

Gateway Community Charters: Empowering Possibilities International Charter (EPIC)

2945 Sacramento Ramco Street, West Sacramento



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Executive Summary

The Gateway Community Charters (GCC) Site Safety Report assesses the facility's current safety practices and infrastructure, providing actionable recommendations to enhance security, emergency preparedness, and operational efficiency. This report underscores the school's proactive approach to safeguarding its community.

Key Highlights

- **Proactive Emergency Supplies:** The site includes Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and first aid supplies inspected monthly by a professional service.
- **Lighting and Visibility:** Exterior lighting is well-placed, ensuring clear visibility across the property and reducing the potential for criminal activity.
- **Landscaping Compliance:** Landscaping adheres to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines, ensuring clear sightlines and removing potential hiding spots.
- **Shared Facility Challenges:** The campus operates within a shared space, creating unique challenges for access control and student safety.

Key Recommendations

1. **Designate Safer Corners:** Identify and mark safer corners or safer rooms for use during emergencies, ensuring they are equipped with emergency kits and communication tools.
2. **Eliminate Door Wedges:** Replace wedges with consistent locking systems for interior doors to improve security.
3. **Install a Camera System:** Implement a CCTV system with live monitoring, recording capabilities, and police access during emergencies.
4. **Improve Access Control:** Add intercoms, remote door-unlocking hardware, and visitor management systems to better regulate and monitor entry points.
5. **Expand Emergency Preparedness:** Ensure all classrooms have lockdown supply buckets and train staff on AED use, choking response, and first aid procedures.
6. **Enhance Collaboration with Local Agencies:** Strengthen relationships with police, fire, and other first responders to ensure quicker and more efficient responses during emergencies.
7. **Apply for Grants:** Seek funding for safety upgrades through programs such as the Non-Profit Security Grant Program.
8. **Add Window Coverings:** Install consistent, quick-pull coverings on windows for classrooms and office spaces to increase privacy and concealment during critical incidents.
9. **Address Parking Lot Safety:** Add privacy screens around the recreation field and consider speed-calming measures for shared parking spaces.

Background

On Wednesday, December 11, security expert Chris Usher visited Empowering Possibilities International Charter (EPIC) to conduct a site safety review. EPIC has approximately XX staff and XX students in attendance and enrolls K-8th grade students in West Sacramento.

This survey is not meant to identify every potential hazard, safety concern, training need, or emergency supply requirement. While we have noted many positive aspects of your facility, this report focuses on areas that may require further attention. It is designed to assess your facility's current state and highlight areas for improvement based on the information provided.

Private and public organizations across America are responsible for providing safe and secure environments for work and learning. These are places where employees and students should feel protected from undue harm and risk. By conducting this vulnerability assessment, your facility is taking a proactive step toward enhanced safety.

This report provides an overview of your facility's current safety awareness, including findings and recommendations derived from on-site interviews, observations, and a review of materials provided by facility administrators.

Scope

The following activities are within the scope of this project:

- Interviews with key staff members responsible for policy, administration, day-to-day operations, facilities management, and safety.
- A visual walk-through of the facilities with administrative and facilities personnel to assess physical site safety.

The following activities are NOT part of this security assessment.

- Testing current facility-developed safety plans or emergency response plans.
- DPrep/WVPA did not independently verify information provided by employees.
- This security assessment does not include any aspect of IT/Cyber vulnerabilities, which should be assessed independently.

Disclaimer

Any action taken by a recipient of this report or by their representatives based upon this security assessment does not guarantee nor warrant in any way whatsoever that the assessed location(s), facility, its users, or visitors may or may not be rendered safer, invulnerable, or in any fashion impervious to successful penetration, attack, or other acts which could cause property damage and/or personal injury to the facility or its patrons. By accepting this security assessment report and/or by taking or avoiding taking any action based on its written or verbal content, Gateway Community Charters hereby agrees to release, waive, discharge, hold harmless, and not sue WVPA, DPrep Inc., any of their officers and/or employees, for any and all loss, harm, liability, or damage caused as a consequence of the security assessment, release of the written report, pictures, and assessors' opinions, including any loss arising from a claim of negligence. Further, by accepting this report, Gateway Community Charters agrees to indemnify WVPA, DPrep Inc., their agents, officers, and employees from any loss, harm, liability, lawsuits, damages, or costs, including court costs and attorney fees.

Facility-Wide Suggestions

Exterior Signage

Effective signage and wayfinding are fundamental to workplace security, as they provide clear directions, identify hazards, and establish boundaries, thereby enhancing safety and preventing accidents. Strategically placed signs guide employees and visitors, reducing confusion and ensuring efficient evacuation during emergencies.¹ Signage and a well-maintained site also convey a sense of preparation and attention to detail that can deter crime or other hostile actions. Clear and sufficient signage aids emergency services personnel with improved navigation and timeliness of response during emergencies and other critical incidents.

