacing their legacy video management system (VMS) with Milestone's XProtect Corporate, an enterprise-level VMS. More recently many cameras have been upgraded to the AXIS P37 Series multidirectional and FA Series modular modelsv. To facilitate interactive nursing student training, they installed AXIS M55 Series pan/tilt/zoom (PTZ) cameras, AXIS P32 Series fixed dome cameras, AXIS T83 Series microphones, and AXIS C20 Series speakers in simulation labs.

Results

Axis multidirectional and modular cameras allowed the college to significantly reduce its camera count, cabling costs and licensing while quadrupling the views from a single IP address. On one campus alone they were able to save $53,000 by replacing 102

analog cameras with 78 Axis cameras. Among other benefits, Axis cameras have been instrumental in stopping theft and vandalism on campus, increasing safety at campus daycare centers, and assisting proctors in detecting student cheating at testing centers. Furthermore, by equipping labs with Axis cameras, ceiling speakers and microphones, academic supervisors are able to remotely guide nursing students through simulations such as routine patient checkups, maternity care and emergency room traumas without getting underfoot.

According to Nathan Howard, Security Surveillance Manager for Salt Lake Community College, *"The cost savings from replacing our old analog single-head cameras with Axis multidirectional and modular ones have been huge for us. We've nearly doubled our coverage while significantly reducing our camera count, cable pulls and software licensing fees."*

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