The Center for Safe Schools suggests exterior signage should be: 1) visible from the street or nearest driveway, 2) contrasting with their background, and 3) reflective for low light or smoky conditions. All exterior doors should be numbered in sequential order in a clockwise manner, with the main entrance designated as number one.²

Empowering Possibilities International Charter (EPIC) is in a light industrial/business park with shared space. They maintain most of the second floor and some offices on the first floor. There is a recreation area at the far end of the parking lot. Signage is consistent with the setting and is easily readable from the parking lot.



Moving Forward:

- While the front signage is clear from the road, ensure the school is identified from each of the sides of the building. Likewise, include a large letter sign with the street number on the front entrance.

¹ American Society of Safety Professionals. (n.d.). Three ways signage can improve workplace safety. Retrieved December 1, 2024, from https://www.assp.org/news-and-articles/three-ways-signage-can-improve-workplace-safety?utm_source=chatgpt.com

² Center for Safe Schools (2024). Model Door and Window Classroom Numbering. Retrieved from <https://www.centerforsafeschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/CSS-Door-and-Window-Classroom-Numbering-2024.pdf>

Cameras

Cameras play a vital role in safety by providing real-time surveillance that can help detect and deter potential threats, ensuring a quicker response to incidents. According to the U.S. Secret Service, monitored and strategically placed cameras are essential for identifying suspicious behavior and enhancing situational awareness in critical areas.^{3,4} Reviewing camera footage after the fact may provide investigative material or document a critical incident but will not aid in preventing an incident.

Cameras provide three general functions when it comes to safety and security.

1. Cameras record what occurred on-site during a hazard, conflict, theft, crime, or other critical event, providing detailed documentation and legal risk mitigation when assessing how employees handle critical incidents. The footage is helpful in training scenarios and as part of an after-event review.
2. Cameras deter those who may be engaged in penetration testing or assessing the site as a potential target. Multiple cameras and signage warnings about being recorded offer a level of hardening a target location that is part of a layered safety and security approach.
3. Cameras that are live monitored by office staff at their desks or broadcast to a larger screen in a public area increase situational awareness and response time when reacting to threats, physical altercations, or an active assailant. Providing this live feed link to local law enforcement improves their awareness when responding to a crisis on-site.

There are no cameras at this site, and there are currently no plans from school leadership to install cameras.

Moving Forward:

- CCTV access with a staged model is strongly suggested, with coverage across all areas.
- Ideally, at least 30 days of recorded footage should be available.
- Camera feeds should be monitored by front reception staff and administrators and made available to law enforcement via a secure link during emergencies.
- Confirm a schematic with all camera locations and coverage areas is available. An assessment should be conducted to confirm adequate coverage (DPrep Safety can assist in this process.)

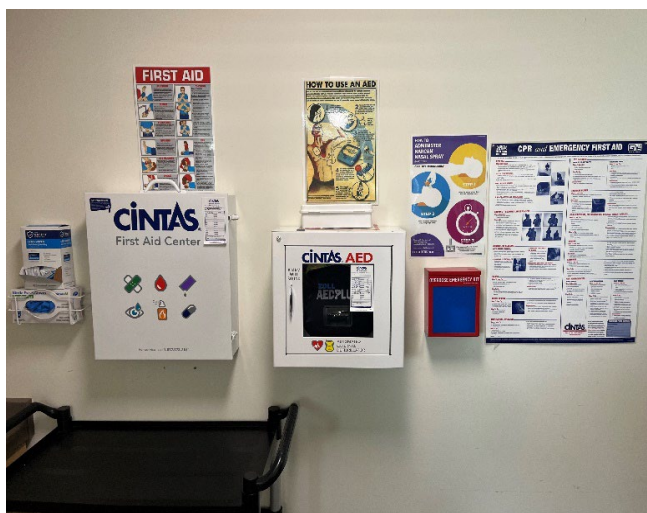
3 U.S. Secret Service, National Threat Assessment Center. (2019). Protecting America's schools: A U.S. Secret Service analysis of targeted school violence. Retrieved from https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/Protecting_Americas_Schools.pdf

4 Alcatraz Lock. (n.d.). How CCTV cameras can help to prevent school shootings. Retrieved from <https://alcatrazlock.com/how-cctv-cameras-can-help-to-prevent-school-shootings/>

Emergency Medical Supplies/Lockdown Supplies

First aid response is dependent on two central concepts: materials and training. Having materials available without knowing how to use them is equally problematic as having people trained without providing access to materials. The American Red Cross recommends that first aid kits and AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators) be available in multiple locations and that all employees be trained in their use.⁵

There are AEDs in two locations. However, due to the layout, we recommend an additional one that is more centrally located and closer to the recreation fields. First aid supplies are in cabinets maintained monthly by Cintas, as in other district schools. There appeared to be no lockdown supplies at the facility. One classroom had additional first aid supplies in a drawer.



⁵ American Red Cross. (n.d.). *Workplace safety training courses*. Retrieved December 1, 2024, from <https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/organizations/workplace-safety>

Moving Forward:

- Ensure that all classrooms and other areas used for shelter have lockdown supplies. The district may have additional lockdown supply buckets available. Also, consider placing a staff member in charge of inventory, placement, and upkeep, perhaps the site manager. Supplies should be stored in the [safer corner](#) of each room.
- While AEDs are useful emergency devices, another priority to invest in would be ***stop-the-bleed/wound-packing*** training for all staff. DPrep Safety offers this training, which would benefit all staff. The training and materials are central in responding to any active assailant or major injury. Blood loss is the leading cause of death during active shooting events. Example materials are included in [Appendix A](#).
- Likewise, training related to choking and some of the newer technology related to emergency response to choking should be a higher priority investment for the location. Example materials are included in [Appendix A](#).
- Invest in ***several smaller first aid kits***, commonly known as 'boo-boo' kits, that would allow for more strategic placement around the facility and provide easier access to commonly used materials such as alcohol wipes and Band-Aids. Example materials are included in [Appendix A](#).
- Add ***a first aid kit, a response kit for cutting and fire injuries, and a fire blanket*** for the kitchen to have materials closer to where an injury might occur. Example materials are included in [Appendix A](#).
- Ensure all ***staff are trained*** on AED use, epi-pen usage, anti-overdose treatment, and basic first aid skills.

Landscaping

According to the American Society of Landscape Architects, maintaining landscaping can enhance safety by creating clear sightlines, removing hiding spots, and creating opportunities for natural surveillance, all principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Well-maintained landscaping can also reduce the perception of neglect, further aiding in crime deterrence.⁶

EPIC is in a newer mixed-use business park. The landscaping is consistent with what you might expect in that setting. Most trees and shrubs were trimmed within accepted CPTED limits, allowing for good sightlines and providing little opportunity for concealment. CPTED teaches a “2-foot, 6-foot” rule to keep a clear line of sight across the facility. This means shrubbery should be no higher than two feet, and tree canopies should be trimmed to hang no lower than six feet.



Moving Forward:

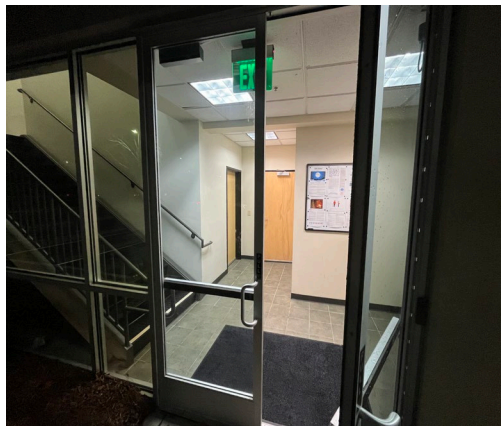
- Regular landscape maintenance should be scheduled to remain in line with CPTED guidelines.
- Cut back vegetation to reduce hiding locations for students or those intent on criminal activity.

⁶ American Society of Landscape Architects. (n.d.). *Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) presentation*. Retrieved December 1, 2024, from https://www.asla.org/uploadedFiles/CMS/PPNs/Landing_Pages/ASLA_Urban_Design_PPN_CPTED_Presentation.pdf

Lighting

Lighting is important as it enhances natural surveillance by improving visibility at night, deterring potential offenders. According to the International CPTED Association, well-designed exterior lighting reduces dark areas and increases the likelihood of criminal activities being observed.⁷

The lighting at EPIC appears to be good on all sides of the building and in the parking lots.



Moving Forward:

- Lighting appears to be sufficient at this site.

⁷ International CPTED Association. (n.d.). *Primer in CPTED – What is CPTED?*. Retrieved December 1, 2024, from <https://www.cpted.net/Primer-in-CPTED>

Perimeter

Territorial reinforcement involves designing spaces to clearly define ownership, using elements like fences, signage, and landscaping to discourage unauthorized access and promote a sense of ownership by employees. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, establishing clear territorial boundaries enhances security by fostering ownership and responsibility among occupants.⁸

There is no fencing around the property, nor would it be recommended due to the shared facility. However, there is fencing around the recreation field and playground. The parking lot is challenging because it is within the school's perimeter but is also used by other visitors to the shared building. The school also uses it for recreation, and students ran laps in the area on the day of the site visit. The school uses cones and portable traffic control devices to block off parts of the lot for this activity.



Moving Forward:

- Consider using the recreation field instead of the parking lot for this type of activity.
- Consider installing privacy screening on the fence surrounding the recreation field (yellow highlight above) and the areas near the playground. This type of screening is reasonably priced and allows for additional territorial reinforcement if the school's name and/or mascot is used. It prevents the public from easily viewing children while they are in these areas.
- Consider working with the complex management company to install speed reduction/calming measures to enhance pedestrian safety in the lot.

⁸ Zahm, D. L. (2007). *Using crime prevention through environmental design in problem-solving*. U.S. Department of Justice. Retrieved from <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/using-crime-prevention-through-environmental-design-problem-solving>

Exterior Facility Access

Access Control

Access control is the ability to secure a site and regulate the keys and electronic systems that allow staff to access the worksite.⁹ Access control includes both after-hours and how employees and the public access the site during operation hours. Common systems include master keys and keys with more limited access, key fobs, locked doors, turnstiles, locked fences, sally ports/man traps, counters, and glass/plexiglass barriers.

Access control is challenging as the main reception area is upstairs, and the entry is on the ground floor. The shared entrance with the counseling center has led to issues with counseling clients and students entering at the same time.

On the day of the site visit, our team was not acknowledged in the reception area for nearly a minute and could have entered through an open door to the hall leading to the classroom area without being stopped. At reception, visitors sign a sign-in sheet.

There is card access for external doors and key access for interior doors. Staff carry keys for their classroom but don't have master keys for locking exterior doors in an emergency.

There is a Knox box for the fire department near the front of the building. There is no similar police access.



⁹ School Safety Working Group. (2020). Ten Essential Actions to Improve School Safety. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Department of Justice.

McPhaul, K., London, M., Murrett, K, Flannery, K, Rosen, J. and Lipscomb, J. (2008). Environment Evaluation for Workplace Violence in Healthcare and Social Services. Journal of Safety Research, 237-250.

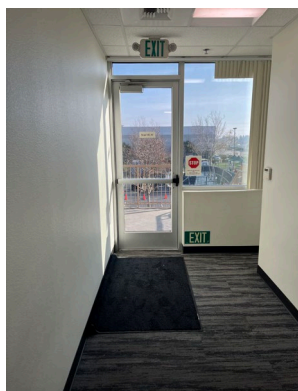
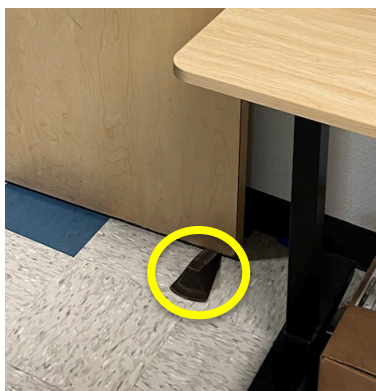
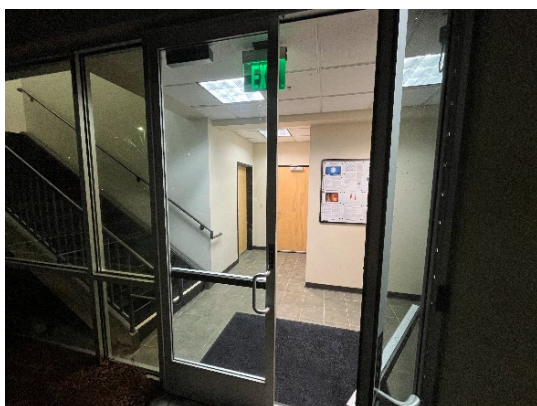
Moving Forward:

- Consider adding an intercom system and remote door-unlocking hardware to allow for better vetting of visitors.
- Consider having security personnel or administrative staff monitor the shared entrance area during drop-off and pick-up to minimize or defuse any student/counseling client contact.
- Consider a visitor management system that will scan IDs, check against the sexual offender database, and allow for the creation of reports or quick access to data. These appear to be in use in other parts of the district and may be available from a common vendor.
- If cameras are added, we suggest adding camera monitoring access to the reception desk workstation.
- Consider working with local police to determine emergency access for them. There is a similar Knox device available for police access.
- Consider issuing keys to the staff to lock any doors during a crisis.

Doors & Windows

Implementing physical security measures like locked doors is a fundamental step in securing a workplace environment. Locked doors help prevent unauthorized access, protect sensitive information, and ensure the safety of employees and assets.¹⁰

While the exterior doors appear well-maintained, some were found propped for convenience, particularly regarding the need for students to use the restroom while on the playground or recreation areas. Access to a second, more convenient restroom is being secured and should aid the issue. Additionally, since the space is shared with a counseling center, one first-floor exterior door cannot be locked during business hours. Stored items blocked some doors. Most of the windows are standard plate glass shatter-resistant and are on the second floor.



Moving Forward:

- We do not recommend security film for these windows. However, it is recommended to have window coverings on any window where pedestrian traffic can see inside.
- Continue with the process of securing access to an additional bathroom.
- We noted the lower exit sign¹¹ which is recommended given the difficult visibility nature of exit signs near the ceiling. Ensuring these are either lit or reflective is also important.
- As discussed later, remove any door wedges found at the site (yellow circle).

¹⁰ National Center for Education Statistics. (1998). *Creating safe and drug-free schools: An action guide - Chapter 5: School security technology*. Retrieved December 1, 2024, from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/safetech/chapter5.asp>

¹¹ Kinkel, E., van der Wal, N. and Hoogengoorna (2024). The effects of three environmental factors on building evacuation time. *Heliyon*, 10(5), e27128. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e27128>

Roof Access

Roof access, while needed for maintenance, can be problematic if it is accessible to others intent on bad acts or who may put themselves in a dangerous situation, increasing risk and liability for the facility.¹²

There is no external roof access or climbable objects or landscaping that would allow access. The interior roof access point that was checked was behind a locked utility room door, and the hatch was locked. Fire codes may have restrictions on locking this type of exit, and this should be explored with the fire department. An alarmed push bar would allow for locked external access and limit internal access while allowing for emergency evacuation.



Moving Forward:

- Talk with the fire department to determine if an internal lock to roof access is in-line with fire code. Consider installing an alarmed push bar instead of a locked access point.

¹² Utah State Board of Education. (2019). *School safety*. Retrieved December 1, 2024, from <https://schools.utah.gov/schoollandtrust/resources/02.2019.SchoolSafety.pdf>

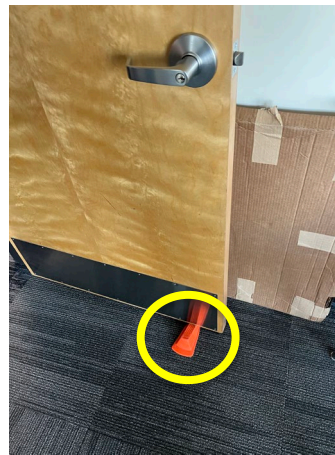
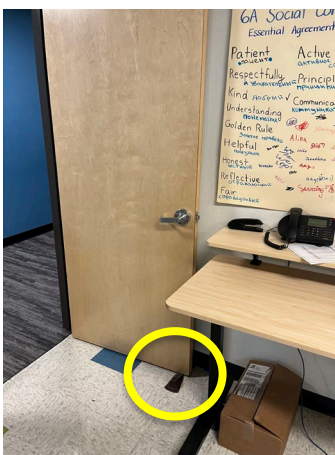
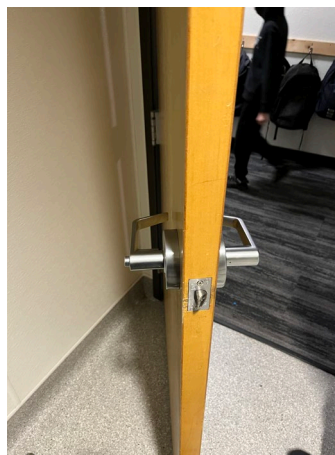
Facility Interior

Doors

Locked interior doors are vital for workplace security because they prevent intruders from freely accessing the facility. By limiting internal movement, they help protect sensitive information, assets, and ensure employee safety. Implementing access controls like locked interior doors is essential for safeguarding organizational assets.¹³

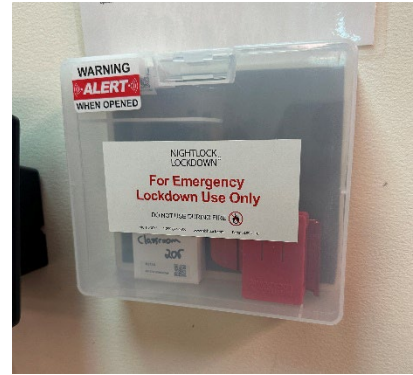
There was inconsistency with locks on internal doors; some rooms had locks, and others did not. There was a variety of locking hardware, with some requiring a key to lock from inside. This is not good practice for an active assailant situation.

There were also door wedges used on many doors. The use of door wedges is problematic, as it allows the door to be accessed without control and conveys an unintentional message to the staff that propping open doors is a permissible practice in the facility. Propping doors and unsecured pass-through doors have been noted in recent school shootings as ways an attacker has gained access to a facility or has been more easily able to move through the facility.



¹³ National Institute of Standards and Technology. (1995). *An introduction to computer security: The NIST handbook* (NIST Special Publication 800-12, Chapter 15). Retrieved from <https://csrc.nist.gov/publications/nistpubs/800-12/800-12-html/chapter15.html>

There should be a consideration of in-floor door lock system. With these systems, we recommend further training on the system for all staff and considering adopting this type of system in other rooms and offices around the school. One example of this system is the [Nightlock](#) device highlighted below in these pictures. These systems lock the lower part of the door and follow most fire codes, as the locking mechanism is not attached to the door but rather to the wall.



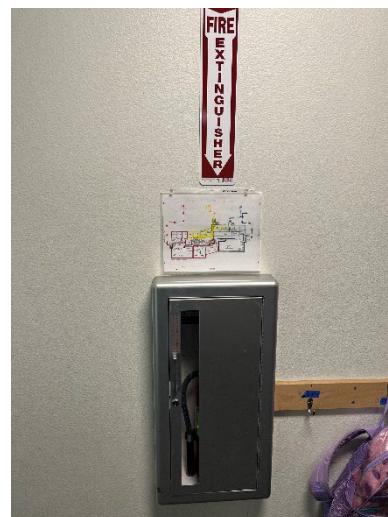
Moving Forward:

- Ensure that all classroom and office doors can be locked from the inside without using a key.
- Consider an in-floor door lock system at strategic doors within the school.
- Consider a consistent access control system for all interior doors, with staff having access in case of an emergency. While there may be some reason to have different locks on certain doors (exterior access, bathrooms, fire code), the goal is to have these consistent across all rooms.
- Remove any door wedges that are used to prop open doors.
- Consider an educational campaign that will aid in preventing students and staff from propping doors or letting in people without the proper ID. Our team could help design and implement this program if needed.

Interior Signage

Signage in the building conveys a sense of order, preparedness, and professionalism to visitors and those who may look to cause harm to the facility. The Center for Safe Schools offers the following guidelines for interior door numbering: 1) always place them on the hinge side of the door near the bottom so they can be viewed in smokey conditions, 2) contrast with their background, and 3) be retroreflective for low light and smokey conditions.¹⁴ This helps emergency responders and those evacuating navigate the space during a critical incident.

While exit signs were present and lighted, there is little interior wayfinding signage beyond that. Classrooms do have evacuation charts next to doors. Classroom door signage varies across the school. Signage was often homemade and lacked consistency.



¹⁴ Center for Safe Schools (2024). Model Door and Window Classroom Numbering. Retrieved from <https://www.centerforsafeschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/CSS-Door-and-Window-Classroom-Numbering-2024.pdf>

Moving Forward:

- Consider installing approved emergency egress directional signage in the hallways.
- Standardize classroom signs and use room numbers instead of only the teacher's name. This aids first responders in finding the areas that need attention.
- Highlight "shelter-in-place" areas or "safer rooms" in existing diagrams. Bathrooms and utility closets are good options for safer rooms. These areas should not be defined/labeled on the maps, as this could give potential assailants the knowledge of secure areas. Staff and students should be trained on their locations.

Electrical Panels and Utility Areas

Implementing physical access controls for sensitive areas is essential for protecting organizational assets and ensuring safety. Securing utility areas prevents unauthorized individuals from tampering with critical systems like electrical, plumbing, and HVAC equipment, reducing the risk of accidents, service disruptions, and security breaches.¹⁵

Some utility areas and panels were locked, and others were not.



Moving Forward:

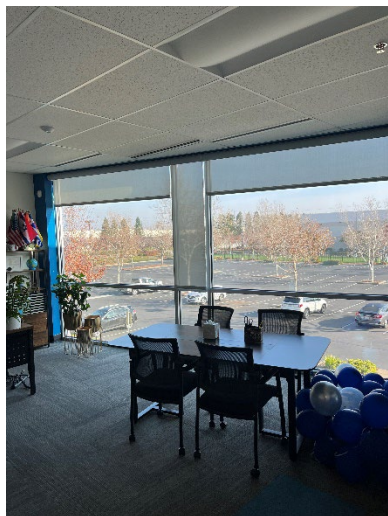
- All utility panels and rooms must be properly closed and locked, and the keys must be secured.
- Consider assigning a safety staff member to review these higher-risk areas to ensure they are locked at the end of each day.

¹⁵ National Fire Protection Association. (n.d.). *NFPA 730: Guide for premises security*. Retrieved from <https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/nfpa-730-standard-development/730>

Windows and Window Coverings

Windows enhances natural surveillance by allowing visibility into and out of a building, thereby deterring potential offenders. According to the International CPTED Association, properly designed and placed windows can increase security by promoting observation, while window coverings can balance privacy needs.¹⁶ Window coverings are also important during active assailant incidents to provide concealment from the attacker. Temporary coverings are preferable to permanent ones to allow monitoring of classroom activities and prevent unauthorized use of empty classrooms.¹⁷

Most classrooms had exterior window coverings, but usage was inconsistent. Windows in classroom doors were inconsistent in terms of coverage as well. Some were covered completely in paper, while others were partially covered.



¹⁶ International CPTED Association. (2020). *What is CPTED?* <https://cpted.net/what-is-cpted>

¹⁷ Keehan, A. (2023). *Secure Classroom Doors to Stop Active Shooters*. Retrieved on November 15, 2024 from <https://www.ue.org/risk-management/premises-safety/secure-classroom-doors-to-stop-active-shooters/>

Moving Forward:

- Consider having all window coverings with public-facing windows closed during school hours.
- Consider quick-pull covers for all classroom door windows. Some examples of these are pictured here and included in [Appendix A](#).



Safer Corners

Designating “safer corners”—areas within rooms that offer protection and are not visible from doorways—is important for enhancing occupant safety during emergencies. According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, identifying secure locations within a building can increase personal safety during incidents like active shooter situations.¹⁸

Safer corners are considered essential for school safety, based on lessons learned from previous school shootings, such as the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School incident.¹⁹

Safer corners/rooms were not identified at this site. The layout of the classrooms is not ideal for safer corners; however, they need to designate areas to store emergency kits, communication, and CSSP documents. In rooms with no clear, safer corner due to the size or exposure to the outside, identifying a “safer room” that students and staff should evacuate to is encouraged. Bathrooms or a utility closet would be options.



These photos provide an example of a safer corner marked with the school’s mascot. These low-cost/no-cost safety measures should be tied to a larger training program to ensure the practices are understood by all staff and are put into place consistently across the GCC community.

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2015). *Active Shooter Emergency Action Plan Guide*. <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/active-shooter-emergency-action-plan-guide>

¹⁹ New Hampshire Department of Safety. (2019). *Recommendations: Hard corners*. Retrieved from <https://schoolsafetyresources.nh.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Recommendations-Hard-Corners.pdf>

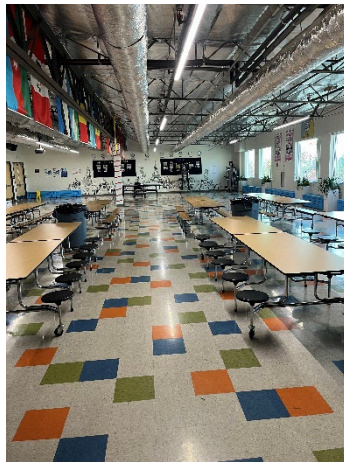
Moving Forward:

- Designate safer corners in each classroom and create a policy that lockdown supplies are to be kept in these areas. These areas can be designated with a picture of the mascot so that children of all ages can be aware of the areas. This should be accompanied by additional training and align with the Comprehensive School Site Safety Plan (CSSP).
- Consider assigning responsibility to an individual for maintaining safer corners and ensuring proper signage.
- Consider storing basic emergency/lockdown supplies in each safer corner/room.

Visibility

Natural surveillance is a CPTED concept that involves designing and positioning features and people to enhance visibility and make it easier to observe activities. The goal is to remove potential hiding spots and improve the ability of authorized personnel to monitor and respond effectively. This approach helps deter aggressive behaviors by increasing the likelihood of detection and enhancing the sense of safety.²⁰

As previously noted, there are good sightlines outside buildings with good lighting at night. The hallways, while decorated, did not have sightlines blocked by decorations or other items. The large cafeteria/gym is open and has high ceilings. The reception staff cannot see who is entering the building since the main entry is on the ground floor and the reception area is on the 2nd floor.



Moving Forward:

- The lack of visibility for the reception staff was addressed in the [Access Control](#) section of this report.

²⁰ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (U.S.). Division of Violence Prevention. (2017). Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) School Assessment (CSA).

Communication

The ability to communicate with staff, administrators, and teachers throughout the school during a critical incident requires each staff person to have access to a two-way radio, with appropriate training on how to use this radio and which channels should be utilized.

The staff has access to radios. However, the radios were primarily used when staff went to the playground/ball field. Staff rely heavily on landline phones located on desks. In an emergency, staff call the reception staff, who then make an announcement. There are currently no plans for staff-wide use of emergency notifications. There are little to no emergency procedures for communications.

Moving Forward:

- It is recommended that every staff member have a radio and be properly trained for emergency procedures. This includes keeping a radio at the reception desk. These devices provide immediate contact among school staff, which helps both in everyday management and daily operations.²¹ These radios are reliable through both power outages and network issues that may impact the internet or cellular services.
- Ensure coordination among the various communication methods used in an emergency, including the phone system, two-way radios, and any duress/panic alarms.
- Review CSSP regarding emergency notifications.
- Consider revisiting the staff's ability to initiate warnings and announcements. This could save valuable time in a crisis.

²¹ Dougherty, K. (2024). Prioritizing School Safety: The Value of Two-Way Radios in School Administration. Retrieved on December 23, 2024 from <https://marketscale.com/industries/podcast-network/icom/prioritizing-school-safety/>
Bryant, K. (2020). The Role of Communications in Implementing a FEMA Emergency Response. Retrieved on December 23, 2024 from www.ehstoday.com/safety-technology/article/21135511/the-role-of-communications-in-implementing-a-fema-emergency-response

Duress Alarms

Providing staff with access to duress alarms (more commonly known as 'panic' alarms) helps improve emergency service reaction time during a critical incident.²² Ideally, there should be several of these alarms, some stationary and some mobile (to be used during tense meetings or customer interactions). These alarms should be tested quarterly to ensure they are in proper working order. Staff should be trained to understand how and when to use the alarm and who the alarm notifies.

There were no duress/panic alarms. The procedure is to call 911. The relationship with local police was reported as minimal. There is a coded system to announce an active threat by using the term "Principal Red is on campus" over radios; however, as noted elsewhere, staff do not generally carry radios.

Moving Forward:

- Consider the purchase of mobile panic or duress alarms, which may be available through the alarm company used by GCC, or explore software-based panic/duress alarms at each staff computer terminal, particularly in the reception area.
- Ensure consistent language is used to communicate various actions such as lockdown/barricade and shelter-in-place. This should be in plain, non-coded language consistent with current best practices in school and workplace safety.
- Consider training for staff, including where the signal goes when they are used and the need for quarterly testing.
- Consider creating a list of where all panic alarms are after installation.

²² Hattersley, R. (2024). More Campuses Adopting Panic Alarm Tech, Most Satisfied with System Performance. Published by Campus Safety Magazine. <https://www.campussafetymagazine.com/insights/more-campuses-adopting-panic-alarm-tech-but-satisfaction-with-system-performance-is-slipping/161115/>

Additional Information and Recommendations

- Consider conducting active threat, mindset, and all hazards emergency training with the staff.
- It is recommended that the school apply for the Non-Profit Security Grant Program. Awarding up to \$150,000 a year for security upgrades.
- Consider establishing a closer relationship with local police, fire, and other first responders so they know any nuances in the building.

Appendix A: Sample Products

Medical

- Smaller “boo-boo” first aid kits: [Johnson & Johnson Travel Ready Portable Emergency First Aid Kit](#)
- Tourniquet: [Stop The Bleed® Basic Kit with CAT Tourniquet](#)
- Wound packing: [Critical Essentials Bleeding Control Kit for Chest & Limb Wounds](#)
- Security seals for AEDs: [Security Control Locks](#)
- Overdose kits: [Naloxone Overdose Emergency Kit Cabinet](#) and [Narcan medication](#)
- Anti-choking kits: [VitalVac](#), [LifeVac](#) and [Arixmed](#)

Fire

- Fire Blanket: [Prepared Hero Emergency Fire Suppression Blanket for Kitchen](#)

Lockdown/Barricade

- Window pulls: [Nightlock window shade](#) and [Hideaway Helper window shade](#)
- Door locking devices: [TeacherLock](#), [SAFEBOLT](#), [Brinks door security bar](#), [Door armor max](#), [DoorJammer Lockdown](#), [The Boot](#), [Bolo Stick](#), [Rhino Ware](#)
- Mobile panic/duress apps: [SHEQSY app](#), [Blackline Safety](#), [OK Alone](#), [Lone Worker app](#)
- Summary article on panic/duress alarms: [Deepdive: 2023 Panic Alarm and Mobile Duress Systems and Apps](#)